USDA Rural Development Meeting (3-20-19)

Present: George Krivda, Dan Jerram, Bud Butler, Christine Hayward

Opening Statements:

George Krivda, State Director (CT, RI, MA) United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development - Reports to Asst. Administrator USDA RD (Joel Baxley) Regional Program Director - Jennifer Lerch (not present) reports to George.

USDA-RD insures that rural areas don’t fall into economic decline*

* RD Programs – “Encompassing the objectives of economic development, growth, stabilization, increasing rural prosperity, fairness, helping people below the poverty line”

TOWN OVERVIEW TO GEORGE –

Reviewed Objectives of AET, Deliverables – Our Plan For Asset Proceeds

Wants to see the following in our proposal: (Not in order of importance) – Turn Everything Back Into The System.

Krivda Reaction:

“SOUNDS LIKE NEW HARTFORD HAS INCORPORATED THE GOALS OF WASHINGTON INTO ITS PLAN.”

What Does USDA-RD want us to emphasize in our request for relief:

(1) Make forgiveness of Grant a cornerstone - this act will allow us to continue the program begun in 2004.

(2) Concise reference of expansion plan and its goals - path to stability, aquifer protection, Protect Wild & Scenic Farmington River, rate stabilization, etc.

(3) All of Aquarion proceeds going back into the systems -show allocations, specific rates relative to current (highest in state) to what we see as projected rates.

(4) Emphasize value of early USDA payback on the principal amount of loans.

(5) Aquarion not profiteering from transaction. They have regulated rates.

(6) Be sure to reference (as a result of the high rates): declining usage, high vacancy rates, usage avoidance, and loss of pricing increases as a tool to garner more revenues.

(7) Emphasis on where we are going to put the money.

George will gladly come back to preview our response for submittal to WDC.