

MINUTES

Joint Meeting of the Representative Advisory Board to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority and the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Electronic Virtual Meeting held via Zoom on October 17, 2024

The October 17, 2024, joint meeting of the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) to the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority, and the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority, was called to order at 7:00 pm by Advisory Board Chairman Barry Weiner. It was determined by SCWA General Manager and Acting RAB Secretary, Josh Cansler, that the requisite number of members present constituted a quorum. Chairman Barry Weiner concurred.

Advisory Board members in attendance were: Chairman Barry Weiner, New London; Carol Russell, East Lyme; Martin Artale, Groton City; Chuck Longton, Montville; Mike Macina and Robert Boissevain, North Stonington; Leslie Hotary, Salem; Kathryn Nason Burchenal, Stonington Borough.

SWCA Board members in attendance were: Authority Chairman Harry Watson, Paul Eccard, Alex Masse, and Nicholas Mullane.

Chairman Barry Weiner offered a period for public comment. There were no customers or citizens in the meeting wishing to speak.

A motion was made by Mr. Boissevain, and seconded by Ms. Russell, to accept the minutes from the July 18, 2024, meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

Authority Treasurer Paul Eccard reported that the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Audit of the Authority was carried out and accomplished satisfactorily by the firm of Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC. Mr. Eccard noted that the audit went smoothly and there were no significant findings during the audit. Mr. Macina made a motion to accept the FY 2024 Audit report as presented by Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC. His motion, seconded by Ms. Russell, was carried unanimously.

SCWA Authority Chairman Watson gave his report (Attachment 1) to the RAB. Before starting his report Chairman Watson thanked Authority Vice-Chair Alex Masse for stepping in to handle his chairman duties during his recent illness and recovery.

Under Item I of his report, "Operational Activities", Authority Chairman Watson gave updates on the acquisition of the Oakdale Heights subdivision in Montville, the project to interconnect the Montville Division and Seven Oaks Division, the Grant-in-Aid for Upgrades to the Tower Pump Station, and the recent upgrades at the Cedar Ridge Division in North Stonington.

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Referencing the delays by DPH and PURA regarding the acquisition of Oakdale Heights Chairman Watson stated that taking over small neighborhood systems such as Oakdale Heights was exactly what SCWA was created for, so the ongoing delays, requests, and requirements didn't make sense. SCWA General Manager Cansler said that the SCWA Attorney, Nick Kepple, had attempted on several occasions to get an explanation on why this transfer was subject to PURA approval, but unfortunately, he has not been able to get anyone at PURA to discuss this case.

Regarding the successful completion of the Cedar Ridge upgrades with minimal disruption of service, RAB Chairman Weiner commended the SCWA staff for a job well done.

Under the Administrative section of his Chairman's Report, Mr. Watson discussed the rollover of the 2023 Bond Anticipation Note (BAN), the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Audit, the 2024 Authority Meeting Schedule, and the Lead Service Line Inventory. Mr. Watson noted that the deadline for submitting the Lead Service Line Inventories was the day before. Mr. Cansler said that SCWA had met the deadline for all 14 SCWA systems.

Addressing SCWA Planning Activities, Chairman Watson discussed the new National Primary Drinking Water Regulations for PFAS (Per-and Polyfluoroalkyl), proposed new developments within SCWA boundaries, and regional considerations affecting SCWA.

Mr. Macina made a motion to accept the Chairman's Report as presented. His motion, seconded by Ms. Burchenal, was approved unanimously by all members present.

Under the Agenda item for Approval of the 2025 RAB Meeting Schedule the subject of the RAB meeting start time of 7 pm was discussed. Chairman Weiner stated that he liked the 7 pm start time, and several members concurred. Since there was no one who opposed the current start time, the discussion was tabled. Mr. Macina made a motion to approve the 2025 RAB meeting schedule as presented. His motion, seconded by Ms. Russell, was also approved unanimously by all members present.

Chairman Weiner indicated he did not have anything to report as Chairman of the Representative Advisory Board, but he thought the RAB would be interested to know that his municipality, New London, was already in the process of replacing all their lead service lines.

Under the Agenda items for Report by the Appointments Committee and Discussion of Committee Assignments, Mr. Macina stated that he and RAB member Mike Cherry, who could not make this meeting, were still working on candidates to fill the two Authority vacancies as well as vacancies on various RAB committees.

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There were no reports from other Representative Advisory Board members.

Under New Business, Mr. Macina brought up the issue of declining membership on the RAB and asked how the positions are filled. Mr. Cansler stated that SCWA sends out letters to all the municipalities in the SCWA area requesting each Mayor or First Selectman appoint two citizens to the SCWA Representative Advisory Board. Mr. Macina said he would reach out to people he knows to see if there was a way to generate more interest in serving on the RAB.

A motion was made by Mr. Macina, and seconded by Ms. Russell, to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The next meeting is scheduled for January 16, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Josh Cansler
SCWA General Manager/RAB Acting-Secretary

ATTACHMENT TO CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Attachment 1 to Minutes of the October 17, 2024 RAB Meeting:

Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Chairman's Report to the Representative Advisory Board

October 17, 2024

I. Operational Activities

A. Oakdale Heights Subdivision (Montville)

In 2023, SCWA and the Oakdale Heights Association, which represents the 219-home Oakdale Heights subdivision in Montville, signed a formal agreement for SCWA to take over ownership and operation of the Oakdale Heights water system. This agreement was submitted along with a formal Request for Transfer of Water Lands Application to the State Department of Public Health (DPH) in August 2023.

In February 2024 DPH informed SCWA and the Oakdale Heights Association that the transfer is subject to the consent of the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), and in May PURA assigned a Docket Number (24-05-10). PURA followed with a request for a joint letter from SCWA and the Oakdale Heights Association, which was filed, and Notice of Proceeding which had to be delivered to everyone served by the Oakdale Heights water system.

In August 2024 PURA issued a letter with 62 Interrogatory questions, 18 of which were directed at SCWA. The SCWA responses were filed on September 9th, which was the deadline. Oakdale Heights filed their responses on September 26th. Both parties are currently waiting on PURA to post a schedule showing events that will happen in the docket.

B. Seven Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project (Montville)

This project will complete the interconnection between Seven Oaks and Montville divisions. Earlier this year, after a public bid process, the Authority approved a motion to award a contract for this project to Richards Corporation, pending approval by the State DPH DWSRF.

In August SCWA received the Authorization to Award Construction Contract from the DPH DWSRF office and awarded the contract to Richards Corporation. A pre-construction meeting was held in September. Unfortunately, in late September SCWA learned that the Federal Grant money, which will fund 50% of the project, may be delayed until the end of the year. The contractor was informed that a Notice to Proceed would not be issued until the funds were all available.

C. Grant-in-Aid for Upgrades at the Tower Pump Station (Ledyard)

Last year the State approved a grant-in-aid for the Tower Division to upgrade the pump station, add storage tanks, and upgrade security. This grant also includes an extension of the emergency connection up Christy Hill Road. The total amount allocated is \$3 million. The General Manager met with the State Department of Health (DPH) several times over the past few months to discuss the requirements, schedule, and submitted a formal Bond Fund Application package for the grant-in-aid funding. During the last meeting, which was in September, the Grant Office indicated that there is a good chance that SCWA would receive authorization to start engineering/design for the project this fall.

D) Cedar Ridge Upgrades

In early September the hydropneumatic pressure tank at Cedar Ridge started leaking. Instead of replacing the pressure tank SCWA decided to install variable speed drive (VFD) pumps, which required a shutdown of the pump station. Rather than shut the system down completely for an entire day to install the VFDs SCWA has hired a water tanker truck which was tied into a hydrant and water was pumped into the system from the tanker using the mobile pump trailer that SCWA built several years ago. This successful installation of the new VFDs was executed on September 11, 2024, and the system was fully operational by 4 pm that same day.

II. Administrative Activities

A. 2023 Bond Anticipation Note (BAN)

Based on the long-term capital financing plan approved in 2020, the 2023 BAN (Bond Anticipation Note) was rolled over into another BAN this year, and most likely will roll over again next year before the BAN is rolled into a Bond that SCWA will begin to pay off. This will roughly align our payment schedule with the expiration of the 2007 Bond that SCWA is currently paying off, while enabling the Authority to do some small projects. SCWA did not add any new projects to this year's BAN. The bid opening for the BAN was on September 11, 2024, and the closing was on October 2nd.

B. Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Audit

Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC conducted their annual audit visit of SCWA during the second week in August. They will present their audit findings to the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) Finance Committee and the Authority prior to the October 2024 RAB meeting. They will have a representative available to answer questions during the Finance Committee's presentation and to the rest of the RAB that same evening.

C. 2024 Authority Meeting Schedule

(Attachment – 2025 SCWA Meeting Schedule)

Attached are the proposed Authority Board and Representative Advisory Board (RAB) meeting dates for 2025. Authority meetings are generally held on the second Monday of each month, unless the Monday conflicts with a holiday. The RAB schedule will remain the same; quarterly meetings on the third Thursdays of January, April, July, and October.

Over the past few years several RAB members have asked why the RAB meetings are held at 7:00 pm. The General Manager has suggested that since the SCWA office hours changed earlier this year this might be a good time to review the meeting time for RAB meetings. The SCWA Enabling Legislation (Act 381) only specifies that the RAB must meet quarterly. No specific guidelines are stated regarding the frequency or date/times for the Authority meeting.

D. Lead Service Line Inventory

The National Primary Drinking Water Regulations for Lead and Copper, which went into effect in 2021, requires all public water systems to develop a lead service line (LSL) inventory that identifies all materials used to construct or repair all service lines connected to a public water distribution system. Last fall the EPA released their guidance for developing the LSL inventory. This LSL inventory must be completed and submitted by October 16, 2024.

III. Planning Activities

A. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances)

In April 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a National Primary Drinking Water Regulation establishing Maximum Contaminant Levels for six PFAS in drinking water. The new regulations require all water systems to complete the initial monitoring requirements for each PFAS within 3 years, and when warranted, take steps to ensure compliance within 5 years. SCWA plans to sample twice in 2025, in accordance with the new regulations.

B. Proposed New Developments

- 1) Hillcrest (Montville):** Millwood is part of the adjacent SCWA Hillcrest subdivision in Montville. Construction of this 55 and over community started in 2021 and so far, 29 homes have been constructed and sold. Forty-six individual modular homes are proposed for this development.
- 2) Salem:** A proposed new 24-unit condominium development in Salem, which is in the SCWA exclusive service area (ESA), is currently on hold for now. It had been in design and engineering phase, and at one point the developer hoped to begin construction in 2024, with the goal of selling the units in early 2025.
- 3) Tower Division:** The construction of this 10-unit Mobile Home development along Kings Highway in Ledyard is underway. SCWA installed a service line to the development in August. Once the individual units are completed and connected, they will receive water from the SCWA Tower Division distribution system. SCWA has enough capacity at Tower Division to handle the additional proposed new homes and mobile home park.

C. Regional Considerations

- 1) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC):** The Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) and the Statewide WUCC both last met in November 2022.
- 2) Water Planning Council Advisory Group:** The General Manager represents SCWA as a member of the Connecticut Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG), which meets monthly.
- 3) SCWA Interaction with the AWWA and CWWA:** SCWA is a member of both the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA). The General Manager represents SCWA as a member of the CWWA Legislative Affairs Committee, which meets regularly while the Connecticut Legislature is in session.

Harry Watson, Chairman
Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority