

**Draft Minutes of October 21, 2024, Water Authority Meeting
Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority
1649 Route 12, Gales Ferry, CT**

This meeting was held virtually per Public Act No. 22-3, which permanently established the requirements for virtual public meetings in Connecticut.

Present

Authority: Vice-Chair Alex Masse, Treasurer Paul Eccard, and Claudia Koerting.

Authority Staff: General Manager Josh Cansler

Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Masse called the meeting to order at 5:17 p.m.

Public Comment on any Item on the Agenda – None

Approval of Prior Minutes

Approval of the minutes of the September 9, 2024 Authority Meeting was deferred to the next meeting.

Correspondence - None

General Manager's Report

1. Oakdale Heights Subdivision (Montville)

In July 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. General Manager Cansler stated the SCWA responses were filed on September 9th, which was the deadline. He added that Oakdale Heights filed their responses on September 26th. Mr. Cansler said he has not heard anything since, and that nothing new has been filed on the PURA docket portal, but he assumes that the next step will be a hearing scheduled by PURA.

2. Capital Projects Update

a) Seven Oaks/Montville Interconnection Project

(Attachment 1: Letter to Congressman Joe Courtney, dated September 27, 2024)

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 July 2024 SCWA received the Authorization to Award Construction Contract from the DPH DWSRF office, and in August SCWA awarded a contract to Richards Corporation. A preconstruction meeting was held on September 4, 2024, at which time the contractor was informed that a Notice to Proceed would be sent once SCWA receives the funds from the State Treasurer's office.

General Manager Cansler stated that in mid-August SCWA was informed by the State that SCWA would require a Federal Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to receive the money from the Federal Infrastructure grant, which makes up 50% of the funding for this project. On August 15, 2024, SCWA applied for a UEI# and a few days later we were assigned a "Case Manager" by the USFCR (U.S. Federal Contractor Registration) office. Mr. Cansler stated that over the course of the past eight weeks our case manager requested more and more information about SCWA, all of which was provided.

General Manager Cansler said that in early September our case manager sent us an email stating they had enough information to submit a request to his superiors for a UEI#, however, on September 23rd SCWA received an email requesting additional information; mostly information which only applies to private companies. Mr. Cansler said he responded that SCWA has provided more than enough information to verify our existence, location, and mission. In that same response SCWA requested a discussion regarding this issue with our case manager's supervisor. Mr. Cansler said he waited several days but did not hear back from our case manager or a supervisor, so he drafted a letter to Congressman Joe Courtney requesting assistance with the federal USFCR office. He said this letter was mailed on September 27, 2024.

General Manager Cansler said that on September 30th our USFCR case manager's supervisor finally called. He explained the SCWA mission and enabling legislation and forwarded information from the Connecticut State Department's website that showed SCWA is an entity of the State. Mr. Cansler said that SCWA finally received the UEI# that day (October 21st), though he added that it came with a request for more information before it could be activated. Mr. Cansler also added that as of today SCWA has not heard anything from Congressman Courtney's office.

General Manager Cansler stated that on September 24th SCWA had a meeting with the DPH DWSRF office to discuss the funding status, during which he explained the problems obtaining a UEI#. In turn DPH stated that there had been some delay obtaining the federal funds and the earliest they thought the funds would be available to SCWA would be late December 2024. Mr. Cansler said that he and our consulting engineer, Haley-Ward reached out to Richards Corp. who indicated they would like to start work in October, and if they did, they would be submitting invoices starting the end of October. After some discussion Richards Corp agreed to delay the start of construction.

b) Cedar Ridge Upgrades

General Manager Cansler said that in early September the hydropneumatic pressure tank at Cedar Ridge started leaking. He said replacement of the pressure tank with variable speed drive (VFD) pumps has been on the SCWA Capital Projects list for several years, so replacing the pressure tank with a new tank did not make sense. SCWA ordered the VFD pumps and coordinated with Laframboise Well and Drilling LLC to assist the SCWA field crews with installation of the VFD pumps. The installation of the VFDs required a shutdown of the pump station. Mr. Cansler said that rather than leave the customers in Cedar Ridge without water for 10-12 hours SCWA hired a water tanker truck that was tied into a hydrant and water was pumped into the system using the mobile pump trailer that SCWA built several years ago. The successful installation of the new VFDs was executed on September 11, 2024, and the system was fully operational by 4 pm that same day.

c) Grant-in-Aid for Upgrades at the SCWA 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. General Manager Cansler stated that he has attended several meetings with the State Department of Health (DPH) over the past few months to discuss the requirements, schedule, and submitted a formal Bond Fund Application package for the grant-in-aid funding. Mr. Cansler stated that during the last meeting 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) Upgrades at the Spicer Hill Booster Station

This project includes installation of variable frequency pumps (VFDs) at the Spicer Hill Booster Station, which is part of the Ledyard distribution system. This project also includes the elimination of the hydropneumatic pressure tanks, which is a top priority for DPH. General Manager Cansler said SCWA has completed the first phase of this project, which included external electrical upgrades. He said that SCWA had finally received the new VFD pumps in early October and the SCWA field crews plan to install the new pumps in the next couple of weeks.

e) 2024 Bond Anticipation Note (BAN)

General Manager Cansler stated that based on the long-term capital financing plan approved in 2020, the previous year's BAN (Bond Anticipation Note) was rolled over into another BAN this year. This will most likely be the last year before the BAN is rolled into a Bond which 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. Mr. Cansler stated that SCWA did not add any new projects to this year's BAN so the total issuance in FY 2024 was \$405,000. He said the bid opening for the 2024 BAN was on Sep 11, 2024, and the closing was on October 2nd.

3. Lead Service Line Inventory

The National Primary Drinking Water Regulations for Lead and Copper, which went into effect in 2021, required 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. General Manager Cansler stated that completion of the LSL inventory had consumed hundreds of man hours over the past year. He added that most of the inventory was completed by Laurie Hancock in the Admin section, and our Foreman, Brandon Belair. Mr. Cansler said that SCWA filed the LSL inventory before the deadline on October 16, 2024.

4. PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances)

General Manager Cansler stated that 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 assure compliance within 5 years. SCWA is currently waiting on further guidance from DPH regarding testing schedules and specific State requirements.

Mr. Cansler stated that the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA) had filed their opening brief the previous week regarding their joint petition with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to review the EPA's Final PFAS Drinking Water Rule. He added that the associations were concerned that the EPA did not rely on the best available science and the most recent occurrence data, and that the EPA underestimates nationwide costs and adds to affordability challenges without achieving the public health outcomes we all seek.

5. Ongoing and Proposed New Developments

a) 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.

b) 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.

c) Fees for providing Estimates: General Manager Cansler stated that based over the past few years various developers have approached SCWA about connecting proposed multi-home developments to SCWA water systems. He said that in some cases developers have reached out several times for updated estimates and that depending on various factors SCWA spends anywhere from 6-12 manhours preparing the estimates. He added that in most cases we never hear from the developers again. SCWA also has homeowners with wells request estimates for connecting to our water mains, and again in most cases they never do.

As a result, General Manager Cansler said he believes it is time to charge a small fee for the estimates. He said that he is proposing a \$500 fee for estimates for multi-home developments and \$100 for individual homeowners. Since several members of the Authority were not present, discussion of this proposed fee was tabled until the next meeting.

6. Digitalization of Blueprints and Drawings Project

SCWA is currently working with Ziptility, Inc. to begin the process of digitizing our old paper blueprints; specifically the locations of water mains, service lines, valves, hydrants, etc. Digitalization of our drawings and blueprints is a project that has been on the capital projects list for years. In August Ziptility input the addresses and areas served by SCWA into their database. SCWA and Ziptility are currently evaluating how to best transfer information and data from our old blueprints into their system.

7. Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Audit

General Manager Cansler stated that based Hoyt, Filippetti & Malaghan, LLC conducted their annual audit visit of SCWA during the second week in August and that they had presented their audit findings to the Representative Advisory Board (RAB) Finance Committee and the Authority the week prior at the October 2024 RAB meeting.

8. Draft 2025 Authority Meeting Schedule

(Attachment 2 – Draft 2025 SCWA Meeting Schedule)

General Manager Cansler said that attached to his report was the proposed Authority Board and Representative Advisory Board (RAB) meeting dates for the calendar year 2025. He said Authority meetings are generally held on the second Monday of each month unless the Monday conflicts with a holiday. By State law, regularly scheduled public meetings may not be held on one of the official State holidays. Mr. Cansler said this would result in the October 2025 meeting being pushed back to the third week of October. He said the RAB schedule will remain the same; quarterly meetings on the third Thursdays of January, April, July, and October. Mr. Cansler added that over the past few years several RAB members have asked why the RAB meetings are held at 7:00 pm, however when this came up for discussion at their meeting the previous week, the RAB had decided not to change their meeting time.

9. Regional Considerations

a) Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC): The Eastern Connecticut Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) and the Statewide WUCC both last met in November 2022.

b) SCWA Interaction with SCCOG: SCWA and the SCCOG continue to interact cooperatively. To this end, SCWA attends the monthly SCCOG meetings if there are items relating to water on the agenda, and the SCCOG Regional Water Committee, which meets only as needed.

c) SCWA Interaction with the WPC, CWWA, and AWWA: The General Manager represents SCWA as a member of the Connecticut Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG), which meets monthly. Mr. Cansler is also a member of the Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) Legislative Affairs Committee, which generally meets monthly between October and June.

Other Business – None

Report from Chairman – None

Report from Authority Members – None

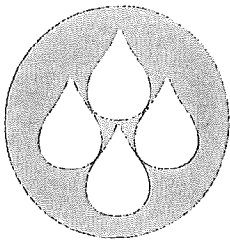
Public Comment – None

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:40 p.m. It was noted that the next Authority meeting is scheduled to occur on November 18, 2024, at 5:15 pm.

Josh Cansler
Secretary

ATTACHMENT 1



September 27, 2024

The Honorable Joe Courtney
United States House of Representatives
2nd Connecticut District
2449 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Courtney,

The Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA) is a non-profit water utility, established by the Connecticut State Legislature in 1967, serving 15 distinct communities and sub-divisions in Montville, Ledyard, North Stonington, Salem, and Preston. The purpose of this letter is to seek your assistance to prevent the possible loss of Federal and State Grant money that has been allocated to a project to construct a water main interconnection between two subdivisions in the Town of Montville, Connecticut.

Background: The purpose of this project is to interconnect a large subdivision (known as Montville Manor), which has over 1000 residents, with a nearby subdivision (known as Seven Oaks) with approximately 30-40 customers. Currently the Montville Manor subdivision is near capacity for drinking water and during drought years SCWA has been forced to place the residents on mandatory conservation limits. Meanwhile the nearby Seven Oaks system, which was designed for roughly 800 customers, has excess capacity. This interconnection will also provide redundancy should either pump station fail. Working through the State Department of Public Health (DPH) Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) office SCWA is in the process of receiving \$1.3 million to construct this project. 50% of this funding will be via federal dollars allocated from the 2021 Biden Administration Infrastructure Bill.

Issue for which we are requesting assistance: SCWA was informed in August 2024 that to receive the Federal Infrastructure funding we need to have a Federal Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. On August 15, 2024, SCWA applied online through the SAM.gov website for a UEI#, which is run by an agency called USFCR (U.S. Federal Contractor Registration). On August 19th SCWA was assigned a "Case Manager" by USFCR (Aidan Ashe). He informed us that it usually takes 5-10 business days to receive a UEI# and requested information about SCWA, which was provided.

Over the course of the next six weeks our case manager requested more information, which was also provided. This information included a copy of SCWA's Enabling Legislation, Act 381 (1967), a copy of our lease for our main office, various utility bills, and even excerpts from the Connecticut Secretary of State's Register & Manual (the "Blue Book") showing that SCWA is in fact an entity of the State. SCWA can be found on page 402 of the latest (2023) edition of the CT Blue Book (excerpt attached).

On September 13, 2024, our case manager sent us an email stating that he had enough information to submit a request to his superiors for a UEI#. On September 23rd we received an email requesting SCWA provide a “property assessment document from the city/county, a business license from the city/county, or a screenshot from the secretary of state website”. Since we do not own our office location, we could not provide a property assessment, and since we are not a private business, we do not have a business license, nor are we registered with the Secretary of State as a business.

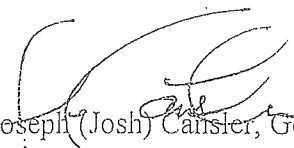
On September 24th I responded that SCWA has provided more than enough information to verify our existence, location, and mission. In that same email I requested a discussion regarding this issue with our case manager’s supervisor. We have not received any response in return.

Meanwhile the State Treasury and DPH have informed SCWA that we cannot receive the federal grant funding without a UEI#, and therefore cannot move forward with this interconnection project. Due process verifying our credentials is understandable to obtaining a UEI#, however the USFCR office is asking for information we don’t have, and they appear to be unwilling to accept or acknowledge that SCWA, though somewhat of an anomaly, is a real entity of the State serving the citizens of southeastern Connecticut. Unfortunately, their bureaucratic intolerance and inefficiency will ultimately impact the ability of SCWA to provide drinking water on a regular basis throughout the year to all the citizens of Montville, and the 2nd Connecticut U.S. Congressional District.

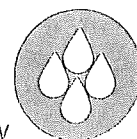
Any assistance your office can provide will be greatly appreciated. I can be reached at (860) 464-0232 or j.cansler@waterauthority.com if you would like more information or would like to discuss this issue further.

I can also make available members of SCWA’s governing Board, three of whom are former First Selectman or Mayors of Towns in southeastern Connecticut.

Respectfully:


Joseph (Josh) Cansler, General Manager
Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority

Enclosure: Excerpt, page 402 from the 2023 Connecticut State Register & Manual from Connecticut Secretary of State.



SOUTHEAST AREA TRANSIT DISTRICT (SEAT). Mailing Address: 21 Rte. 12, Preston 06365-8219. Website: www.seatbus.com. E-mail: information@seattransit.org. Tel., (860) 886-2631; FAX, (860) 886-6097. Chm., Ron McDaniel; Gen. Mgr., Michael Carroll.

VALLEY TRANSIT DISTRICT. Address: 41 Main St., Derby 06418-1932; Tel., (203) 735-6824; FAX, (203) 735-0277. Website: www.valleytransit.org. E-mail: mpandolfi@valleytransit.org. Chm., Mark A. Lauretti, Shelton; Vice Chm., Shelia O'Malley, Ansonia; Secy., Betsey Doane, Shelton; Treas., Mary McNelis, Seymour; Exec. Dir., Mark Pandolfi.

Participating municipalities and representatives: **ANSONIA**, John Marini. **DERBY**, Shirley Miani, Richard Schreiner. **SEYMOUR**, vacancy.

WINDHAM REGION TRANSIT DISTRICT. Address: 28 So. Frontage Rd., Mansfield 06250; Tel., (860) 456-2223; TDD, 1-800-833-8134; FAX, (860) 456-1235. Website: www.wrtd.org. E-mail: info@wrtd.org. Chm., Marjorie Roach, Coventry; Vice Chm., Rachel Vertefeuille Windham; Secy., vacancy; Treas., Thomas Currier, Mansfield; Admin., Linda Hapeman.

Participating municipalities and representatives: **ASHFORD**, vacancy. **COLUMBIA**, Thomas Currier. **COVENTRY**, Marjorie Roach. **MANSFIELD**, Will Bigl, Adam Richardson. **WINDHAM**, Chandler Rose, Rachel Vertefeuille.

REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITIES

SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY. Address: 90 Sargent Dr., New Haven 06511-5966; Tel., (203) 562-4020; FAX, (203) 624-6129. Website: www.rwater.com. E-mail: ask.info@rwater.com. Chm., David Borowy, Cheshire; Vice Chm., Kevin Curseaden, Milford; Secy./Treas., Catherine E. LaMarr, New Haven; Members, Suzanne Sack, Killingworth; Pres./CEO, Larry L. Bingaman.

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT WATER AUTHORITY. Address: 1649 Rte. 12, P.O. Box 415, Gales Ferry 06335-0415; Tel., (860) 464-0232; FAX, (860) 464-2876. Website: www.waterauthority.org. E-mail: SCWA@waterauthority.org. Chm., Edward C. Monahan; Vice Chm., Harry Watson; Treas., Paul B. Eccard; Members, Claudia Koerting, Alex Masse, Nicholas Mullane, vacancy; Gen. Mgr., Joseph C. Cansler.

ATTACHMENT 2



October 17, 2024

TO: Municipal Clerks of the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Region

FROM: Secretary, Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA)

SUBJECT: SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR 2025

1. Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Meetings:

Notice is hereby given that the regularly scheduled meetings of the Authority will be held at 5:15 PM on the following dates:

January 13	July 14
February 10	August 11
March 10	September 8
April 14	October 20
May 12	November 10
June 9	December 8

2. SCWA Representative Advisory Board (RAB) Meetings:

Regularly scheduled joint meetings of the SCWA Representative Advisory Board and the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority will be held at 7:00 PM on the following dates:

January 16	July 17
April 17	October 16

3. Location of Meetings: Authority meetings and Representative Advisory Board meetings are currently being held virtually per Public Act No. 22-3, which permanently established the requirements for virtual public meetings in Connecticut. The agenda for all meetings is posted at the SCWA office which is located at 1649 Route 12, Gales Ferry Commons, Gales Ferry, CT, and on the SCWA website [Home | scwa \(waterauthority.org\)](#)

4. All meetings are open to the public.

Josh Cansler
SCWA Secretary