



Chairman
Ed Lynch

TOWN OF LEDYARD

Water Pollution Control Authority

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

6:30 PM

Council Chambers - Hybrid

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lynch called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Board Member Monir Tewfik
Board Member Terry Jones
Board Member Stanley Juber
Board Member Edmond Lynch
Alternate Member Tony Capon
Excused Board Member Sharon Wadecki
Alternate Member Jeremy Norris
Non-voting Alternate Member James A. Ball

Also in attendance:

Naomi Rodriguez, Town Councilor

Mauricio Duarte, GU General Foreman Water Operations.

Tina Daniels, Groton Utilities Customer Service General Manager.

Mark Beauchamp, President of Utility Financial Solutions, LLC.

III. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Tony Capon was appointed as a voting member for Sharon Wadecki.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

Kevin Blacker, 11 Church Street, Noank. Mr. Blacker said he pays personal property tax in Ledyard for farming that he conducts. He spoke about the Cashman application, specifically he said that Cashman is looking to build good will. Cashman offered a \$20,000.00 donation to New London County Farm Bureau to support the production of aggregate from boulders as a by-product of crop land clearing. Mr. Blacker agreed that a meter should be installed on Route 12 and added that if handled properly Cashman may be convinced to pay for the installation of the meter. Mr. Blacker supported the idea of a bond to protect the water infrastructure. He suggested putting teamwork on the WPCA radar. He said the Plan of Conservation and

Development references the lack of sewer service on the Route 12 area. The lack of sewer service coupled with the need to make use of the industrial wastewater site at Dow could be a strong feature to both encourage development and treat wastewater. Mr. Blacker said similarly on the teamwork scale with Groton Utilities there should be some profit sharing because Cashman is a major water customer (approximately over a million gallons a day). He thinks that GU could also benefit from a water and/or electrical infrastructure. Lastly, he wanted to mention that the Loftus family specifically Julie and Robert have expressed interest in putting the well to use since it could be a very strong asset for the farm, strengthening the likelihood of remaining in agriculture by using the building for hay storage.

Chairman Lynch replied to Mr. Blacker's comments. As for the wastewater treatment facility, the WPCA has brought up the possibility of using it for Gales Ferry. He added that Dow didn't use the water, it was there for emergency use only.

Mike Cherry, who services the Town's Representative to the Resident's Advisory Board for Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority was present at 6:39 p.m. because he had a question on service areas. Mr. Cherry presented a drawing and asked if he wanted to build more homes on Blue Bird Drive and Hyde Park Drive what service company would be used for water? Chairman Lynch said there are two questions, who's service area it is and are hydrants required? He added that Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority can't provide hydrants. Chairman Lynch said he would find out the answers to the questions.

ACTION ITEM: Find out which company services water for Blue Bird Drive and Hyde Park Drive in Gales Ferry and if hydrants are required.

VI. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to APPROVE Regular Meeting Minutes from December 19, 2023, as written.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Edmond Lynch

SECONDER: Stanley Juber

AYE 5 Tewfik Jones Juber Lynch Capon

EXCUSED 2 Wadecki Norris

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

1. Operations Report.

Chairman Lynch mentioned that he will be meeting with Groton Utilities on January 24, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. regarding lead remediation in the Ledyard WPCA distribution system.

Water sampling and testing was completed in accordance with DPH requirements. All results were within normal limits. A required 4th quarter 2023 OEL report for THMs in Ledyard Center was submitted. If results are satisfactory in January, a 1st quarter 2024 report will not be required. A water test for a third customer showed lead levels just below the maximum

allowable level.

There was a discussion of excessive water use on Rosemary Court. Chairman Lynch asked if there were prior water issues with Rosemarie Court. Mauricio Duarte, GU General Foreman Water Operations answered yes but with the house across the street (number 1, this house is number 2). Chairman Lynch asked how much water was leaked, Tina Daniels, Groton Utilities Customer Service General Manager answered about 50,000 gallons. Once GU discovered where the leak was, they notified the homeowner who chose to shut off the water until the leak was repaired. The homeowner had it repaired a few days later and is now back to normal water usage.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

2. Service Correspondence.

Chairman Lynch noted that letters were sent by GU to two customers whose water tested high for lead. The letters outlined the procedures the customers should use to collect new water samples for testing. The new samples should be taken after aerator screens from the end of the (sample) faucet are removed, cleaned, rinsed and reinstalled. Next, investigative samples will be taken using four small (250mL) bottles collected one right after the other.

Mr. Lynch will be meeting with Groton Utilities on January 24, 2024, to discuss lead service inventories which are required by DPH and due in October 2024.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

3. Aged Reports/Finance.

There was nothing remarkable about the aged report. Month to month variations were normal.

4. Year to Date Water/Sewer Report.

There was nothing remarkable about either report.

5. PSR - Steve Banks.

The waste treatment plant is using 300,000-400,000 gallons per day, not the 150,000 gallons it is rated for. The WPCA needs to investigate.

Float/ PLC issue at headworks. Waiting for DB Electric to install new float and new Teeco PLC.

Steve Banks, WPCA Supervisor requested that a Portable trailer mounted 175 kW generator \$35,000, design/installation on Rotary Drum Thickener panel \$30,000, and HACH DR 3900 spectrophotometer \$6900.00 are ordered if there are any ARPA funds remaining.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Review of Trail/Sewer line bids continued.

2. Discussion on Gales Ferry Intermodal, Inc, 1761 Route 12, Gales Ferry, CT continued. Application has been pulled from consideration.

Tony Capon, who is chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, recused himself, was absent during the discussion and was not informed of the results of the discussion.

Chairman Lynch said at the very minimum a leak test before blasting needs to be completed to create a baseline. He added that a geologist should decide the size of radius to be tested. Mr. Cherry commented that the hydro-geological report that was submitted for the Baldwin Hill blasting stated that once past 900 feet there is no effect on a well.

Discussion was had between the WPCA and GU concerning the proposed blasting by Cashman at the former Dow Chemical plant property and the impact the blasting might have on the present water main and service. As a third party interested in protecting Ledyard's investment in the water system, the following four conditions need to be met:

1. Blasting specialist expertise needed: Both the WPCA and GU do not have on staff a specialist to determine what impact, if any, blasting near underground pipe may have, particularly when the route 12 16-inch iron ductile main is only 50 feet away. The commissioners and GU would like to request that an expert in blasting near underground utilities be employed to outline the risks and precautions that need to be taken to minimize blasting damage risks.
2. Before any blasting takes place, that we conduct a leak test, at Cashman's expense, on the main 16-inch line on route 12 extended from the center point of the blasting activity to at least ½ mile in either direction. In addition to route 12, the line under the road in the south of the blasting area (Chapman St) including all service lines for each resident on that road also be leak tested.
3. That blasting vibration instrumentation be deployed, at Cashman's expense (based on the above expert's suggestion) covering the route 12, 16-inch main before and during blasting activity.
4. Because the state of Connecticut requires the local water service authority (that is the WPCA) to bring water to residents that have failed wells, that Cashman - at their expense, provide the cost to deploy water service (called water main extensions) to the resident that has a failed well if all parties agree it was due to blasting - up to the meter pit which is on the resident's property line.

In addition, a question of bonding and or insurance be posted in the event of a failure to any of the water services as outlined above has been raised. As we are not familiar to the mechanism for such insurance, we will leave this up to Planning and Zoning for further discussion.

Members of the WPCA viewed a map that Mauricio Duarte, GU General Foreman Water Operations provided of the blasting area and service areas including a mile radius from the project midway.

RESULT: DISCUSSED**3. Any Other Old Business to come before the Authority.**

It was brought to Chairman Lynch's attention that the Gales Ferry Fire Department water usage went from 4,500 gallons a month to 125,000 gallons a month because their classification changed from residential to commercial usage. Chairman Lynch asked Ms. Daniels why it was changed? Ms. Daniels answered that GF Fire was set up in the beginning as a residential customer but it should have been classified as a commercial customer all along. This misclassification along with 3-4 others was discovered while dissecting properties for the cost-of-service study. Ms. Daniels explained that the classifications are either "residential", "commercial" and a less often used classification of "usage". For the usage classification the billing is only for actual water usage not a monthly rate, for instance ball field concessions, fairgrounds etc. She added that the WPCA could change the classification for the Fire House to residential but technically a residential classification is just for dwellings where people live. Mr. Jones asked what the decision is for the GF Fire House classification, Chairman Lynch said it can't be answered until the rate study is complete. Mr. Jones pointed out that the GF Fire House also rents out the facility which would not be residential. Mr. Juber asked what the difference in cost would be for GF Fire. Ms. Daniels said she would find out.

Financial projection and cost of service study presentation:

Mark Beauchamp, President of Utility Financial Solutions, LLC and Jillian Jurczyk, Rates Manager Utility Financial Solutions, LLC were present.

Mr. Beauchamp presented a financial projection and cost of service study. He said that UFS does cost of studies and financial planning for municipalities in 44 states. For the Town of Ledyard, USI completed a preliminary draft with a long-term financial projection.

Before Mr. Beauchamp started the Powerpoint presentation he made a couple of observations:

- Most utility companies do not operate by classifications of either residential or commercial but rather classifications by meter size.
- The WPCA's amount of water purchased vs. the amount of water billed leaves a 37% difference which equates to a 37% loss.
- The water meters are not recording the proper consumption. The average water meter has a life of 15 - 20 years, the average life of the water meter inventory is 18 years. It is not unusual to see a 30-40% loss when a meter is old. Chairman Lynch added that the WPCA performs a significant amount of line flushing which equates to a pure loss of water.

USI provided an assumption table for FY 24-29 and projections without rate adjustments. Mr. Beauchamp pointed out that the WPCA needs to increase rates since without rate adjustments the WPCA is not breaking even. He provided three scenarios of rate tracks:

- Breakeven rate track / one year - the customer rate impact is \$43.29 per month.
- Breakeven rate track / two years - the customer rate impact is \$21.64 per month for year one and \$25.97 per month for year two.
- Breakeven rate track / three years - the customer rate impact is \$14.29 per month for year one, \$17.85 per month for year two and \$21.87 per month for year three.

Mr. Beauchamp stressed the importance of a fixed customer charge which recovers the cost for connection at zero consumption.

A new rate structure will create winners and losers for customers. Mr. Beauchamp said the proper step would be completing rate adjustments then dealing with the rate structure. It was asked if changing classifications to meter size would affect only businesses or residential properties as well. It was explained that usually residential customers have either a 5/8" or a 1" meter and the difference in fixed cost would be about 50%. Ms. Daniels said that 99% of the residential properties have a 5/8" meter, there are very few 1" meters. She added that apartment complexes are mass metered at 5/8". Mr. Beauchamp said that classification is probably not correct and for an apartment, it should not matter what happens behind the meter, only the size of the meter.

Chairman Lynch suggested that Mr. Beauchamp shares the presentation with the Finance department, he will mention it Ian Stammel Assistant Finance Director.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Election of Officers:
Chairman.
Vice-Chairman.
Secretary.

Reappointment requests.

Motion to REELECT Ed Lynch as Chairman, Sharon Wadecki as Vice-Chairman and Tony Capon as Secretary.

Tony Capon suggested staggering the reappointments since all five appointments expire at the same time. He will ask Roxanne Mayer, Administrative Assistant to Town Council about this.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Terry Jones

SECONDER: Stanley Juber

AYE 5 Tewfik Jones Juber Lynch Capon

EXCUSED 2 Wadecki Norris

2. Motion to APPROVE payment to Groton Utilities for invoice # 23770, dated November 30, 2023, in the amount of \$1,101.24, for lead service labor through November 19, 2023.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Edmond Lynch

SECONDER: Stanley Juber

AYE 5 Tewfik Jones Juber Lynch Capon

EXCUSED 2 Wadecki Norris

3. Motion to APPROVE payment to Groton Utilities for invoice #23791, dated December 29, 2023, in the amount of \$437.76, for lead services labor through December 17, 2023.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Edmond Lynch

SECONDER: Stanley Juber

AYE 5 Tewfik Jones Juber Lynch Capon

EXCUSED 2 Wadecki Norris

4. FY 2024-2025 Budget.

*Tabled from the January 23, 2024 meeting.

Chairman Lynch said that Ian Stammel Assistant Finance Director was unable to attend the meeting and suggested tabling this agenda item until the February 27, 2024, meeting. He added that there will be increases which are highlighted on the budget worksheets in yellow.

RESULT: TABLED

5. Any Other New Business to come before the Authority.

None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to ADJOURN the Regular Meeting at 9:15 p.m.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Edmond Lynch

SECONDER: Stanley Juber

AYE 5 Tewfik Jones Juber Lynch Capon

EXCUSED 2 Wadecki Norris

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.