

**New Hartford Water Pollution Control Authority
TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, June 1, 2017 at 7:00 PM
New Hartford Town Hall
530 Main Street, New Hartford, Connecticut**

PRESENT: Chairman Denton Butler, David Douyard, Mary Beth Greenwood, Michael LeClaire, Wes Marsh, Polly Pobuda, and Joe Toro.

ABSENT: None.

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

1. APPROVAL OUTSTANDING MINUTES – MAY 18, 2017:

It was noted that the May 18, 2017 Minutes ought to be amended to clarify that Ms. Pobuda was absent.

MOTION: Mr. Toro, Mr. Marsh second, to approve the May 18, 2017 Minutes as amended; Motion passed with Mr. Butler, Ms. Greenwood, Mr. LeClaire, Mr. Marsh and Mr. Toro voting aye while Mr. Douyard and Ms. Pobuda abstained.

2. BUDGET DISCUSSION – ADOPTION:

Ms. Greenwood provided the Board with copies of a revised proposed FY18 Budget draft including a projected deficit of \$94,704.58. Mr. Butler noted that the current operating budget is projecting a \$12,216 surplus. With respect to adopting a budget, Mr. Butler laid out options including: the Board adopt a budget with a deficit or for the Board to remove needed maintenance items from the budget to remove the deficit.

Mr. Butler reported that he instructed Aquarion to not purchase or contract anything outside of their contract without prior approval. He also reported that in order to meet the WPCA's debt service obligation of \$20K to town and approximately \$36K to USDA due at the end of this month, payments to Aquarion and Torrington Water Company have been put on hold. He noted that he had also advised First Selectman Dan Jerram that the May debt service payment would not be paid. The short term cash flow problem is likely to be overcome when the July statements go out, according to Mr. Butler.

Mr. Butler then canvassed the group for thoughts and opinions regarding the options with the proposed budget. Ms. Greenwood and Mr. Douyard did not support putting forth a budget that was not balanced. Mr. Marsh indicated that he is inclined to believe that some help will be lent by the Town and that a balanced budget could be had with this support along with rate increases. Ms. Pobuda disagreed with adopting a budget projecting a deficit. Mr. Toro opined that the proposed budget represents a more accurate reflection of the costs and overhead and that to put forth anything less would be untruthful and misleading. Mr. LeClaire disagreed with putting forth an unbalanced budget and instead suggested that balance be achieved through a combination of an increase in rates along with making cuts wherever possible. Mr. Butler noted that this Board has done as much as possible over the past two years including receivables programs, liening properties and rebidding contracts. He noted that despite this progress, the planned maintenance items have now risen to demand maintenance items and in some cases, dictate maintenance. Because of these reasons, Mr. Butler noted that any balance budget should contain a footnote in this regard.

Board of Selectmen Laura Garay thanked the Board for their work and urged them to continue to review the proposed FY18 budget draft seeking savings in order to close the gap. Robert Goodskey of the New Hartford Fire Department addressed the Board noting the difficulties presented with the department's training in an inability to conduct hands-on training with the town's fire hydrants. He also voiced opposition to a rate increase in either hydrant charges or the usage charges.

MOTION: Ms. Pobuda, Mr. Douyard second, to refer the FY18 Budget Draft to the budget subcommittee for further review and analysis; Motion passed with Mr. Butler, Mr. Douyard, Ms. Greenwood, Mr. LeClaire, Mr. Marsh, and Ms. Pobuda voting aye while Mr. Toro was opposed.

3. RATE CHANGE REVIEW & RECOMMENDATION – ACTION:

Mr. Butler reviewed the proposed increases to service charges as presented at the last meeting. Mr. Butler suggested that Inspection Fees ought to be listed as being priced on a case by case basis. He reminded the Board that these proposed changes have been calculated to generate approximately \$20K, a sum not calculated in the proposed current projected deficit in the FY18 draft budget.

Mr. Butler then canvassed the Board for their thoughts and opinions on the proposed rate changes. Mr. LeClaire opined that a 2-3% increase for water usage ought to be considered. Mr. Toro disagreed with raising the water rates. Ms. Pobuda opined that there ought to be a higher fee for private hydrants than the public hydrants. Mr. Marsh agreed that water rates ought to be raised. Mr. Douyard concurred. Ms. Greenwood proposed an increase in the sewer usage rates rather than the water usage rates.

MOTION: Mr. LeClaire, Mr. Marsh second, to adopt the fee schedule as reviewed with the following modifications:

- raise the private hydrant rate by \$11.55;
- reduce the public fire hydrant increase to a flat \$5;
- increase, by 2.5%, the water and sewer usage rates;
- raise lien filing fee to \$20; and
- add a charge for inspection fees, to be calculated on a case by case basis;

Motion passed with Mr. Douyard, Ms. Greenwood, Mr. Marsh, and Ms. Pobuda voting aye while Mr. Butler and Mr. Toro were opposed.

It was noted that the Public Hearing for the rate change will be held at 6:00PM on June 15, 2017.

4. UPDATE – WATER SUPPLY PLAN INITIATIVE:

Mr. Butler reported that the subcommittee charged with working on the water supply plan met yesterday and that progress is continuing in this regard. Much is left to be completed, he explained.

5. DISCUSS CLIENT ATTORNEY CORRESPONDENCE RE ABUTTERS:

Mr. Butler reported that a copy of the 2012 correspondence to property owners abutting the sewer system has been forwarded to the WPCA's counselor, Attorney Matt Willis. Mr. Butler provided an update on the advice and suggestions received from Attorney Willis.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OR CORRESPONDENCE TO PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE WPCA:

Mr. Butler reminded Mr. Toro about seeking competitive pricing on a product from Savoff.

MOTION: Mr. LeClaire, Mr. Toro second, **to adjourn at 8:27PM; unanimously approved.**

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