

**TOLLAND WATER COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**February 11th, 2008
HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
Conference Room A
7:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Stewart Joslin, Chairperson, Rene Wagner, Andy Neto, Eugene Koss, Glenn MacDonald (arrived 7:12pm), Dick Symonds, and William Pakulis (arrived 7:21pm)

Others present: Dave Smith, Terry O'Neill and Jack Keefe from Connecticut Water Company, William Preuss and Steve Amedy were also present.

Not in attendance: N/A

Call to order: Chairman, Stewart Joslin, called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm

1. Approve minutes for last meetings:

- **Regular meeting of 1/14/2009** - Andy Neto motioned to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of January 14th, 2009, seconded by Rene Wagner. **Discussion:** Dick Symonds noted that there were spelling errors on opposed as well as commingling. He also stated his name had been left off of the “members present” list, and since he is a member, he wants his name listed. Sarah Bollinger apologized and said it was an oversight. Dick Symonds also stated that he did not like the format of the minutes and that they were too long which can get them into trouble. He also commented that he didn't like the format of the New Agenda items. Dick Symonds also took issue with a reference to the time in the minutes, and did not think it should be there. After some discussion, Sarah Bollinger suggested that the new agenda items be added to the end of the meeting instead of bringing it up in the beginning, and then discussing the items at the end of the meeting for a second time. She also commented that it was discussed several times last year what format the commission members would like for the minutes since each Commission has their own preferences. At that time, the commission had agreed they were happy with the style and format they had been receiving from Sarah Bollinger with more detail on it. However, if the members were all in agreement, she would gladly shorten them going forward, as Dick Symonds requested. She stated this was the first time she knew of any concerns of the minutes being too long. Dick Symonds then stated he has had an issue with them for some time, but this was the first he commented on it. Stewart Joslin said summarizing “a little bit” would be ok. Dick Symonds also stated he didn't agree with the wording in another section of the minutes, however, after further discussions with the members, they agreed not to change it. All were in favor to accept the minutes with the changes noted.
- **Special meeting of February 4th, 2008** Dick Symonds motion to approve the minutes from the Special meeting of Feb. 4th, seconded by Rene Wagner. Glen abstained, 6 were in favor, none were opposed.

2. New agenda items. Dick Symonds brought up four items he would like to discuss at the end of the meeting. They are as follows:

- Amendment to the admin procedures
- Staffing
- Ct. Water Bill issues
- Fire Hydrant billing

3. Ct. Water Co. with new proposal.

Stewart Joslin commented that he wanted the Commission members to hear the new revised proposal from CT Water Co. so he invited them here tonight to give a presentation.

Terry O'Neill presented a new Regional Water Main proposal to the Commission. With this new proposal, there would be no mixing or commingling of the water. They would like to install it as a regional water main where they would maintain the pipe but the customers would be Tolland's. This would be similar to Hazardville Water Co. It is called a regional pipe line. This would result in a revenue neutral situation where Ct Water Co would make an annual payment equal to the amount the Town of Tolland currently receives from the customers being affected. Stewart Joslin clarified who would be reading the meters and it would be CT Water as long as they had the contract with Tolland. They would take on the operation and maintenance of the line as well. Glenn asked about a backup system and how this new proposal would help Tolland. Terry O'Neill said it would be an emergency backup system for the Town and they could provide water to the entire town with this in place if needed. Glenn asked what the negative was in this proposal for Tolland and Stewart Joslin said none. Also, there would be no CT Water customers in Tolland. It was agreed they would have to notify the customers that they would be getting water from CT Water although they would be billed at TWC rates and that it would contain fluoride which they did not previously have. There was more discussion and clarification on how the billing would occur and how the line would be maintained so that this new section would be revenue neutral to the Town. Stewart Joslin stated that they would discuss this in further detail. Dave Smith asked how they would treat the fire hydrants and he said that they would implement it the same as they have now at Tolland's rates. Stewart Joslin asked the members to give a consensus at this time to Ct Water although much detail would still need to be worked out. Eugene Koss said he was in favor of this concept. Stewart Joslin said they would probably need another workshop on some of the details and get back to them. Terry O'Neill reviewed the benefits of this system, including emergency water for Tolland and UCONN and leaving the customers with Tolland, and is a great regional solution. Rene Wagner said he is also in favor of this.

Dick Symonds made a motion that the Commission is in favor of exploring the new proposal from CT Water to utilize the existing 195 pipeline for a regional water main. Rene Wagner seconded. All were in favor. Once the commission meets again, they will be in contact with CT Water.

Terry O'Neill asked if they wanted to discuss the billing issues at this time. Dick Symonds commented on the incorrect envelopes being used for the billing, which had been corrected

previously, and suddenly were wrong again. Terry O'Neill will follow up on this issue. Dick Symonds also commented on the charges from CT Water to Crystal Springs and if they were supposed to be the same as is being charged to Tolland. Terry O'Neill will check into this.

- 4. Steve Amedy Re: Capital Improvements and reserve for replacement.** Steve Amedy asked about the presentation and if it would prohibit TWC from expanding their lines south of the proposed regional line. There was some discussion on what the intent was and what options they might have for future expansion.

Steve Amedy handed out some spreadsheets which total up the work done on the Crystal Springs water system from day one. They started with Birmingham and changed to Ct Water. They also provided backup invoices for all of the charges in question on the system. They typically get billed quarterly. TWC holds 35% of the revenue which totals \$9810.22 plus interest. Rene Wagner had commented that he found the invoice where it referred to damage that had been done by lightening which was brought up at the last meeting. Rene Wagner also asked who the companies were that provided the pumps as the brand names were not mentioned on the invoices. Steve Amedy didn't know but invited him to go look at them. Steve Amedy said they thought they were mirroring the system in the Town's pump house as it was supposed to make it easier for repairs, etc. Dave Smith agreed they had wanted some standardization in the systems, although there are some differences. Birmingham designed and built this system. Steve Amedy was concerned why the system was supposed to be the best and yet there were so many repair and replacements on it. Dave Smith also suggested that they might want to speak to the people at Ct Water that are doing the work. Glenn clarified that Steve Amedy would like some of the set aside funds reimbursed for the replacement of the equipment that has failed to date. They have paid roughly \$16k for the repairs to date, some of which are rightfully their responsibility, but the replacement equipment should be reimbursed from this fund. They reviewed the invoices for the replacement equipment. Eugene Koss said that he feels they are not charging enough for the water if the amount being reserved will not cover the ongoing replacement costs. Dave Smith suggested that they go through the problematic areas so they can determine if they will be ongoing and what the reserve funds actually need to be to cover them. Steve Amedy stated that an Engineer designed the system, it was approved by the state and installed and contracted out and built by Birmingham and they should have installed the correct system to begin with as one of the invoices was to change a pump from single phase to three phase which the commission felt was wrong to begin with. Steve Amedy also commented that he didn't think the fees were that far off since they still have 20 new houses going up which will be added to the system. There was more discussion on what items had broken on the system and why it may have happened. Glenn asked what the life cycle would be on a system that costs \$400k and Andy Neto said 5 to 8 years in general, although the well could be 25 or 30 years and the pumps would be at least 10 years. Stewart Joslin said the 35% figure came from the depreciation of the system and it was not compiled based on actual costs of replacement parts. Bill Preuss stated that they chose Birmingham because the Town was using them and they wanted to do what the Town was doing to mimic their system and Birmingham was involved with the original design and they also did \$100k in upgrades. Steve Amedy also pointed out that there is no pattern of items that have broken but different items each time. He felt the matrix and invoices should help them see the problem areas and would like to know if they would consider reimbursement of the costs. William Pakulis asked if they could get Stuart here from CT Water to discuss the problems. Andy Neto did

not feel we should spend any of the funds since it was accrued to pay for fixing items once they take over the system. Glenn stated he felt that we were sitting on money that was not ours. Andy Neto felt that we need to accrue it for problems going forward. Glenn said if we are going to be held accountable we need to sign off on the invoices and Dave Smith said he already does. Andy Neto was concerned if the houses don't all sell for 10 years then we take over a system at the end of its life, or we may never take it over if they don't sell. Steve Amedy said that they have already paid the bills, and will continue to pay the bills, but that they feel some of the major expenses should be reimbursed and they need to come to an agreement that is acceptable to both parties. Glenn agreed we should move forward with reviewing the items, however, if they choose not to purchase insurance for lightening strikes that is a risk they take and they can't expect the reserve to pay for it. Bill Preuss said the builders risk deductible is \$25k so it would not matter if they submitted a bill for this small amount. There was some discussion about the billing fees from CT Water. Dave Smith said he would arrange to have the contact from Ct water come to the next meeting and will provide the invoices in question to them in advance. Bill Preuss said he will not be able to attend on Ash Wed. due to Lent. March 11th is the next meeting. There was some discussion about the major costs totaling just over \$12k and if they were to ask for ½ this amount it would be roughly \$6200. They had put in \$9800 up to Sept. plus interest. Steve Amedy did note that they have not had that many major repairs in the past year while Glenn felt we should consider increasing the 35%. Eugene Koss felt they should leave the 35% as is and monitor the expenses going forward. Andy Neto felt that if it's a bad design they will always have problems and didn't feel they should spend the money now when they are going to need it going forward. Steve Amedy also commented that they could argue that the Town does not have the right to withhold the reserves anyway as it is not in the contract – but was agreed to after the fact. Rene Wagner felt we should pay them \$5k. William Pakulis agreed.

William Pakulis motioned that they use \$5k from the reserve fund to help make Steve Amedy's burden lighter. Rene Wagner seconded. All were in favor. They will however, still speak to Ct Water for their input on the system design and problems.

5. **Status of Old Cathole Road project.** Dave Smith said the project is out to bid and ads have been put in the paper. Responses are due back Feb 25th. They have already put together 32 sets of documents and have asked for more to be made. They are charging \$50.00 for each set for the cost of producing them. Dick Symonds asked Dave Smith to review the project scope to refresh his memory of some of the details. The school connection is a permitted item with the DEP Consent Order related to the Diversion Permit.
6. **Act on Water Supply Plan proposals.** Dave Smith sent out the notices to both companies Lenard and Milone & Macbroom requesting proposals. Milone's did not have one of the required documents attached from the Dept of Public Health, but Dave Smith questioned them and they said their proposal still stands and they are ok with the requirements. Andy Neto stated he did not see the time requirements that we had asked for mentioned in the proposal. Dick Symonds asked what the price difference was for and Dave Smith felt it was probably due to the fact that Lenard had already done the last one and has much of the work already done. Milone would have to do more leg work. Dick Symonds stated his concerns about the time requirements and making sure Lenard can meet the deadline. Dave Smith felt they can certainly make it part of the contract. William Pakulis felt that we should consider

adding a penalty if they miss the deadline that would cover any penalties we would be charged. Stewart Joslin asked if we could get the draft document for the May 13th meeting so they would have 2 weeks to review and make comments. Dave Smith said he can ask them since we did not ask for a specific date other than saying it must be completed by June.

Dick Symonds motioned that they authorize Dave Smith to contract with Lenard at \$6950 and to proceed with the lower bid pending the first draft is ready by April 15th and a final draft of May 13th. If this is not feasible with Lenard, then the Commission authorizes Dave Smith to contract with Milone and Macbroom with the same stipulations. Seconded by William. All were in favor.

- 7. Discuss monthly report content.** Stewart Joslin felt they should draft a 1 page list of reports needed, but that they do not need it until they select the contractor. Dick Symonds commented that they have already reviewed the information they would want and need in the administrative procedures and feels that having it would be helpful for future meetings and decisions the commission makes. Glenn asked what information is available right now. Dick Symonds said it is all available, but in different locations. Dave Smith does not currently get production records and if they want it, they would go get the log books. They discussed Crystal Springs reports and how they need to review the same reports for their own system in the event that they may have similar billing problems or equipment problems. William Pakulis felt that at this point they can just ask the contractors in the interview process what reports they will provide. There were additional discussions on what type of reports they would like to see monthly and annually. Dick Symonds commented that he would like to know about any major problems with the systems immediately so they can be sure the problem is fixed correctly. They have procedures in place and they are not being followed. Glenn agreed to compile a list of what they would need and Dick Symonds and Andy Neto agreed to help him.
- 8. Staffing** – Dick Symonds commented that Dave Smith needed some help when the Commission Members ask for work they need to be done.. With the current financial situation, this is a difficult issue right now. Steve Werbner said it would be difficult to find a p/t person for 12 hrs a week, and the estimated cost would be roughly \$10,500 annually, plus FICA costs. They would be looking for a clerical and administrative type person which would also allow them to have 24 hrs per week total, being shared with another Commission. Dick Symonds feels there is enough work to keep someone busy and it would have to be funded by the water commission where there is revenue since the Town currently does not have funding for this position. Eugene Koss asked what the downside was and Dick Symonds said there is none. William Pakulis asked who would manage the person's time and work load and how they would prioritize their workload. Dick Symonds had spoken to Steve Werbner about this in January and Dave Smith said the situation may have changed since then and he should check with Steve Werbner for an update. Stewart Joslin didn't think there was enough work to sustain someone 10 or 12 hours a week and also didn't feel that someone for this pay level would be able to maintain their own work schedule. Dick

Symonds said he feels we need to try this at some point and now is the right time. Eugene Koss asked about the WPCA and if they have the same problems. It was unsure what exactly they needed for staffing. Glenn agreed that it was a good idea and was not sure what the Town staffing issues were but was in favor of trying to get someone for the commission.

- 9. Ct Water Bill** – Dick Symonds asked if the issue was resolved with the bills being delivered in the incorrect envelopes to customers. Dave Smith said that they have specific info that we would need to meet to print the envelopes and otherwise we would have to let them print the envelopes using their outside agency. Dave Smith didn't think we wanted to allow this, but the members didn't think it was a problem. Dave Smith will follow up with Ct. Water.

- 10. Amendment to the procedures:** Dick Symonds motioned to amend pg 16 of the procedures to revise the date of ending terms for William Pakalus to 2013 Rene Wagner to 2012 and Dick Symonds to 2013, seconded by Eugene Koss. All were in favor.

- 11. New Proposal from CT Water Co.:** Stewart Joslin suggested that a subcommittee should meet on the new proposal to determine where they should end up. Eugene Koss felt an extra workshop would be better to work through all of the details since it takes up so much of the regular meeting. Dave Smith said this would qualify for a workshop session. William Pakulis would like to do this in executive session. They also need to get the service contract done first since that is the priority. Then they can focus on the new proposal. There was more discussion about the process they would need to follow and how they would notify the customers being affected. William Pakulis feels that they should also notify the public that this interconnection is being done as it was a major goal for the commission. There was further discussion about the replacement of the pipe over time and who would own it.

- 12. Fire Hydrants** There was some discussion about the hydrants and that the Commission needs to be sure they are being billed properly.

- 13. Adjournment:** William Pakulis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:21pm, and seconded by Rene Wagner.

Sarah Bollinger
Commission Clerk

slb