

Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of the  
Suffield Water Pollution Control Authority & Treatment Facility

September 14, 2021

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chairman

Janet Davis

Members:

Jeff Davis

Dan Holmes

Roger Ives

John P. Murphy

Chris Rago



**ALSO PRESENT:**

Jamie Kreller, Superintendent

Julie Nigro, Business Administrator

Mike Headd, WPCA Engineer (Woodard & Curran)

Andrew Lord, WPCA Attorney

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Janet Davis called the Regular Monthly Meeting for September 14, 2021 to order at 7:05 p.m. with all present with the exception of Frank Bauchiero. Also present, Superintendent Jamie Kreller, and Business Administrator Julie Nigro, as well as Mike Headd, WPCA Engineer (Woodard & Curran) & Andrew Lord, WPCA Attorney. Also present are representatives from the slaughter house at 1448 North Grand Street.

2. **CITIZEN INPUT:** None

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- August 10, 2021 Public Meeting Minutes, Review & Approval:
  - Jeff Davis motioned to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of August 10, 2021.
  - John Murphy seconded the motion
  - The motion passed unanimously, with Dan Holmes & Chris Rago abstaining.
- August 10, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, Review & Approval:
  - Jeff Davis motioned to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 10, 2021.
  - John Murphy seconded the motion
  - The motion passed unanimously, with Dan Holmes & Chris Rago abstaining.

4. **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

- Add to New Business, "F: 1448 North Grand Street"
  - Chris Rago motioned to add "F: 1448 North Grand Street" to the agenda under New Business.
  - John Murphy seconded the motion
  - The motion passed unanimously.

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- Move 9F to 4a - immediately following “Changes to the Agenda”
  - Dan Holmes motioned to Move 9F to 4a - immediately following “Changes to the Agenda”
  - John Murphy seconded the motion
  - The motion passed unanimously.

- a. **1448 North Grand Street Slaughter House** – Mark Christian was present to explain that the owners of the slaughter house would like to truck cleaning water from the slaughter operations to the Plant. Jamie Kreller stated he has had the water tested and there doesn't appear to be any issues that would affect our process. Jamie's waiting on an ammonia test and if all looks good, they would be coming in once per month (approx. 300 gallons) and we would charge them the same as septic haulers (\$0.075/gallon). We would also continue to test monthly each time they come to dump.
- Jeff Davis motioned to give conditional approval to accept approximately 300 gallons per month from the slaughter house, based on the ammonia test outcome to the satisfaction of Jamie and our engineer.
  - John Murphy seconded the motion
  - The motion passed unanimously

**5. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE:**

- Janet Davis stated the Town Engineer has a paving fund and she suggested Jamie Kreller approach them for the Town portion of the driveway for paving.
- Janet also asked about the labor negotiations. Jamie Kreller stated they have another meeting this Thursday.

**6. TREASURER'S REPORT:**

- Roger Ives summarized the Administration (O&M) bills included in the packets, for a total of \$12,760.37 for 2020/2021
- Roger Ives summarized the Administration (O&M) bills included in the packets for the 2021/2022 new fiscal period for a total of \$86,732.95 – which included additional bills totaling \$3,436.07 summarized below:

Metzger Lazarek & Plumb	August legal – Union contract	1,406.00
Alternative Generator Inc	UPS battery dying off	1,228.13
Anthem Life	September STD/LTD/Life insurance	539.88
USA Blue Book	Lab supplies	224.76
CT Water Co	PS#1 water 6/1/21-9/1/21	37.30
- Roger Ives stated there was one RCM bill for fiscal 2020/2021 for Woodard & Curran in the amount of \$23,999.75

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- Roger Ives stated the RCM bills for fiscal 2021/2022 totaled \$4,375, and included one additional invoice in the amount of \$3,725 from Allied Testing Laboratories for testing asphalt for the paving project.
- Lastly, Roger Ives reported August's payroll of \$69,366.59 from the Admin account.
- Janet Davis inquired about the attorney's bill from Metzger Lazarek & Plumb, and asked if we've received a proposal, purchase order, or contract for the law firm of Metzger, Lazarek & Plumb to provide WPCA union contract negotiations for the WPCA Commission? Roger and Jamie answered not that they're aware of. Janet went on to explain we've received a bill for \$1,406, and was inquiring if the WPCA contracted for attorney Lazarek to do any of the contract negotiations for us. She stated that during the WPCA March 9, 2021 meeting, Melissa Mack, the First Selectman said the First Selectman and the Director of Human Resources, Karin Ziemba would be the ones who would be doing all of the negotiations, and the Town labor attorney, Lisa Lazarek, would look at it in the end. The WPCA would be billed for Attorney Lazarek's review, and she would submit the final draft to the WPCA. The WPCA will then submit the draft to Hugh Murray, WPCA Labor attorney, who has been contracted to review the contract. Attorney Lord said that from a legal perspective, the question is, who is the client? And, attorney Lazarek hasn't established an attorney/client relationship with the WPCA based on what you're saying. There isn't an engagement letter where she said that she's working for you and you're the client. He went on to say that apparently there hasn't been any communication that would be attorney/client communication or anything along those lines. "Absent of that, you're not her client." Jeff Davis stated that we made it very clear that we didn't want attorney Lazarek working on this and wanted to use attorney Murray (WPCA attorney). He went on to say that we were told on March 9, 2021, by First Selectman Melissa Mack that she, Karin Ziemba, Director of Human Resources, and WPCA Superintendent Jamie Kreller would do the lion's share of the negotiations, and Lisa (Lazarek) would look at the paper work at the end. The WPCA never had any discussion, nor signed a contract with Lisa Lazarek to review the WPCA labor contract, nor to participate in the union negotiations on behalf of the WPCA, nor to provide payment for any legal fees rendered by Attorney Lazarek in regards to the Union Contract negotiations. The WPCA approved paying attorney Hugh Murray to review the final draft. Janet stated that Hugh has not been brought into this at all yet, even though he specifically contacted her asking about a status on the negotiations a month ago. Based on the fact that there is no contract, no attorney/client relationship between the WPCA and Lisa Lazarek; and Lisa Lazarek was requested by the First Selectman to assist with the labor union negotiations and contract review, several WPCA members believe this should be the Town's responsibility to pay. Dan Holmes stated that Hugh should be looking at this along the way to get his input prior to finalizing it. Janet stated that the Town disagrees with that. Roger Ives stated that there isn't anything too controversial, and that the only item we seem to differ on is the pay raises. Jamie stated that Janet had

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requested he go to the First Selectman and ask that the proposal be brought to Hugh. He was told they would take care of that and that the First Selectman would call Town attorney Derek Donnelly. Dan Holmes asked if the Commission has seen this proposal. Jamie responded that the Commission hasn't seen any of the proposals yet but he could obtain them. Dan Holmes stated that if the WPCA would be paying for any of this, the WPCA should see the proposals. Roger Ives said he thinks the discussion involving the Charter Review Commission is misleading about what's happening as far as the WPCA's concerned. We are utilizing Human Resources and we're doing this negotiation together. He believes it's a valid point, however, regarding the fact that technically, the Town's labor attorney, Lisa Lazarek isn't contracted with us. If the WPCA is paying the bill, she should be working for the WPCA – at least communicate with us, which is not what's happening. Jeff Davis stated that if we're paying the bill, the WPCA should choose the attorney. Roger Ives stated that we have administrative management of the WPCA by state statute, so we should be driving the bus. John Murphy suggested we defer the bill and request some kind of contract going forward.

- Jeff Davis moved to defer payment on the Metzger Lazarek & Plumb bill dated 9/10/21 until we talk about it again at the next meeting.
- John Murphy seconded.
- The motion passed with one abstention – Janet Davis.

- Chris Rago moved to disperse accounts payable and payroll, as reported in the Treasurer's report, less the Metzger Lazarek & Plumb invoice for \$1,406.00.
- John Murphy seconded the motion.
- The motion passed unanimously

**7. STAFF REPORTS:**

**a. Superintendent's Report-**

Jamie Kreller reported on the following:

- Jamie Kreller stated that for the last couple of months we've had many storms, but we've been doing pretty well compared to other towns around us.
- Training – Mike and Jamie attended classes.
- After hour call-ins are up last month and this month due to the storms.
- We believe PS#5 was hit by lightning. The entire Mission board was knocked out. Every device on the Mission board was out. The Mission electrician installed items to keep that from happening in the future.
- DEEP – semi-annual Kent Farms testing was completed.
- We had one complaint this month.
- The EPA Cybersecurity Assessment was completed. We're working with TAB and NIC to complete the items identified.
- The manhole inspections are ahead of plan.
- Sewer cleaning – completed almost 11 miles since January, with a goal of 15 miles by the end of the year.

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- All wet wells have been cleaned this year.
  - The Operators finished paving all the walkways around the tanks.
  - Janet asked if we normally clean out the catch basins for the Highway Department. Jamie stated that we help with items like this now and then. DEEP is fine with it as long as it's not all the time and we get other services from the Town. It's not like they're taking 2 guys for a week and doing something unrelated to the WPCA. We don't charge them for these services, and they don't charge us for their services.
  - PS#9 (Conservation Road) – two of our operators paved the driveway in front of the gate.
  - PS#6 (Landing Circle) and PS#4 (Deep Brook Harbor) sustained damage due to the storm. We've put claims in, but not sure if we'll receive anything. Jamie went on to say that he had 10 trees taken down around PS#4 that were leaning toward the equipment. Janet asked if this could also be brought up as reimbursable, if they are in fact owned by the Town.
  - Jamie stated the results from Allied (testing for the paving project) look good for us to go forward with the paving project.
- b. **Business Administrator's Report-** Julie reported on the July financials.
- The July variance report shows we were 95% unexpended thru the end of July's monthly bills versus an expected 92% for the end of July.
  - We collected just over \$6k on our Major Delinquent list, and one account paid in full. We transferred another 7 accounts to Andrew Barsom. Our 2021 collection rate through the end of August is 88.5%.
  - The auditors are coming in the last week of September.

**8. OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. **Kent Farm Study** – Mike Headd stated they've begun the final design. They're still waiting for DEEP's response regarding funding.
- b. **Thompsonville/Cassotta SSE** – Jamie stated he sent out the report to everyone. Mike Headd stated the results showed Thompsonville as a big problem as well as anything south of Cassotta. There's no real structural damage to any of the pipes. The water coming in was either at the joint connections with roots or gushers at several lateral connections. The problem seems to be a restriction with getting the flow out of Cassotta and on to Thompsonville Road, coupled with a lot of flow coming in down-stream. Mike stated they've approached it with a focus on fixing the issues on Thompsonville and then fixing the Cross-street easement on First street to get that water out. There's no reason to line the pipes because they're structurally sound. Jamie stated that we have \$500k budgeted for this year and we would like to begin this right away.
- c. **Stony Brook Study** – Mike Headd stated that they've submitted the report to DEEP and still waiting for their report to move forward.
- d. **Lake Congamond Study** – Mike stated they met with Southwick to talk about capacity they're willing to give. It's not enough to cover the entire proposed area. The next step is

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to go to Westfield for additional capacity. Southwick said if Westfield grants more capacity, they'll give it to us.

- e. **Assistant Business Administrator Position** - Jamie Kreller reported that we've hired a candidate and Human Resources is conducting the background check and we anticipate the new person will start before the next meeting.

**9. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **14 Cassotta Lane** – Jamie stated the homeowner was going to attend tonight's meeting, but was unable to attend. He just wants to know that will begin the project soon. Dan Holmes asked if these first steps we plan to undertake will improve things for this homeowner. Mike Headd stated he believes this will help. Jamie Kreller stated that some of the manhole repairs have also helped, but we've been getting much more water this year than last year.
- b. **Suffield Chase Phase 2** – Jamie Kreller stated this has been completed. Mike Headd said this was much better than the first phase and much better communication. The original bond was \$328,900 and we need to release \$263,120. We will retain \$65,780.00.
  - Jeff Davis motioned to accept this into the public sewer system and release 80% of the bond (\$263,120). We will retain 20% (\$65,780.00).
  - Roger Ives seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed unanimously
- c. **200 Mountain Road** – Jamie stated this is Elzear Roy's development. It was 6 condos (3 buildings, with 2 units each) and 2 office buildings. The address is actually 204 Mountain Road, but the name of the Development is "200 Mountain Road LLC". An assessment was paid for a 6-unit home back in the 1960's in the amount of \$2,778 (\$600/unit). Andrew Lord stated that The Developer's Agreement should be revised to reflect that there was a previous benefit assessment paid for a portion of the development on the property. It will reduce the amount due under the Developer's agreement because of the previous paid amount. The motion would be to allow Jamie to revise the Developer's agreement to reflect the previous payment, subject to consultation with attorney Andrew Lord.
  - Jeff Davis motioned to allow Jamie to revise the Developer's agreement as stated by attorney Lord.
  - John Murphy Davis seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed unanimously
- d. **340 Woodbridge Drive** – Jamie stated this property is actually 40 Woodbridge. He went on to say that this home sustained a sewer back-up during the last major storm, and he is working with the insurance company, CIRMA – but they're currently indicating they will likely not cover it – calling it a 100-year storm. They would like their rug replaced (\$16,959.33) and their baseboards replaced (208 feet). There's a \$10,000 deductible

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anyway. Attorney Lord suggested paying reasonable expenses and then make a claim to the insurance company.

-Jeff Davis motioned to reimburse the homeowner of 40 Woodbridge Drive for reasonable expenses incurred, and file a claim with the insurance company.

-John Murphy seconded the motion.

-The motion passed unanimously

- e. **1415 Mapleton Avenue** – Jamie stated they need a whole new system, leach field and all. They can't get an easement from their neighbors so the Department of Health has asked the WPCA for a waiver for them to not have to be required to connect to the public sewer. The Department of Health is fine with them not connecting as long as it's ok with the WPCA.

-Jeff Davis motioned to waive a requirement for 1415 Mapleton Avenue to connect to the public sewer based on recommendations by DPH and allow them to replace their septic system based on hardship.

-John Murphy seconded the motion.

-The motion passed unanimously

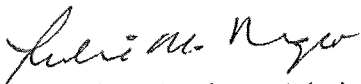
**ADJOURNMENT:**

- Dan Holmes motioned to adjourn the Regular Meeting of September 14, 2021 at 8:45 pm.

- John Murphy seconded the motion.

- The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Nigro, Business Administrator