

1 **DRAFT**

2 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
3 WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT  
4 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

5 155 JOHN STREET

6 WALLINGFORD, CT 06492

7 Tuesday, October 6, 2020

8 6:30 P.M.

9 **MINUTES**

TOWN OF  
WALLINGFORD

OCT 13 2020

DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC UTILITIES

10 **PRESENT:** Chairman Robert Beaumont (TC); Commissioners Patrick Birney and Joel  
11 Rinebold; Director Richard Hendershot; Electric Division General Manager Tony Buccheri,  
12 Office Manager Tom Sullivan; Water and Sewer Divisions General Manager Neil Amwake;  
13 Recording Secretary Bernadette Sorbo.

14 (TC-TELECONFERENCE)

15 *Members of the public – Sam Sharif, Sonia Sharif, Sarah Sharif, Barrett Chandler, and Adelheid*  
16 *Koepfer*

17 Mr. Birney called the Meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

18 **1. Pledge of Allegiance**

19  
20 **2. Consent Agenda**

- 21 a. Consider and approve meeting Minutes of September 15, 2020  
22

23 **Motion to approve the Consent Agenda:**

24 **Made by: Mr. Birney**

25 **Seconded by: Mr. Rinebold**

26 **Votes: 3 ayes**  
27  
28  
29

30 **3. Items Removed from Consent Agenda – None**  
31  
32

33  
34 **4. Discussion and Possible Action: Electric Division: DEDR Reinstatement – Sam**  
35 **& Sonia LLC.**  
36

37 Mr. Hendershot referenced the memorandum dated September 12, 2019 from Mr. Sullivan to  
38 Mr. Buccheri. Mr. Hendershot stated that the owners of Sam & Sonia, LLC sent a letter to the  
39 PUC requesting that they consider reinstating the Downtown Economic Development Rider  
40 (DEDR) to an electric account which services Aries and Boggs, a restaurant at 104 Quinnipiac  
41 Street. Due to the DEDR criteria, the discount has been discontinued based upon a delinquent  
42 payment.

43  
44 Mr. Buccheri stated that the customers came in and spoke about the reasons on why they were  
45 being taken off the rider. The customers were instructed to come back to the PUC in a year and  
46 if all the payments were made on time there would be reconsideration for reinstatement. Once  
47 the payments were made on time, the customers would then have to send notice in writing to the  
48 Electric Division. The customers sent in a letter on September 22, 2020. Mr. Sullivan has  
49 provided the backup to show that all payments have been made on time and that there are no past  
50 due bills.

51  
52 Mr. Sullivan confirmed that there are no past due bills and that all payments have been made on  
53 time.

54  
55 Mr. Rinebold stated that he is supportive of the motion.

56  
57 Mr. Beaumont questioned if the customers would be reinstated from last year or if there will be a  
58 year lag?

59  
60 Mr. Sullivan stated that at the time the customers were terminated they were six months into the  
61 discount at the fifty-percent level. The discount drops 10% each year.

62  
63 Mr. Beaumont questioned if the customers were reinstated would the customers be at the 7<sup>th</sup>  
64 month of the first year?

65  
66 Mr. Sullivan confirmed that this would be acceptable to the Electric Division staff.

67  
68 **Motion to Approve the Reinstatement for Sam & Sonia LLC**

69 **Made by: Mr. Beaumont**

70 **Seconded by: Mr. Rinebold**

71 **Votes: 3 ayes**  
72  
73  
74

75 **5. Discussion and Possible Action: Electric Division: Budget Amendment – From**  
76 **Retained Earnings to Various Accounts.**  
77

78 Mr. Hendershot stated that this is a request for a budget amendment appropriating \$604,500.00  
79 from retained earnings into the various capital and operations accounts. These amounts are to  
80 cover additional expenses incurred in the restoration of damages caused by Storm Isaias in  
81 August 2020. Mr. Hendershot referenced the memorandum dated September 30, 2020 from Mr.

82 Sullivan to Mr. Buccheri. This memo lists the amount of funds that will go into each of the  
83 various accounts.

84  
85 **Motion to Approve the Transfer of \$604,500.00 from Retained Earnings into the Various**  
86 **Accounts**

87 **Made by: Mr. Rinebold**

88 **Seconded by: Mr. Beaumont**

89 **Votes: 3 ayes**  
90  
91  
92

93 **6. Discussion and Action: Sewer Division: Proposed Revisions to the Policy**  
94 **Regarding Reimbursement of Inflow and Infiltration Removal Costs.**  
95

96 Mr. Amwake referenced the Infiltration and Inflow Policy. The policy was adopted by the PUC  
97 on October 6, 2015. Mr. Amwake stated that the policy is working very well but there are  
98 always revisions that could be made. The staff at the Wallingford Sewer Division worked on the  
99 policy for three to four months before the revisions were presented to the PUC.  
100

101 The Updates and Revisions to the Policy Regarding Reimbursement of Infiltration and Inflow  
102 Removal Costs include:

- 103 • Inclusion of a revision date
- 104 • Wordsmithing and grammatical edits
- 105 • Clarifications, specifically additional words and phrases added to existing text to improve  
106 readability and understanding of the Policy particularly for property owners
- 107 • Added a statement requiring a minimum of two quotations from contractors qualified to  
108 perform the work for corrective actions greater than \$500.00
- 109 • Revised reimbursement amounts based on reimbursement data and Engineering Section  
110 staff recommendations and discussions;
- 111 • Add a paragraph that allows the Sewer Division General Manager in consultation with  
112 Engineering Section staff to modify the maximum reimbursement amount for specific  
113 situations (one off instances) based on the cost savings realized by the WSD in avoiding  
114 conveyance and treatment of I/I flow removed
- 115 • Add a section for private sewer main and manhole repairs undertaken by the Sewer  
116 Division
- 117 • Update the financial examples based on the revised reimbursement amounts  
118

119 Mr. Amwake stated that if the policy was approved, the only caveat would be that the policy  
120 would be effective for October 1, 2020. Therefore, the policy date would be retroactive for five  
121 calendar days or can be pushed to November 1, 2020. Mr. Amwake recommended keeping the  
122 policy effective date for October 1, 2020.  
123

124 Mr. Rinebold commented that Mr. Amwake put in the changes skillfully. Mr. Rinebold stated  
125 that he is in agreement with the changes to the amounts as these are based on the cost savings  
126 over a ten-year period.  
127

128 Mr. Beaumont commented that he has no problem with the changes.

129

130 Mr. Rinebold commented that this program is a good proactive approach. The program is good  
131 for the public as it will save money and the wear and tear on the facility. Mr. Rinebold  
132 questioned if other utilities are using this kind of approach?

133

134 Mr. Amwake stated that this is a regulatory approach and that he does not know what other  
135 utilities are proactively doing this program.

136

137 **Motion to Approve the Revisions to the Policy Regarding Reimbursement of Inflow and**  
138 **Infiltration Removal Costs**

139 **Made by: Mr. Birney**

140 **Seconded by: Mr. Rinebold**

141 **Votes: 3 ayes**

142

143 **Public Question and Answer Period**

144

145 Ms. Koepfer asked within the last six months have there been any changes in usage for the  
146 Electrical Division or Water Division due to Covid?

147

148 Mr. Hendershot responded in regards to the usage for the Electric Division. Mr. Hendershot  
149 stated that the electric usage for residential customers is up slightly about 4% total energy  
150 through the meters so far this calendar year. The usage for commercial is down about 6% and  
151 industrial is up a tick. Mr. Hendershot advised that the total for the Electric Division sales are  
152 down just under 1%. Overall this is not a large difference. The increase in usage for residential  
153 customers are up due to more customers being at home.

154

155 Mr. Amwake responded in regards to the usage for the Water Division. Mr. Amwake stated that  
156 the Water and Sewer Division bills quarterly and thus there is a lag between when a customer  
157 consumes water and when such use is billed. The Water and Sewer Division compared the  
158 fourth quarter 2019 to the fourth quarter 2020. Mr. Amwake stated that the overall consumption  
159 is up 3.12% for the same quarter year to year, and that a lot of this is driven by the drought vs.  
160 Covid. Mr. Amwake indicated that the institutional schools are down -15.09% for the fourth  
161 quarter 2020 compared to the fourth quarter 2019. The residential is up 6.65% for the fourth  
162 quarter 2020 compared to the fourth quarter 2019. Institutional accounts for 4% of overall  
163 consumption and residential accounts for 67.5% of water consumption. Mr. Amwake stated that  
164 overall the Water and Sewer Divisions are up approximately 3% but the company feels this is  
165 driven more by the lack of precipitation rather than Covid.

166

167 Ms. Koepfer questioned if the drought is effecting the water supply?

168

169 Mr. Amwake responded no. Mr. Amwake advised that the reservoirs are monitored every Friday  
170 by three different engineers. As of last Friday the status of the reservoir is in the normal range.  
171 The stages are as follows: alert, advisory, phase I drought, phase II drought, phase III drought.  
172 The division is not even at the alert stage.

173

174 Ms. Koepfer asked if there are any concerns with larger companies coming into Connecticut and  
175 sharing our water supply?  
176

177 Mr. Amwake stated that this is balanced against economic development. The water treatment  
178 plant has the capacity of eight million gallons a day. Right now the treatment plant is treating  
179 about 4 million gallons a day. Mr. Amwake advised that if needed there is capacity to give.  
180

181 Ms. Koepfer questioned can the minutes to the meetings be available to the public earlier than  
182 two weeks? In addition to the minutes being available earlier, can the meetings be recorded or  
183 can the audio tapes be made available to the public?  
184

185 Mr. Hendershot advised that the audio recordings are for the recording secretary to build the  
186 minutes from the meetings. These recordings are then kept for a given period of time. These  
187 recordings can then be requested by the public as long as they exist. Mr. Hendershot stated that  
188 the video recordings are not feasible for this facility as the buildings and the rooms are not set up  
189 for this. In addition, the PUC would need to pay workers to come in and video record the  
190 meetings.  
191

192 Mr. Beaumont stated that there needs to be availability of personnel to video the recordings.  
193 This would be an additional cost to the budget.  
194

195 Ms. Koepfer questioned if the tapes would be available?  
196

197 Mr. Hendershot stated that these would need to be formally requested.  
198

199 Ms. Koepfer inquired if the draft minutes can be posted on the Wallingford Town Hall website.  
200

201 Mr. Beaumont referenced the memo that was written by Kathy White on behalf of Mr.  
202 Beaumont. Mr. Beaumont stated that he would not want to post a draft of the minutes until they  
203 are approved and final.  
204

#### 205 **Public Question and Answer Period Closed**

206  
207  
208

#### 209 **7. Discussion and Action: Water and Sewer Divisions: Resolution – Phelan**

210

211 Mr. Beaumont commented that they are losing a fine individual who has done a phenomenal job  
212 for the Town of Wallingford. Mr. Phelan has been with the Town of Wallingford Water and  
213 Sewer Divisions for eighteen years. Mr. Beaumont stated that he is sad to see him go and that he  
214 wishes nothing but the best for Mr. Phelan and his family.  
215

216 Mr. Birney stated that Mr. Phelan anticipated every single question that was usually asked for the  
217 meeting and that Mr. Phelan always had an answer for the questions. Mr. Birney commented  
218 that this will be a major loss for the Town of Wallingford.  
219

220

221 **Motion to Approve Resolution for Phelan**

222 **Made by: Mr. Beaumont**

223 **Seconded by: Mr. Rinebold**

224 **Votes: 3 ayes**

225

226 **Committee Reports/Correspondence**

227

228 Mr. Hendershot spoke on an email that was sent over by Ms. Koepfer in regards to raising the  
229 topic on the Green Energy Rate. Ms. Koepfer inquired if the staff would have an interest in  
230 exploring the Green Energy Rate to determine feasibility and costs. Mr. Hendershot stated that  
231 what would need to be looked at is purchasing Renewable Energy Credits (RECS) and then  
232 monetizing these on a per kilowatt basis. This would need to consist of buying RECS in blocks  
233 small enough to cover the amount of energy associated with a block of RECS and that there  
234 would be sufficient funds generated from the interest in customers to cover more than the costs  
235 of RECS. Mr. Hendershot noted that this is not an actual purchase of unique or unit specific  
236 green energy. The purchase would just be going into the REC market which exists. Mr.  
237 Hendershot stated that purchasing the RECS would make a funding stream back to the owners or  
238 developers of the projects that generated the RECS. Typically, the projects that generate the  
239 RECS are solar projects, wind machines, hydro projects, qualifying bio mass or landfill methane.  
240 Customers would then volunteer to pay more for their electric energy to “reward” the owners of  
241 the REC generating projects. Mr. Hendershot advised that a purchase of Green Energy for the  
242 sake of a program like this runs the risk of increasing the costs for the Town of Wallingford.

243

244 Mr. Rinebold stated that he would be supportive of the initiative to investigate the Green Energy  
245 Rate. Mr. Rinebold would like the staff to explore the logistics, administrative, the costs and  
246 overall impact on the rate base. Mr. Rinebold expressed a concern that if the green rate is  
247 created it will be difficult to balance with the customers that want to participate.

248

249 Mr. Beaumont stated that he does not have a problem conceptually with respect to purchasing the  
250 RECS. Some questions that Mr. Beaumont would like answers for when the research is being  
251 done are:

- 252 • How many customers do we need?
- 253 • How much usage is needed in order to make it feasible to go ahead with the project?

254 Mr. Beaumont stated that in order to approve the Green Rate, he would not want an adverse  
255 impact for the vast majority of the customers.

256

257 Mr. Birney agrees with Mr. Beaumont on his view of the Green Rate. Mr. Birney stated that he  
258 is not in support of a Green Rate bounded on RECS but he does support the PUC creating a  
259 potential Green Rate that would allow the PUC to purchase real energy if possible.

260

261

262

263 **ADJOURNMENT**

264

265

266

267 **Motion to adjourn**

268 **Made by: Mr. Birney**

269 **Seconded by: Mr. Rinebold**

270 **Votes: 2 ayes**

271

272

273

274

275 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:17 p.m.

276

277 Respectfully submitted,

Respectfully submitted,

278

279

280

281 Bernadette Sorbo

Joel Rinebold

282 Recording Secretary

Secretary