

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL
AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020 IN
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT
06410.**

Present

John Perrotti, Chairman; Steve Carroll, Vice Chairman; Jason Beach, Tom Scannell
Absent: Abdul Abdelghani, Zack Wellburn and James Urbano
Staff: Walter Gancarz, Town Engineer

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Perrotti called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Perrotti read the fire emergency notice.

ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

1. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS
a. Calvary Life Sewer Bill

Mr. Gancarz informed the Commission that there has been e-mail correspondence between him and Pastor Sam DeFrancesco of Calvary Life Family Worship Center (Calvary). The communications were about the commercial sewer bill received by Calvary in December for 2019. The process for calculation of a sewer bill was defined by Mr. Gancarz. It requires getting the data from Regional Water Authority (RWA), applying the commercial rate and sending out the bill to the commercial user. This billing showed a significant increase and Pastor Sam questioned the increase.

Copies of the RWA bills for March 2018 to March 2019 were provided, and there was three times the water use during this time period than the prior year. This is why the billing was higher. Mr. Gancarz noted there have been other commercial facilities with similar issues and documentation was provided to the town which showed a water leak or break in a water line. RWA submits a letter on the matter, and the town has entertained a bill reduction in the past for a commercial user.

The Pastor and any representatives of Calvary were invited to the WPCA meeting to review the matter. Mr. Gancarz said there was nothing in the town records to reduce the billing. This year, bills are lower than past bills...and there is no idea where all the past water went.

Pastor DeFrancesco thanked Mr. Gancarz and the Authority members for the opportunity to meet with them and present information on the increased sewer bill..and get guidance on how things can be resolved.

Calvary has been in the new building since 2008, and Pastor DeFrancesco said the history of the church, events, services, etc. have not changed, and there has been no large growth in membership. Services are held once a week on Sunday; there may be a few conferences/events during the year; but these would have little result in the increase of water usage.

The Pastor introduced Church Member Rob Boulanger.

The Authority was told by the Pastor that he started to research where the high billing could have come from, and has not found reasoning for the increase...but Calvary believes there is an error somewhere...possibly in the water meter. Pastor DeFrancesco said the RWA staff was asked about where the discrepancy would be, why the gallons are four times more than normal...723,000 gallon; no leaks; no building addition or major significant changes to the church facility. An automatic sprinkler system was installed in 2017, and sprinklers are run at the same time each year, and a running toilet was repaired last year.

Mr. Boulanger spoke with someone at the RWA, tried to get some help with the problem, was shown graphs for water throughout the year, but did not see anything substantial to cause such an increase. He explained the church can request a one-time reduction offer from RWA (for the lifetime of the church)...and this reduction can only be used one time, never again, and he and the Pastor are uncertain if this is the best move to make.

Pastor DeFrancesco commented on RWA showing Mr. Boulanger a graph on which there was a time line of 20 to 30 days where there was a constant cycle of billing going on with the meter. It was overnight...when there was no one at the church facility. At the church the water usage is for toilets, one drinking water fountain, small kitchen, no use of showers. The sprinkler system is paid to a private company. This year there was flushing of the system.

In looking at the last quarter of water consumption, the water meter shows "zero" use. RWA has not been asked to take out the meter and check it out.

Chairman Perrotti stated the WPCA wants to help the Calvary Church, but is also bound by the RWA. There seems to be no substantial, engineering reasoning why this is happening. From what has been presented to the Authority, the meter is working, had spikes, and is now not performing. Mr. Perrotti questioned the ability of the Authority to request RWA to take out this meter, check it out, and provide information on the usage issues.

In response to a question about the normal quarterly bill, Mr. Boulanger cited the following: 2018 RWA Bill-\$5,578; Tax Bill-\$1,900; 2019 RWA Bill-\$4,752; Tax Bill \$6,000.

Mr. Gancarz explained that the Calvary sewer bill is in arrears for March 2018 to March 2019, and commercial users are billed on the amount of water usage.

The Calvary RWA billings were included in the Authority meeting packet.

7/18/18 Billing date – 3/31/18 to 7/1/18 water service – 223 CCF; prior year 140 CCF.
Billing Amount - \$1,445.66.

10/12/18 Billing date – 7/2/18 to 9/30/18 water service – 465CCF; prior year 237CCF.
Billing Amount -\$2,017.60

The church is using less water now, and there is confusion about zero water usage this year. Mr. Gancarz noted the quarterly usage (3/31/18 to 7/1/18 and 7/2/18 to 9/30/18) was consistently higher than the prior year, and this was a warning sign that something was amiss.

In looking at the higher usage over the last quarter, Mr. Carroll believes the meter is the likely culprit, and should be checked by RWA. He suggested the church pursue this issue with RWA for the means to find out how the metering is working.

Mr. Hallier also recommended the Pastor have the meter checked out by RWA.

With regard to the sewer bill, Mr. Carroll suggested the WPCA suspend that portion of the bill that is pending the outcome of the meter research by RWA and the resolution...and not require payment of this part of the bill at this time.

Mr. Beach commented on the RWA 3/131/18 to 7/1/18 billing of \$1,445.66. The next invoice sequence (10/12/18) shows the church paying \$4,868.40 on 7/20/18. And, it seems to him that the payments do not match up, and it could be RWA records could be in error.

Mr. Boulanger stated one of those billings is for the 12 inch fire main, \$3,422.

Something is wrong, and Mr. Boulanger has been reviewing the billings in depth, and believes it could be something simple...just the water meter...and if RWA says the meter is fine, he questions where the church goes from there.

Mr. Gancarz pointed out that the last quarter shows “nothing”, and that could be a meter problem.

The prior sewer bills were looked at by Mr. Carroll, and he cited the following:

2019 - \$1,953.18; 2018 - \$2,332.44; prior years were also in this billing range.

Mr. Carroll averaged these two billings at \$2,142.00, and recommended Calvary payment of \$2,142.00 pending resolution of the water meter and increased billing issues with the RWA. This could be a 90-day extension for Calvary Church.

Another way is to take the average of the two previous years, use that number as payable, and Mr. Gancarz said anything being investigated is deferred until resolution. This would be without penalty to the Calvary Church.

MOTION by Mr. Carroll; seconded by Mr. Scannell.

MOVED that the Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) requests payment from Calvary Life Family Life Worship Center for the 2019 Sewer Bill in the amount of \$2,142.00; the balance of that sewer bill will be suspended for 90-days pending a report back from Calvary Church; and there will be no penalty accrued or imposed on this unpaid balance.

Discussion

With regard to submitting information on the RWA meter inspection and resolution, Mr. Gancarz advised the Pastor to communicate directly with him and submit the information to him.

It was recommended by the Authority that the Pastor and Mr. Boulanger contact Tim Slocum, RWA representative for Cheshire.

Pastor DeFrancesco and Mr. Boulanger expressed their appreciation to the Authority members for their consideration and assistance with resolution of the sewer bill.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

b. 2019 Septic System Failure Report-Chesprocott

The annual report was submitted. Mr. Gancarz will add the data to the GIS System.

2. APPLICATIONS

None.

3. PROJECTS

- a. Payment Application #2000325210 from AECOM dated 2/18/2020 for \$1,405.62**

MOTION by Mr. Scannell; seconded by Mr. Carroll.

MOVED that the WPCA approve Payment Application #2000325210 from AECOM dated 2/18/2020 in the amount of \$1,405.62.

Discussion

Mr. Gancarz has reviewed the invoice, which should be the last one from AECOM, and approves it for payment.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

a. Status of Plant Operations – Inspection Report 09/06/2019

Scott Hallier, Plant Superintendent, reported the plant is running well; the plant is experiencing a normal January and February; flows are a little elevated to about 3M, and peaking at 3.5M; and, mechanically, everything is good. The plant is getting ready to start up phosphorous removal system in April, and UV startup in May. Staffing is still down one person. In the proposed budget there is a request for the Electrician to be a full-time employee, undertake some operator duties as well as electrical duties. This should alleviate some of the short staff issues. The Electrician is taking classes for licensure for Operator Class 1, will complete the educational courses, and take the test.

Supt. Hallier and the Authority members reviewed the DEEP Inspection report of the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Chairman Perrotti asked for Supt. Hallier's perspective and conditions around the inspection, what happened, and what is being put in place to prevent these or other things from happening.

Supt. Hallier explained the inspection is a semi-annual inspection by DEEP. They come in, as they want, inspect all the records and paperwork for two (2) years; take a tour of the plant; look at all equipment at the plant. The plant did not get any "NOVs" ...Notice of Violation.

Flow Meter Calibration – This is required once a year; WWTP has done this in October; and now DEEP has changed this time to July; the calibration was done following the inspection in October and will be done again in July 2019. This is now included in the maintenance system program.

Phosphorus and Nitrogen Level Overages – Supt. Hallier explained that this was not a "bypass event"...the plant did not lose any effluent from the plant. The computers that control the operations of the equipment itself lost their program; monitors were frozen; it is unknown how or why this happened. The assumption is a power bump; when this happens the monitor shows things looking fully operational...but the monitor is frozen. If you go outside and look it can be seen that something is not operating...pumps not

working, overflowing a gate here and there. This lasted from a night into a day and was found the next morning. It is assumed a power surge affected the computer to drop out the program. The software company was called; their people came in; and they reloaded the program; and the system is up and running. It is part of the SCAITA.

In response to a question from Mr. Carroll about regular updates on the SCAITA program, Supt. Hallier said this reporting is not received. This system is not on-line, so anything to be upgraded is done by the outside computer company, Napp Engineering of Prospect CT.

Mr. Carroll asked if it is obvious from the monitor that it is remaining static, and triggers something to be done.

That is correct, and Supt. Hallier said if no one is there to see it...it is not noticed until someone comes into the offices. Freezing of the monitor has not happened since the last time. The issue was definitely a software issue; it was not an equipment failure; there are no alarms for software problems.

In the inspection report, the estimation is to file an official bypass report through the DEEP website when it happens. Supt. Hallier said the monitor issue was not loss of equipment...not a bypass...it was loss of software, and equipment was functional. He and staff will keep their eyes open for software/ monitor issues.

Supt. Hallier informed the WPCA that all licenses are updated and recurring. Every day there is a routine...morning rounds...where every system, building, and entire plant is checked out.

From his perspective, Chairman Perrotti said any other glitch or software error or interruption should be addressed in the same way as was done.

There are surge protectors and oversight protectors on every service coming into the building, and Supt. Hallier said what happened was a fluke.

Clarifier-Sludge Levels – Mr. Gancarz asked why there is such a high blanket.

According to Supt. Hallier there were no problems; the plant was carrying a high inventory; in June there were high flows; septage was high and that increased the blanket levels; and only so much can be processed into the digester. The crews spent two weeks running extra truckloads of sludge out to reduce inventory; there are no required permits on inventory.

Mr. Gancarz commented on the EPA having enforcement action going for collection/management/maintenance operation systems. Cheshire has never had such

a system. DEEP could be looking for this system in the future along with a FOG program.

Supt. Hallier reported Cheshire has a FOG program, but not an official CMOM program. Funding will be needed to pull all this together and hire a consultant to put together a program. There is a maintenance program developed by staff...a five (5) year rotation of cleaning sewer lines around the town, a weekly check program of pump stations. A CMOM will have to be developed according to DEEP and EPA guidelines.

Chairman Perrotti recommended development of a "check list" on these issues.

Mr. Gancarz will develop a check list, work with Supt. Hallier, fill in the blanks on things to be done in-house and outside help may be needed.

According to Supt. Hallier, the DEEP will work with plant staff on a maintenance program, will cite violations, and it's like an informal OSHA inspection.

5. TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT
No report.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Tighe and Bond 2019 Sewer Survey Costs

The Authority members reviewed the 2019 information. Mr. Gancarz said Cheshire stands well; trends are most important; 2019 average sewer fee is \$475; median fee is \$413; 50% of the towns charge a flat fee; 50% charge an annual fee. There is a new water usage estimate based on 5,000 gallons per month (was 6,000 gallons) for residential users. Cheshire's rate structure last year was based on close to the 5,000 gallons.

The Authority members discussed the option of semi-annual sewer billing; it would be similar to tax bills with payments in two installments.

With the recent sewer billing, a few commercial users did call Public Works regarding their bills.

b. Election of Officers

Mr. Perrotti and Mr. Urbano were reappointed to the WPCA by the Town Council in January 2020.

CHAIRMAN

MOTION by Mr. Carroll; seconded by Mr. Scannell.

MOVED to elect John Perrotti as Chairman of the Water Pollution Control Authority.

There were no other nominations.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

MOTION by Mr. Perrotti; seconded by Mr. Beach.

MOVED to elect Steve Carroll as Vice-Chairman of the Water Pollution Control Authority.

There were no other nominations.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. Sump Pump Committee Update

Mr. Carroll, committee chairman, noted the committee last met in 2016, and the two other members no longer serve on the WPCA. Another committee should be formed by the Chairman.

Chairman Perrotti recommended Steve Carroll, Jason Beach and Tom Scannell as Sump Pump Committee members.

MOTION by Mr. Carroll; seconded by Mr. Scannell.

MOVED that the WPCA approve the appointment of Steve Carroll, Jason Beach and Ton Scannell to the Sump Pump Committee.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Mr. Carroll talked about his going through old information and records for this committee, and there being lots of information available for review. He noted that Mr. Gancarz has provided information on self-reported sump pumps, flow meters installed throughout town for a short period of time, and there is data on I&I problems. There are some funds available for I&I remediation.

According to Mr. Gancarz this is about \$300,000 in one account and \$150,000 in another account.

One year a flyer was sent out with the sewer bill about I&I, and Mr. Carroll noted it talked about actions that can be taken, smell tests, etc. There can also be an ordinance for real estate purchases to include a sump pump inspection process. The committee will meet in April just prior to the regular WPCA meeting. The committee can identify a few strategies to address the I&I problem.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 22, 2020

MOTION by Mr. Perrotti; seconded by Mr. Scannell.

MOVED to approve and accept the minutes of January 22, 2020 subject to corrections, additions, deletions.

Corrections – Page 2, line #2 – should read...”Mr. Gancarz said there is **no** withholding of payment.” Page 3 – should include...”**MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.**”

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Scannell; seconded by Mr. Beach.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk