

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY MINUTES

For minutes prior to January 2004, please contact Judy Archer of Public Works
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CITY OF NORWALK
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
January 14, 2008

Attendance: Mayor Moccia
John Atkin, Chairman
Jim McInerney, Vice Chairman
Fred Wilms
Darren Oustafine
Frederika Bikakis-Hajian
Andrew Conroy
Lewis Clark

Staff: Hal Alvord, DPW Public Works Director
Lisa Bardon, DPW Operations Manager
Ralph Kolb, Wastewater Systems Manager

Others: Kevin Dahl, CH2M Hill OMI
Tim Dupuis, Camp Dresser & McKee, Inc.
David Waters
Tim Pramer

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Atkin called the meeting to order at 5:29 PM

2. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM WPCA MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2007 (COPY INCLUDED)

Vice Chairman McInerney said on Page 5, item 8, to change "pomerate" to "permanganate"

Vice Chairman McInerney said on Page 3, Item 4, Line 7, to change "costumers" to "customers"

**** MR. CONROY MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM WITH CORRECTIONS**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. REPORTS

a. FY07-08 Revenues/Expenditures Report (report included)

Ms. Bardon said that everything appears to be on track and that an additional \$51,000 was received for septage hauling since Friday. Mr. McInerney said that the nitrogen credits will be taking an \$800,000 swing next fiscal year. Ms. Bardon referred to the state

letter included in the Board package that projects Norwalk will be paying approximately \$240,000. Mr. Kolb said that was an estimate through October 2007.

b. CSO/Wet Weather/Low Level Nitrogen/Facilities Plan Project Update (letter attached and representative from CDM to attend)

Ms. Bardon said that on the draft Clean Water priority list that Norwalk was slated to receive \$37 million dollars in grants and loans for fiscal year 2009-10 for construction loans. She said she had spoken at the public hearing on the Clean Water Fund priority list and that Mayor Moccia had provided a letter to the Commissioner stating that Norwalk is committed to meeting the construction schedule for this project. She said that the State has some concerns that Norwalk will not have the ability to meet the schedule and they have indicated that they may remove Norwalk from the priority list if the schedule could not be met. She said that a meeting was held with CDM and staff from the DEP and went over their concerns and had prepared a project schedule for the first stage of the project which is constructing the head- works facility. She said that after meeting with the DEP there were several tasks to be performed and the first was to prepare an opinion of probable costs in which CDM has done. She said that a cover letter had been sent to the DEP outlining the City's commitment to do this project and showed that this project has to proceed in order for the State to meet its 2014 nitrogen goal.

Ms. Bardon said this is not an optional project and that since Norwalk is one of the top three dischargers of nitrogen into the sound and is in the highest concentration zone of the top three cities that Norwalk will be required to reduce nitrogen. She said this project could be deferred but there is money available to do this project that the State is now offering and that the Clean Water Funds may not be available in the future and that in addition the cost of the project will escalate in the future. She said if this project is done sooner rather than later that approximately \$5 million dollars in nitrogen credits revenue could be received. She said that she has re-run the financial model, has the five-year capital budget draft, and prepared an earmark request. She said she also has a letter from the State asking how Norwalk will meet the State's nitrogen discharge goal. Mayor Moccia asked if Norwalk was in competition with any other cities for receiving the funds. Ms. Bardon said "yes" it is with the entire state but primarily Hartford and New Haven. She said she had spoken to the State today and they have guaranteed that Norwalk is on the final Clean Water list and it is going to the Bond Commission on January 25, 2008.

Mr. Dupuis presented three options of the CSO/Wet weather low level nitrogen facilities plan projected update. He said that he would be reminding the DEP which funding sources that they are trying to obtain. Ms. Bardon said that the DEP does not consider all aspects of this project eligible for 50% grant money and that it is all subject to negotiation but said they will be trying to obtain as much as possible for the 50% grant. Mr. McInerney asked about the \$5.5 million dollars for the electrical allowance. Mr. Dupuis said he thought that number was high also but said at this point think that it may include odor control and HVAC. Ms. Bardon said that the cost estimates are in 2010-2011 dollars. Mr. McInerney said that all the grants and loans were applied to Phase I which is

the headworks and wet weather projects and asked if there were any additional grants or loans available for Phase II. Ms. Bardon said that they would have to re-apply and that the Clean Water Fund priority list is only through Fiscal Year 2009-2010. She said that the financial model was based on receiving Clean Water Fund grants and loans for Phase II. Mr. McNerney said that in the letter to the DEP it had stated that the nitrogen would be reduced to 350 pounds per day and asked out of the three options that have been presented would one of the options be better than the other? Mr. Dupuis said Option C would be the best option.

Ms. Bardon said at the end of the project there will still be \$4.6 million dollars in the operating reserve and that the rate increases that are required on the residents to fund this project and with the mix of what grant and loan funding that would be available would be approximately in the 6% range. Chairman Atkin asked how that compares to the dashboard that was presented a year ago. Ms. Bardon said they had always anticipated a 5% rate increase but in the capital budget most of the collection system work that was anticipated being done has been deferred.

Chairman Atkin asked if there would be any contingency funds since some of the pump stations are older. Ms. Bardon said “yes” and that the pump station upgrade and replacement account is available so that there would be an ability to react to things and that they would be working closely with OMI. to ensure that interim upgrades are being done. The Fort Point pump station is on the list for starting at the tail end of the WWTP plan project and that it is the oldest pump station, which was built in 1929. Ms. Bardon said that not all previous years’ funds have been expended in the pump station account and anticipate slowing down on the collection systems were with the rehabilitation of the last large interceptor sewer being done this year. Chairman Atkin asked if there is any action needed to be taken either by the Authority or the Mayor concerning the DEP. Ms. Bardon said no but would be keeping them informed. She said that all the cost estimates have been sent to the State and it is the obligation of staff to keep the Board informed.

Mr. Conroy asked regarding the 5% to 6% per year rate increase and where was that strategy developed? Chairman Atkin said the Authority has been looking at that on an annual basis as this capital plan is being developed. Ms. Bardon said the overall philosophy was that there were large infrastructure improvements that were needed and that a \$10 yearly rate increase would not be a huge burden on residents. Mr. Conroy said he did not agree with that. Ms. Bardon said it is better to raise the rate modestly each year to be able to be in the position to handle large capital projects, which are inevitable with the infrastructure the way that it currently is. She said the way this project will be funded in not completely through the residential revenue increase but are looking at other revenue increases and are trying to take the burden off the user and putting it back to the people who use the system more. Mr. Wilms asked if Mr. Hamilton has seen the proposal. Ms. Bardon said she had forwarded it to him on Friday. Mr. Wilms noted he felt comfortable with the financial models development and structure.

Ms. Bikakis-Hajian arrived at 5:55PM

c. Sewer Connection Fee & Sewer Use Bill Appeals/Adjustments

1. Act on 80 Fair Street Sewer Connection Appeal

Mr. Alvord said he had met with a representative from Building and Land Technologies and he has requested a waiver for the connections fees on 80 Fair Street for work force housing project. He said that he had explained to Mr. Waters that there is a process that the Board had established that all requests for waivers be forwarded to the Board. He said that he suggested to him that that the Board may want to see economic justification as to why it should be excluded from the connection fee. Mayor Moccia said that the City has a sizable investment of approximately \$3.5 million dollars through the Redevelopment Agency made to this project due to the bailing out of Human Services. Mr. Waters said that this the former property that was owned by MCI, Inc. and that they had sold the property to the Human Services Council and it was their intent to develop it with affordable housing and had obtained approval to build fifty-six units, but the adjoining neighbor had made an appeal and from that has languished and the property was turned over to the Redevelopment Agency who had provided funding for the project. He said the Redevelopment Agency had contacted him and asked if he would proceed to develop the property with affordable housing and he had agreed to do that. He said that he has created a mixed-use project for this property, which has been approved. He said it would include fifty-nine units of affordable housing and a storage location. He said that the self-storage facility is not part of the request for a waiver and will have a separate connection. He said this is a non profit project. Mayor Moccia said that because the City has made such a sizeable investment and that the units may be offered on a first serve basis to City employees who qualify and that he is an advocate for the project and would be happy to make a motion to waive the sewer connection fees. Mr. Wilms said that he has served on the Board of the Human Services Council and that they have tried to build the affordable housing but couldn't because of financial resources. He said he is in full support of the project and that it is very much needed in Norwalk. Mr. Oustafine asked if the Mayor's motion would have to carry out that there would definitely be units allocated for City employees. Mayor Moccia said it would not have to include that but it is on the record that it has been discussed that City employees who qualify under the income guidelines would have a first serve basis. Ms. Biakkas-Haijan asked how much the units would be sold for. Mr. Waters said these would be rental units and that the rent would be based on the State's affordable housing statute.

** MAYOR MOCCIA MOVED TO APPROVE THE ITEM

** MOTION PASSED

** TWO ABSTENSIONS-MR. CONROY, MR. OUSTAFINE

2. Status Update

Mr. Kolb said that adjustments for sewer fees to date are \$92,812.

d. Information Copies:

1. Nitrogen Credit Exchange Program (letter included)

No discussion.

2. Town of Wilton Sewer Use Fee

Mr. McInerney asked if Wilton has responded to the bill that they had received. Ms. Bardon said that the bill went out on December 11, 2007, and that it normally takes approximate a month to forty-five days to receive payment. Mr. McInerney asked if anyone has questioned the bill. Mr. Alvord said no and that the bill is based on a written agreement.

3. NACWA Newsletter (copy included)

No discussion.

4. Contract Operations Report:

a. Public Works Director Report:

1. Contract Operations Status

No discussion.

2. WWTP Odor Management

Ms. Bardon said that the last call that was received was on November 29, 2007. Mr. Wilms asked about the status of the changing of the hauling schedule. Mr. Dahl said that they are coming from 10 AM and 11AM and also from 2PM and 4 PM but said it does fluctuate based on operations and traffic. Mr. Dahl said that he would also be trying an atomizer spray along with sodium permanganate on a trial basis. Mr. Wilms asked when that would begin. Mr. Dahl said he is hoping to have the vendor on site tomorrow. He said OMI is currently attempting to run off of one blend tank in attempt to keep the sludge fresher and to reduce odors. Mr. Dahl said frequently there are times that both tanks need to be used to equalize things. He said by using one tank seems to be working although it is also a challenge to maintain one tank.

3. Westport Avenue Area Inflow & Infiltration (I&I)- Sewer Moratorium

Ms. Bardon said this project had gone out to bid last April and the contract had finally been signed at the end of October and that the notice to proceed has been sent out. She said that they have begun minimal work and that their sub-contractors have been doing cleaning, tving, and point repairs but she had been informed by the contractor that the bulk of the work would not begin until March, which is after the 180 days that is stated in the contract. She said that there is a provision in the contract for liquidated damages of \$500 per day. She said this would also have some impact on the sewer moratorium as well. She said that it is possible to the next lowest bidder but at this point would cost more money and no time would be gained. Mr. Alvord said that the recommendation by staff is not to withdraw the contract and be sure that they pay the liquidated damages fee. He said that Insituform is a very reputable contractor and that they are very effective. Mr. McInerney asked where Insituform is located. Ms. Bardon said in the Midwest. Chairman Atkin asked if something like this would make staff think twice about going with the

lowest bidder. Ms. Bardon said probably not because they are a reputable company but said in the future she would be increasing the liquidated damages fee.

4. Draft Interlocal Agreement with Town of Westport (copy included)

Mr. Alvord said that a draft has been forwarded to Steve Edwards, who is the Director of Public Works in Westport. He said that he has not received a response back from Mr. Edwards to date. Mr. McInerney said that there are terms and conditions that are included in the Westport proposal that he would like to see incorporated into the Wilton agreement. Ms. Bardon said that the Wilton agreement is up for negotiation at the end of this year.

Mr. McInerney asked how to catch anyone introducing deleterious material into the system. Ms. Bardon said that could be done through sampling. Mr. McInerney asked if there is a WPCA in Wilton. Mr. Alvord said that there is.

b. OMI Report

1. Introduction of Shawn Jennings

Mr. Dahl introduced Shawn Jennings who is the new Maintenance Supervisor. He said that he had replaced Mike Mitchell who has taken a promotion within the company.

2. Monthly Operating Report-November 2007 (copy included)

Mr. Dahl said that there were no permit or performance violations for November. He said that there was an OSHA reportable injury and that nitrogen had fallen into band "D".

3. Collection System and Pump Station MRR Accounts (copy included)

Mr. Dahl said that there were no pump station MRR and have started to receive the invoices for the siphon upgrade and for engineering services related to the Westport Avenue project.

5. MOTION PASSED TO OPEN MEETING FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Mr. Pramer said that today the shellfish beds were closed due to the operations at the WWTP and asked what the problem was that solids were discharged. Mr. Dahl said that there was a failure to the scum trough on the final clarifiers, which requires taking the tank off line. Mr. Pramer said that this was the second time this week that this had happened. Mr. Dahl said that this was the only incident this week and said that they had some spills over the weekend that were related to the scum trough but had not gone out to the river. Mr. Pramer said they were not notified until approximately 3PM to shut down and asked Mr. Dahl what time he had made the call. Mr. Dahl said he had notified the appropriate agencies at approximately 11:30AM. Mr. Pramer asked whom he had notified. Mr. Dahl said the DEP, Aquaculture, Health Department, Connecticut Department of Health, along with the Towns of Westport and Darien. Ms. Bardon said that there are capacity issues in the secondary clarifiers and that anytime there is an issue it makes it difficult to react and that is why with this upgrade of the WWTP there will be more capacity in the plant so these things do not happen. Chairman Atkin said that plant operations staff had taken the proper protocol.

Mr. Pramer said that the problem is primarily the spills and that there are happening quite frequently and asked if something could be done about that and asked if the WWTP was operating within the limits of the permit. Chairman Atkin recommended that Mr. Pramer contact someone in operations to discuss this matter and develop a letter which outlines Mr. Pramer's concerns. Mr. Oustafine said the letter should also include the magnitude as to how his business had been affected as well as the times that the spills occurred. Mr. Wilms asked if the failing of the trough was a reoccurring problem. Mr. Dahl said he has had this trough failure in a similar tank and at this time have another tank with a failed trough, which will be worked on tomorrow. He said the problem with the final tanks is that one cannot be taken off line to perform preventive maintenance on an annual basis because there is always the risk of losing solids.

6. ACTION ON ANY ITEM DISCUSSED HEREIN

No discussion.

5. ADJOURNMENT

** MR. WILMS MOVED TO ADJOURN

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd

