TOWN OF TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 21, 2011

Members Present: John Konrad, Chair
Todd Rolland, Vice Chair
Jim Williams, Secretary (arrived 7:10pm)
Perne Maynard
Matthew Rood, Alternate

Members Absent: Bruce Allen
Michael Longenbaker, Alternate

Others Present: Jennifer Usher, PE, Town Engineer & Public Works Administrator
Jason Hofmann, The Water Planet Company

1. Call to Order: John Konrad, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:08pm in Council Chambers. He seated Matt Rood for Bruce Allen.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Proposed Sanitary Sewer Connection.

   A. 62 & 70 Merrow Road – Jennifer Usher said she got a call from the would-be consultant for the owner of the property saying that the owner is pulling back right now on his plans. This will be taken off the agenda for now.

   B. United Congregational Church – Jennifer Usher said the church is within the Sewer Service Area and is presently experiencing some problems with their septic fields. They have inquired about the possibility of connecting to the sewer as they are aware the town will be getting into that construction shortly. If they did connect, the town would require they come in from a separate lateral. Right now the church is considering its options. They could expand their septic field. Presently they have contracted with Gardner and Peterson to do some preliminary studies and prepare cost estimates.

   John Konrad said he is a trustee of the church so is unsure about what role he can play in any discussion about this. Jennifer Usher said the WPCA would not need to vote on this matter. He said the church wants to get a handle on what fees they might incur if they do connect to the sewer. She said the new fee structure would involve an assessment fee and then a connection fee. They will be eliminating the additional benefit assessment fee. She reiterated that the original assessment pays for a project, connection fees pay for capital improvements, and user fees pay for operation and maintenance costs.

4. Operator's Report – Jason Hofmann, The Water Planet Company – Jason Hofmann distributed Report #39. He said everything has been going well at the pump stations. He said Ivonne Hall from the Department of Environmental Protection attended the June 15

inspection of the Old Post Road pump station with him. At that time, they took a sample which was sent to Phoenix Laboratories in Manchester. The sample contained very little hydrogen sulfide so the odor problem is not due to a lack of Bioxide in the system. They also sealed the last two manhole covers with silicone at the top of Old Post Road. Jason Hofmann said Ivonne Hall asked Roger Lentocha to keep a log of the dates and times he detects odor problems in his area.

Jason Hofmann noted also that he was unable to open the manhole that they sealed with silicone about five months ago. He said he told Ivonne Hall that he anticipates there will be problems if they continue to open and close manholes with fitted covers repeatedly, and would expect they would end up having to hammer out the rings. He suggests they stop doing this. He said odor problems at Old Post Road are not prevalent right now, but that if they persist, the next step will be to do a smoke test. That will help determine if any households have cracked vents. Jennifer Usher said she has not heard any complaints from Roger Lentocha recently.

5. Gerber Pump Station Upgrades – Status Update - Jason Hofmann said he spoke to Dave at United Concrete. They have a lull in their work load and are expecting the town will be sending them a purchase order shortly, after which they will pour the lid and install it at the Gerber Road pump station. Jennifer Usher said that after United Concrete is done with their work, she will need to get with Jason Hofmann to plan getting the bollards installed. The town will be doing the work. Jason Hofmann confirmed that the town would be hand digging the installation.

   Jason Hofmann said Ivonne Hall inquired about how much the town is spending annually on Bioxide. He was uncertain as he does not receive the invoices. Jennifer Usher said they have spent about $11,000 in the fiscal year to date and that they just received another $1,000 bill. She said they only budgeted $7,500 for the year but that was because one of the pumps was broken. She said they will need to budget more for the coming year.

   John Konrad asked Jason Hofmann if he had anything to report about Water Planet doing meter readings. Jason Hofmann said he spoke to Grant Weaver and they can be flexible to do the readings however the Board wants. They just need to get the details, such as how many customers.

6. Staff Report – Jennifer Usher, PE, Town Engineer & Public Works Administrator

   A. Regulation Revisions – Status Update – The Board reviewed the various handouts and reviewed the reformatting. They discussed the requirement for Exemptions for Connection Charges on page 4 of document 6A6. At the workshop the Board had considered removing language that said a customer's septic would have to be failing and irreparable according to current CT Department of Public Health codes in order to qualify for the exemption. There was concern that some people who don't have a hardship might take advantage of the exemption allowance simply because they don't want to be bothered with maintaining their septic system anymore. After some discussion, they agreed to add back this language. Jennifer Usher said she will revise the document and send it on to Attorney Rick Conti for a final review.

Jennifer Usher also noted that document 6A5, the fee schedule, is not part of the proposed regulations, but that the fee schedule will be referred to in the regulations. The Board discussed whether they could cover both FOG regulations and the budget discussion in one workshop in July. They agreed this might be challenging and will focus on the FOG ordinance in July, fitting the budget discussion in at the end if there is time, and, if not, discussing the budget in August. Jennifer Usher said she would like to double check with Steve Werbner on this as the WPCA is schedule to present its budget to the Town Council in August. She said she would like both the WPCA and Water Commission to present to the Town Council at the same time as they are both utilities.

B. Grease Interceptor Inspections – Status Update – Todd Rolland reported on the inspections at the Big Y and Tolland Pizza. He said Tolland Pizza's interceptor was dirty but not in terrible shape, and they may simply need to increase the frequency of their pump outs. Jennifer Usher said the Big Y interceptor was in similar shape, but they were likely due for a pump out. She said the owner of Meetinghouse Commons was in her office and said Skips Septic was going to be doing a pump out shortly. The Board discussed the possibility of going out and observing the pump out at Meetinghouse Commons when Skips Septic is there to see exactly what is being done or to have someone from Skips Septic discuss with them the details of the pump out.

C. Staffing Update – Jennifer Usher said she met with Attorney Rick Conti about a contract position for a utility engineering assistant. She said the Town Council discussed this a week ago at their meeting and a Town Council member had some concerns. A labor attorney is being brought in to prepare an employment contract. The position would be for up to 24 hours a week. Board members expressed some concerns about the delay in hiring. Jennifer Usher suggested if members had any questions to attend a Town Council meeting.

D. Route 195 Sanitary Sewer Extension Project – Status Update – Jennifer Usher said the project is about 99 percent complete. The paving is done. She will follow up with Kurt Mailman at Fuss & O'Neill to get a punch list going with the contractor.

E. Sewer Service Area – 15 Old Post Road – Jennifer Usher recapped previous discussions about 15 Old Post Road. Originally the town had agreed that if they purchased a portion of the land at 15 Old Post Road for a HUD elderly housing project that the entire piece of land, including the portion they did not purchase, would be made a part of the Sewer Service Area. Unfortunately, the town did not get the funding for the project, so it is now off the table.

   Todd Rolland said that this means 15 Old Post Road is now not part of the Sewer Service Area.

   Jennifer Usher said the town is not abandoning doing an elderly housing project, but it will not be at that site.

7. WPCA Financial Update

   A. YTD Report – The Board reviewed the report. Jennifer Usher noted that the bill for Water Planet to do the work putting in a new vent at the high school is not showing up on the report. She said she signed off on it, and it is about $1,200. She also noted that the WPCA appears to be doing fairly well at this time. She said the third quarter billing is not showing on the report yet, but the bills will be going out this week.

      John Konrad said he found some of the gallonage usage numbers surprising, pointing out that from October 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010, the Star Hill Athletic Center was only charged for 2,000 gallons of water. He pointed out unusual numbers for other locations such as Sleepy's, and Prism Home Accents. The Board agreed to watch the numbers on the next report to see how they compare.

      Jim Williams said he and Jennifer Usher met with Laura Schwabe in Accounting to learn how the numbers are reported. He said bills come in from Vernon with gallonage usage and Laura moves them into an Excel spread sheet. She saves a hard copy of the previous report, then uses the current report to update the new month. Jim Williams said there is some redundancy in the process that could contain human errors. He said they need to start receiving an electronic and hard copy of the raw data each month, so they can save an electronic copy of previous months for comparisons.

      The Board discussed that they do pay $5,500 to the town for accounting services so they should establish procedures about what they would like to receive. If they can receive electronic monthly reports, they can better keep an eye on where they are getting fluctuations in gallonage. It will also prove useful for future Boards. Jim Williams said the next step might be to talk to Vernon about getting information electronically. He said he will format the report he received and send Board members the quarterly usage information.

   B. 2011-2012 Budget and Associated User Rate Adjustment – The Commission reviewed the report which is a sum total of the bigger WPCA fund budget. Jennifer Usher walked through the real numbers in the report and the process for which projected numbers were extrapolated out.

      The Board also discussed whether they should shift the clerical billing work from the town to the utility assistant to be hired and adding the $5,500 they currently pay the town to the assistant's contract. They agreed that for now, they will not do this as they need to determine where the assistant could best be utilized.

8. WPCA Workshop – June 23, 2011 – Jennifer Usher asked if everyone had seen the Powerpoint email from Bruce Allen with the talking points to discuss with the Department of Environmental Protection at their upcoming meeting. She said she would simplify this to a single page Word document if they'd like. The Board discussed some of the items on the list and what they might be looking for from the DEP.

9. Other WPCA Business – Status Review and Updates – The Board reviewed the list. John Konrad noted that some months back they had discussed the possibility of holding neighborhood meetings as part of their public outreach plan. He said it might be good to invite members of the various neighborhoods in town to a meeting. Jennifer Usher said they might also like to ask Jody Schmidt from the Eastern Highlands Health District to attend one of these meetings to provide information as the Board's purview is not just about sewers, but about protecting the quality of the waters. Perne Maynard said he finds people don't often come to these things, and suggested a better route might be to start a blog on the Patch website.

   Jennifer Usher also noted that they need to rename Item F as "Potential Pump Out Regulation" rather than as an "Ordinance."

10. Approval of Minutes

    A. Approve minutes of May 12, 2011 Workshop: Jim Williams/Todd Rolland motion to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2011 Workshop. Jim Williams, Todd Rolland, and John Konrad voted to approve the minutes. Perne Maynard and Matt Rood abstained. Motion passed.

    B. Approve minutes of May 17, 2011 Regular Meeting. Jim Williams/Todd Rolland motion to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2011 Regular Meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.

11. Adjournment – Jim Williams/Perne Maynard motion to adjourn the meeting and pay the clerk at 8:05pm. Motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Gentile
Clerk