

**CITY OF NORWALK
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL
VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
REGULAR MEETING
November 18, 2024**

Attendance: Darren Oustafine, Chairman
John Igneri, Vice Chairman
Chris Mannella
John Bove
James Frayer
Barbara Smyth

Staff: Vanessa Valadares, Chief of Operations and Public Works
Ralph Kolb, WPCA Senior Environmental Engineer
Nelya Bauer, Wastewater Systems Manager
Chris Torre, Superintendent of Operations, DPW
Jared Schmitt, Chief Financial Officer

Others: Trever Steeprock, Project Manager, Veolia, Inc.
Ross Gambino, Asst. Project Manager, Veolia, Inc.
David Connors, Regional Manager, Veolia Inc.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Oustafine called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.

2. PUBLIC INPUT- (GUESTS AT THE WPCA MEETING MAY SPEAK TO ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA. COMMENTS SHALL BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN THREE (3) MINUTES PER SPEAKER.)

There were no public comments this evening.

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE WPCA MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 21, 2024

**** MR. IGNERI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OR VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH KOVACS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION FOR THE KEELER BROOK PUMP STATION UPGRADE PROJECT (WPCA 2024-01) FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$9,695,000. (BID SUMMARY ATTACHED)

ACCOUNT NOS. 09194062-5777-C0360, 09204062-5777-C0360, 09214062-5777-C0360, 09220462-5777-C0360, 09144062-5777-C0361, 09194062-5777-C0361, 09204062-5777-C0361, 09244062-5777-C0361, 09254062-5777-C0361, 09264062-5777-C0361

Ms. Valadares said the procurement was done on an emergency basis and a full bid package was sent to two contractors who have worked with the WPCA in the past on the final designs of the pump station and Kovacs Construction was the low bidder at \$9,695,000. She said that staff realizes that this was a high price and was not what they had originally budgeted to replace the pump station, but the original price was based on the engineer's estimate without the full set of drawings and now need the work done on an emergency basis. She said they are also working on an easement with Eversource, and that parcel has a lot of limitations particularly due to the vertical clearance limitations. She went on to say that she is very proud of the team and that the pump station was lost on August 18th and in November have a final price to replace the pump station and the team has worked very hard to bring this to the finish line. She said that staff is working on the financial model and even though there is an extra cost there will be no change to the rates because they will be moving projects around to accommodate this cost.

Mr. Frayer asked if any funds were received from FEMA. Ms. Valadares said this project brought the area to the threshold that was needed so they can now apply for FEMA funding and are putting the package together. Mr. Kolb said the finance team submitted the application through the FEMA portal and is now waiting for their contact person to reach out to the team for additional information and backup. He said they would also be meeting with the city's insurance carrier.

Mr. Frayer asked how much was originally budgeted to replace the pump station and what the incremental cost is currently. Ms. Valadares said the original placeholder was approximately \$6 million dollars and some of the projects that were scheduled will not be done now and will be moved to the future. Mr. Frayer asked if that would present any risk. Ms. Valadares said this was the most critical pump station particularly because of the location and they continue to maintain the other pump stations and will be moving more of the funds from the collection system for the installation of the new pump station and don't think by pushing the projects out a few years will put the assets in danger.

Mr. Igneri asked how long the project would take to complete. Ms. Valadares said two years. Mr. Mannella asked if there is a projected cost for the Godwin pumps. Ms. Valadares said the current operating cost is \$25,000 per month to maintain the existing bypass. Mr. Kolb said they are expecting the first diesel pump to be delivered in December and the electric pump soon after and will return the rental pumps to Godwin to reduce the costs. Ms. Valadares said they are also trying to use insurance money to reduce some of those costs. Mr. Mannella asked if the safety observer was included in that cost. Mr. Kolb said that will be included in the Wright-Pierce scope of work.

**** MS. SMYTH MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN OR VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH KOVACS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION FOR THE KEELER BROOK PUMP STATION UPGRADE PROJECT (WPCA 2024-01) FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$9,695,000.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS TO EXECUTE ORDERS ON THE CONTRACT WITH KOVACS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION FOR THE KEELER BROOK PUMP STATION UPGRADE PROJECT (WPCA 2024-01) FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$969,500.

Account Nos. 09194062-5777-C0360, 09204062-5777-C0360, 09214062-5777-C0360, 09220462-5777-C0360, 09144062-5777-C0361, 09194062-5777-C0361, 09204062-5777-C0361, 09244062-5777-C0361, 09254062-5777-C0361, 09264062-5777-C0361

**** MR. FRAYER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF OF OPERATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS TO EXECUTE ORDERS ON THE CONTRACT WITH KOVACS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION FOR THE KEELER BROOK PUMP STATION UPGRADE PROJECT (WPCA 2024-01) FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$969,500.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF NORWALK'S PURCHASING AGENT TO AUTHORIZE A SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE ORDER TO GENGRAS FORD LLC FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO (2) FORD ESCAPE PLUG-IN HYBRIDS FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$73,812.40 (COPY INCLUDED).

Account Nos..09244062-5777-C0361, 09254062-5777-C0361

Mr. Kolb said these two cars will be for WPCA staff to use every day to go to the various projects, meetings, etc. He said they are being purchased from the CT State bid list and are hybrid vehicles that meet the city's goals and objectives for green energy.

Mr. Frayer asked if there was a request for vehicles on the agenda a few months ago. Mr. Kolb said "Yes" There were two Tesla's that were moved back to the City of Norwalk and not the WPCA and these cars will be for WPCA staff. Ms. Valadares said these vehicles will be replacing the Taurus and are very reasonably priced and will be purchased as a trial and if successful will be expanded to the cars in the city fleet. Mr. Frayer asked for clarification that this will not be a company car that WPCA employees will be taking home and will be used in the field and will be replacing vehicles that the WPCA staff currently has. Ms. Valadares said that is correct.

Mr. Mannella said the City of Bridgeport just purchased three of these cars and he thinks this is a good choice.

Mr. Oustafine asked if these cars would be replacing older vehicles. Ms. Valadares said "no"

**** MR.IGNERI MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF NORWALK'S PURCHASING AGENT TO AUTHORIZE A SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE ORDER TO GENGRAS FORD LLC FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO (2) FORD ESCAPE PLUG-IN HYBRIDS FOR A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$73,812.40**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. CONTRACT OPERATIONS REPORT:

a. Veolia Monthly Operating Report – October 2024 (copy included)

Mr. Steeprock reported and said in October the Veolia collections system team completed 1.02 miles of TV inspection, the cleaning of 3.62 miles of sewer lines, 8 manhole inspections, and 11.41 miles of SL Rat, and completed 1.97 miles of hot list cleaning.

Mr. Steeprock said the IPP inspection program conducted 45 inspections.

Mr. Steeprock said that the maintenance team repaired the primary settling tank #1 drive and the clutch and learned a few best practices along the way that should help in the future.

Mr. Steeprock said the Norwalk team won an internal safety award known as the Copy & Adapt initiative for reducing a trip hazard in the final clarifiers and had won the national contest and are now in a competition for Norwalk to win globally with Veolia.

Mr. Steeprock said the collections team addressed an ongoing issue at Ely Avenue & Lowe Street and removed a large amount of debris.

Mr. Steeprock reported on the regulatory events and said the facility followed all permit requirements for the month of October, and all the reporting was completed and submitted to the CT-DEEP and the EPA.

Mr. Steeprock said the team had found an issue at Ely Avenue and Lowe Street in the collection system and were able to remove a large amount of debris that had not been able to be removed previously due to an issue with the piping. He said it has made a significant improvement that they have been able to monitor through the smart covers.

b. Major Repair or Replacement / Out of Scope Items:

i. Erin Court Pump Station Fence and Westport PS Gate (copy included)

There was no discussion.

ii. North Water St. Stormwater Pump Repair (copy included)

There was no discussion.

8. REPORTS:

a. FY23/24 and FY24/25 Revenues/Expenditures MUNIS Reports (copies included)

There was no discussion.

b. Discussion on Facility Plan Update

Ms. Valadares said that on November 1st a response letter was sent to the CTDEEP related to the Consent Order requesting more details regarding the plan that was previously submitted and have received confirmation that they have received the letter and are evaluating it.

c. Financial Model Update (copy included)

Ms. Bauer said the WPCA team has engaged Woodard and Curran team to update the financial model.

d. Discussion on WPCA Engineering Projects:

1. Beacon Street Sanitary Sewer (copy included)

Ms. Bauer said the Brown and Caldwell team is moving forward with the design work for that project and staff is working closely with them on the progress of their design.

2. Catch Basin Disconnect Program

Ms. Bauer said that there is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow with the DPW to review the projects and finalize the 90% design for the Hubbell's Lane sewer project.

3. Hubbell's Lane Relief Sewer

This item was discussed under the previous agenda item.

e. Discussion on WPCA Construction Projects

1. Collection – Sammis and Bell Island Sewershed Rehabilitation (copies Included)

Ms. Bauer said the project has been ongoing and is 88% complete. She said the crews limited their work in Norwalk last month as they have been busy in other cities but are expecting them back in early January to finalize the work.

2. Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Updates (copy included)

Ms. Bauer said that staff is working with Wright-Pierce on the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition updates to continue to enhance it.

3. Keeler Brook PS Replacement

Ms. Bauer said this was discussed under item 4 of the agenda.

f. Sewer Use Bill Appeals/Adjustments Update

a. Appeal status

Ms. Bauer said the appeals to date are \$ 62,863.

g. Information Copies:

a. 2025 WPCA Meeting Schedule

There was no discussion.

9. ADJOURNMENT

**** MR.IGNERI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd