

WATERFORD UTILITY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

DATE: March 14, 2023

PLACE: 1000 Hartford Turnpike

PRESIDING: Chairman Ken Kirkman

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ray Valentini, Thomas Dembek, and Steve Negri

ALSO PRESENT: J. Robert Tuneski, Board of Finance Liaison
Attorney Nicholas Kepple, Town Attorney

Staff: James A. Bartelli, Director of Utilities
Jill Stevens, Assistant Director

Chairman Ken Kirkman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

CITIZEN SESSION

None

SECRETARY'S REPORT

MOTION Made by Mr. Valentini to approve the Minutes of the February 21, 2023 meeting, Mr. Negri seconded.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

BILLING ADJUSTMENTS

The Commission reviewed the February adjustments. Water Assessment adjustment was explained. The adjustment report will be kept in the office for review.

EXPENDITURES

MOTION Made by Mr. Negri to approve the March 2023 bill list, Mr. Dembek seconded.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

- FINANCIALS – WW FUND REVENUES/EXPENDITURES REPORT

Reports were reviewed and discussed.

- Director’s Report-Mr. Bartelli reviewed his report that provides updated information on all Utility Commission Capital projects that are currently funded and the status of each project.

Mr. Bartelli provided more information regarding the reversed pitch sewer lateral line at 908 Harford Tpk. We are awaiting costs estimates for providing a new lateral service.

Mr. Bartelli informed the Commission that the new Fire Alarm System for the Utility Maintenance Building is installed and operational

- The Collection Report was reviewed and Attorney Kepple reported that there was a few Town’s Foreclosures going on currently. He also reported that one property did go through foreclosure but there wasn’t enough funds from the sale to cover the Town’s debts. The Utility Commission was informed that we will need to write off \$17, 556.85 as Bad Debt Expense for account #06-0003129 . A letter from Town Counsel indicating such will be forthcoming.

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The Office Coordinator reported that out of the 644 intent to lien notices there were only 399 that were lien. The number of liens processed continue to decrease every year.

- Utility Billing Software Billing Logistics
The Office Coordinator gave an update on the progress of the software conversion.

- Contract #1 Sewer Interceptor Access update

Mr. Bartelli gave an update on the meetings he attended on this matter.

- On-Call Engineering Services RFQ submission

Eleven RFQs were received. Mr. Bartelli and staff are currently reviewing the submissions. A recommendation to the Commission is anticipated by March 31, 2023..

Mr. Bartelli entertained a Special Meeting be called prior to the regular meeting to act on the staff’s recommendation this instead of waiting for the regular next meeting. He would like to start moving this project along.

- Secondary Water Meter Policy #3015 revision

The Office Coordinator reviewed the proposed policy for a once a year rebate on Secondary Meters. There was discussion and Commission requested that we updated our application for future installations that indicate that a radio read type meter be installed. The Commission requested that our customers be fully informed of this revision. The Staff will post the new Policy on the Commission's web page and send notices to current Secondary Water Meter customers informing them of the revised Policy.

MOTION made by Mr. Negri to accept the new policy #3015 for a once a year rebate on Secondary meters as presented to the Commission, Seconded by Mr. Valentini.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- Water Service Replacement/Paving Cooperative Project Special Funding Request

Mr. Bartelli represented that this project entails the replacement of plastic water services prior to DPW paving the roadway. The plastic pipes have exceeded their useful life and are prone to failure. A special funding request of \$550, 000.00 has been submitted to the Town.

MOTION made by Mr. Dembek to ratify Mr. Bartelli's request of the funds for the Plastic Water Service Line, Seconded by Mr. Negri.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

- WATER-NLWWPCA/ REPORT

Mr. Bartelli updated the Commission regarding recent conversations and a meeting he had with New London's Director regarding the following items: Unaccounted for water, Illegal water service connections found in Waterford, Fire Hydrant color coding bands to identify static pressure, Metered Water filling Stations for municipal apparatus at Fire Stations, Recording and Reporting water use by Fire apparatus at fire calls, Secondary water meter reading by the City logistics, Plastic water service replacements both proactive and reactive replacements, Data sharing for Utility Billing software and Wastewater Flow Metering. Mr. Bartelli indicated that the meeting was very beneficial and anticipates future cooperative meetings.

The Veolia Report was not available at the time of meeting. Commission will receive e-mail of the report when it becomes available.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Former Owner of Account 06-0001434 requested an adjustment and a refund for a water leak that did not enter our sewer system. The Commission previously requested more information which was provided in this meeting that justified the water in fact did not enter our system.

MOTION made by Mr. Negri to adjust and refund the former owner that incurred the cost of the sewer bill before selling the property, Seconded by Mr. Dembek.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

PLANS REVIEW

None

PERSONNEL

Mr. Bartelli reported that the department is fully staffed.

OTHER

- Caroline Ct land acquisition and required survey. Mr. Bartelli updated the Commission on this situation. A cost to survey the paved portion of the roadway has been submitted by our on-call engineer.

MOTION made by Mr. Dembek for the Utility Commission, through its Enterprise Fund, provide for the cost of survey in the amount of \$5000 for a survey to be conducted on Caroline CT for the purpose of roadway and sewer main acquisition. Seconded by Mr. Negri.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

- Pat Kelley from East Lyme Shell Commission provided Mr. Bartelli with an educational flyer on different pollutants, predominantly nitrogen in the bay that most likely is a result of over fertilizing lawns. Mr. Bartelli showed the Commission the Flyer and requested permission to post the flyer on the Utility Commission Town Web Page.
- Broadband/Security Upgrades at Pump Stations ARPA Funding Amount: \$680,322

Mr. Bartelli discussed the pros and cons of bringing Broadband services to all of the pump stations and expressed concerns with the recurring costs and substantial installation costs. Mr. Bartelli stated that there are other means of enhancing connectivity and communications other than installing broadband and does not see a positive return on investment. Mr. Bartelli explained the success of the cell booster pilot program and how it greatly enhanced connectivity and communications within our pump stations for far less installation costs and no recurring costs. Mr. Bartelli stated that there is a current ARPA

allocation in the amount of \$680,322 for Broadband/Security Upgrades at Pump Stations and entertained that the Commission return the allocation to the Town and request a separate appropriation \$100,000 for the installation of additional cell boosters at the pump stations.

MOTION made by Mr. Negri to authorize the Director to return the funds and request a separate appropriation of \$100,000.00 for the installation of cell boosters.

 Seconded by Mr. Valentini.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

MOTION made by Mr. Valentini to adjourn. Mr. Dembek seconded.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy L. Windle
Recording Secretary