

**New Hartford Water Pollution Control Authority  
TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, July 2, 2020 at 7:00 PM  
Held Remotely Via Zoom**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Denton Butler, David Douyard, Mary Beth Greenwood,  
Michael LeClaire, Wes Marsh, Joe Toro, and First Selectman Dan Jerram.

**ABSENT:** Polly Pobuda.

Mr. Butler called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

**1. APPROVE MINUTES:**

**A. June 6, 2020.**

**MOTION:** Mr. LeClaire, Mr. Marsh second, to approve the June 6, 2020 Minutes; unanimously approved.

**2. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REVIEW:**

The Board reviewed financials as prepared by Administrative Office Assistant Jill Healey. Mr. Butler reported that a payment of \$9,008 had been made on June 27, 2020 and indicated that there are two debt service payments scheduled within the following two weeks. He indicated that there were adequate funds to cover those expenses but noted that there are still payments on the sewer plant that are in suspension.

**3. BUDGET DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENTS/ADOPTIONS:**

Mr. Butler noted that the budget consisted of expenditures and revenues. Mr. Butler reported that he had provided guidance to Ms. Greenwood to include a 4% increase in line items unless known differently. With respect to the water routine operations contract and the sewer routine operations contract, Mr. Butler noted Aquarian Water Company was raised by 3% and Torrington Water Company was raised by 2%. Mr. Butler noted that the hourly rate, which had been at \$85 since 2014, was increased to \$90. He explained that includes all non-routine charges that involve a labor rate.

Mr. Butler noted that the revenue line of \$656,980 was carried forward to the next fiscal year. However, he reported that after working with Ms. Healey, the revenue for the previous year was actually \$609,621 for the past revenue year, a differential of \$47,360.

Ms. Greenwood reviewed her proposal to decrease the water and sewer rates to \$78.88 per 1000 gallons of water and \$20.38 per 1000 gallons of wastewater, explaining these were the rates prior to the last increase in FY2017. She made a motion in this regard, but it failed to garner a second.

Mr. Toro questioned why the rates should be reduced at this time and what the perception of that might be during a time when the town is considering a sale of its assets. He shared his opinion that the rates should be kept constant.

Ms. Greenwood explained that the WPCA is unable to break even each year and opined that the goal of setting rates in an effort to accomplish a break-even is impossible. She opined that this also puts a strain on the New Hartford economy.

Mr. Butler noted that in 2017 when the rates were changed, there were several initiatives underway including going after users who were receiving services but not paying for them, the implementation of a lien program and a payment program, and efforts made to reduce costs. He noted that the cost savings efforts did materialize in 2018. He noted that these efforts had a significant impact to stave off rates but the increase in costs have been great.

Mr. Douyard agreed that no decrease in rates should be considered while in negotiations to finalize the sale of the assets. He questioned how the shortfall would be covered. Mr. Marsh recalled raising the rates and the struggle the Board had in doing so. He concurred with Mr. LeClaire, Mr. Toro, and Mr. Douyard in not changing the rates at this point.

Mr. Butler noted that the struggle of the WPCA is one that has been there for fifty years, largely due to a lack of growth in its customer base.

**MOTION:** Mr. Toro, Mr. Douyard second, to adopt the budget with a 4% increase for FY2021, putting the expense projection at \$778,730.63; unanimously approved.

#### **4. OPERATIONS REPORTS:**

##### **A. Aquarian Water Company.**

The Board reviewed the operations report from Aquarian Water Company. Regarding the annual cleaning of the pumping stations at Prospect Street and at Route 219, Mr. Butler explained that American Rooter was being utilized this year because they are equipped to pressure stream the forced main from the top head at High Street back down to the well at Routes 219 and 44. He noted that pressure streaming this year is especially important due to the infiltration of sand and stones. Mr. Butler pointed out that the shift in companies was only due to the extra service deemed necessary this year.

Mr. LeClaire questioned whether there was a quote received from American Rooter. Mr. Butler confirmed, noting it to be \$1400 more but reiterated that there was more being done with this year's cleaning.

##### **B. Torrington Water Company.**

The Board reviewed the operations report from Torrington Water Company with no questions or discussion.

#### **5. OTHER BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE TO COME BEFORE THE WPCA:**

##### **A. Asset Review Update.**

Mr. Butler reported that the First Selectman's Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward would be reaching out to members of the Asset Evaluation Team within the next couple of days to discern their availability for a conference call.

##### **B. Discussion – Regulations.**

Mr. Butler reported an offer from Mike Crawford of Aquarian Water Company to assist the WPCA in pushing forward with a revision to this board's regulations. He noted that he had spoken with Mr. Marsh earlier this week regarding working with Mr. Crawford to put together a version for this Board to discuss.

Mr. Butler requested the Board to recall when they had approved a period of time for reduced rates for new sewer connections. He noted that he had received several inquiries in the last few weeks about new connections. Mr. Butler indicated that he and Mr. Marsh will discuss

extending the reduction phase for new connections and be prepared to make a suggestion for the August meeting.

Additionally, Mr. Butler noted that there are accounts that have carried consistently an outstanding balance for over 90 days. He noted that he plans to include a discussion item for August to address customer accounts that are due over 90 days either because the customer has died or because the account has been outstanding for many years.

**MOTION:** Mr. Douyard, Mr. Toro second, to adjourn at 7:32PM; unanimously approved.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Pamela A. Colombie  
Recording Clerk**