

SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

APRIL 25, 2025

MEETING TRANSCRIPTION

David:

We're ready. I will call the April 25th, 2024, Regional Water Authority meeting to order. It is 12:30. Suzanne is going to be just a few minutes late, but she's coming in person as well. Nice to have us all here. It'll be the first time since [inaudible 00:01:32]. That's great. [inaudible 00:01:33] again.

The first item, safety moment about driving. We're just talking about that and defensive driving. So it's a little read for today.

David:

Public comment is next. Is there anybody from the public here, Jennifer?

Jennifer:

No.

David:

Okay. And then Larry had an item that we thought [inaudible 00:01:57].

Larry:

Yes. I'm very pleased to introduce Lisa DiFrancesco, who's our immediate Communications and Education Team Lead, who handles a lot of the educational programs, and Kevin Watsey, who is our new Director of Public Affairs for several months. [inaudible 00:02:14].

Kevin:

So this is our official citation [inaudible 00:02:40] member of the assembly who represents one of our town sign on to this, assuming [inaudible 00:02:45].

If you'd like, I can read to you the actual General Assembly official citation.

The General Assembly hereby offers its sincerest congratulations to the Regional Water Authority (RWA) for their protection and stewardship of precious natural water resources for our communities. This includes supplying 42.5 million gallons of water daily to 430,000 residents across 15 municipalities.

With cutting-edge treatment plants, extensive infrastructure, and rigorous testing – you have strived to ensure abundant, reliable, and healthy water for all.

Thank you for all your work in helping to give back to the community and we wish you many more years of innovation, sustainability, and success at providing this valuable natural resource.

Fire membership extends its very best wishes on this honorable occasion and expresses the hope for continued success.

Given on the 25th day of April 2024, [inaudible 00:03:54], signed by the President pro tem of the Senate.

David:

I guess we'll let you be the keeper.

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Kevin:

I'll keep saying this [inaudible 00:04:59] appropriate.

David:

Anything else under public comment? And seeing that we're all probably here, we're all set to move on to "Meet as the Pension and Benefit Committee." I'll entertain a motion to recess as the Authority and meet as the Pension and Benefit Committee.

Kevin:

So moved.

Mario:

Second.

David:

All those in favor, signal by saying aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

David:

Passes unanimously.

[PENSION & BENEFIT COMMITTEE MEETS FROM 12:34 P.M. TO 2:04 P.M.]

David:

All right, we're back as the Authority. Let's do item D and then E, and then we'll take a break. But D because it's fresh in our mind to acts on matters arising from the committee meeting. There were several items that we had that [inaudible 01:36:11] as well as the IPS update. So Catherine, would you like to lead us in those?

Catherine:

Sure. We have three resolutions that we moved to the main body or the five-member board. One would be the 2024 additional contribution, a quarter million dollars. The second would be the proposed resolution for the 2025 contributions, and fair point that we need to break out, which is [inaudible 01:36:51] additional. But total for the salary is \$2,397,959, and for the union, \$1,083,084. The third is the proposed resolution for the contribution to the VEBA plan of \$1,000,694 and 75 cents.

David:

Is there a second?

Mario:

Second.

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David:

All right. Any further discussion than what we had earlier?

Mario:

No.

David:

Sensing you're ready to vote, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

David:

All right. You have another item of the IPS.

Catherine:

Thank you. Also, the committee moved the amendment of the investment policy statement to this board to vote on. Do we need to go into the detail of that? I think we had a lengthy discussion-

David:

Unless anyone changed their mind in the last half hour. Would anyone have an opportunity to speak? Of course, once you make a motion.

Catherine:

I move the adoption of the amendment to the investment objectives for the investment policy-

David:

Is there a second?

Kevin:

Second.

David:

All right. Is there a discussion? All right. Sensing you ready to vote, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

David:

Those opposed?

Suzanne:

Nay.

David:

Passes four to one. All right. Let's do the consent calendar and then we'll take a little break.

Kevin:

So moved.

David:

Okay. Any items?

Catherine:

Second.

David:

Very good. No items of clarification or no items you want removed? Sensing you really are ready to vote on this, all right, all those in favor, say aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

David:

Okay. Let's take a 10-minute break till 20 after.

[BREAK FROM 2:10 P.M. TO 2:20 P.M.]

David:

Okay, then let's get started. Rochelle, we just need you for finance, which is next, right?

Rochelle:

Yes.

David:

Okay. All right, so then let's reconvene at 2:20 and we will Item F, Finance Type B3 Amendments and there are several in here and the year adjustments.

Rochelle:

So the first item is we want to increase the filter media replacement budget. We have money available from another project, so we're resolving to increase that by 651,000. Then all the remaining ones, which total 4.315 million for a variety of external factors, we're proposing here to move these monies into the project reserve.

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I do want to just mention that money that we need to spend, let's say we thought we were going to spend it at the end of fiscal '24, but we're going to spend it at the early part of fiscal '25, is still within the same rate period because we have to get it all the way through the end of December.

So Jennifer, if you scroll down. So if you're in agreement, this final resolve reflects the 4.315 million. The prior one is the \$651.

David:

Okay. Any questions? Couple of motions implicit in here.

Suzanne:

Yeah, I have a couple of questions. So the \$651 was because we had 38 inches instead of 30 inches, blah, blah, blah, blah. So how much of an increase is that percentage-wise to that project for that function?

Rochelle:

I think off the top of my head, the filter media is probably roughly eight to 900,000, not including the actual underdrain, which was a project this year. So we had significant, but it's associated with the underdrain. Off the top of my head, it's about one [inaudible 00:04:10].

Suzanne:

Okay. So it's a big increase.

Rochelle:

It is a big increase.

Suzanne:

That's what six inches or eight inches of media can do to you. Is that right?

Rochelle:

That's right.

Suzanne:

Okay. And then also, I don't know if we need to do this in executive session, but amount for the CIS project is the outflow of this whole conversation we've had about the delay in the project.

Rochelle:

Yeah, this definitely has, and I think there's going to be an executive session later about this CIS, but this has to do with the timing of it.

Suzanne:

Okay. So we're being asked to approve this before we talk about, whatever confidentiality you want to talk about, with the delay in the project? Or is this a by-product if we've already talked about it and this is how much it's going to cost?

David:

This is a delaying the payments and the cost, but it's not adding to the cost. It's simply moving it from one fiscal year to the next.

Rochelle:

Correct. Yeah.

Suzanne:

Oh, thank you, David. I don't think I caught that. Thank you. I'm sorry. My apologies.

David:

Any other questions or comments? Right. There are a couple of resolutions in here. Somebody would like to move them and move forward.

Mario:

So moved.

Catherine:

Second.

David:

All right. Any other discussion? Sensing you're ready to vote. All those in favor say aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

David:

It's unanimous.

RPB committee meetings. I went to the Finance Committee and I think they had a good meeting. They had a great presentation by management and did not have a lot of questions, as usual. And basically that was their meeting. So they just didn't have a lot of questions. Yes, thank you. Right. Any other? Let's see. The next one was Land Use.

Mario:

I did not attend.

David:

Okay.

Mario:

I missed, what, based on the review of the minutes, they basically covered the same information that we covered last month. Environmental, Health and Safety as far as invasive species management and how they're treating it. They hired a couple of people for the summer in order to do that. And John Triana's typical multiple-page report with all the detail that you would want on all our assets, land related, including 36 kids attending the Easter egg hunt.

David:

Anything else, Sunny, that came up that we should know?

Sunny:

No, I think everything was good. It was pretty straightforward. The invasive species, there were questions on invasive species and the chair presented very well. They did appreciate the information that they got, which was pretty much summarized in the memo that the EH&S committee had.

David:

Good. Did they seem appreciative of the extra help that they're going to have for the summer?

Sunny:

Absolutely. They were wondering as to what this steam weeder does and they went to some more details of asking the questions about how it works. And they were also kind of inquiring about the \$200,000 grant from the USDA, how we went about it. So overall, it ended up on a very positive. They were very appreciative of the efforts of the real estate team as well as Josh.

David:

Good. Okay. Thank you. All right. And Consumer Affairs?

Catherine:

I did attend.

David:

Okay. You both did. Okay.

Kevin:

It was a budget meeting.

Catherine:

Yeah, it was a budget meeting. And the bulk of the meeting was in executive session where management presented the proposed capital budget, operating budget and the proposed commercial business budget. The OCA gave his report and there was only really one matter, which I found out more about after the meeting. He mentioned some peculiar concern about a person that made some significant changes to his house and didn't understand why that might increase his water consumption. The OCA's invoice was approved and there was no new business.

David:

Any other questions or comments that you concur? All right, very good. With that we will move on to business updates.

Larry:

Yes. Thank you. So just a couple of items, some of which are in my letters [inaudible 00:09:09]. First of all, the enabling legislation [inaudible 00:09:13] we could. The house unanimously approved our

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proposed enabling legislation changes, so that's good news. Good work on the part of Nicoletta Blevins there.

Then it was transmitted to the Senate and they're waiting to get scheduled for vote. She's been meeting with senators this past week, reports that the discussions have been very positive and they expect a full vote in favor of the bill. Maybe as soon as next week, but certainly before the session ends. So it's just a matter of scheduling. So that was good news.

Catherine:

Larry, is this a short year or long year?

Larry:

Yes, this is a short year.

David:

Yeah, two more weeks. May 15, I think. May 8th.

Larry:

As long as we go through the Senate vote before we hit the last night.

David:

Yes.

Larry:

Yeah, that's when you get the list. And speaking of invasive species, I went out with Josh Tracy, our basic species specialist, and saw some interesting items there. I saw two sites, one five acres and one two acres in which he used a automated puller to clear the land of Japanese barberry. So one of the sites was done, I think he said five years ago, and it was pretty much still clear. The one done, it's coming back, and then he did another one that was a couple of years ago. And it was very, very clear. So that's very effective.

Then I saw the famous bat hibernaculum. So the significance of that is that all 90 bats that are native to Connecticut are hibernaculum. And I thought it was going to be like a hut, but actually it's not. We have a very large diversion that feeds from the Big Gulph reservoir into the Lake Gaillard. And at the end of this pipe that feeds into it, they have a very large metal grating on it that's just big enough for bats to fly in and out it. So that is where they are, where they were stationed, so it was fascinating to see.

Catherine:

I'm happy you enjoyed it, Larry.

Larry:

Along with Josh, I went to Lake Gaillard [inaudible 00:12:24]. Then on Friday, Kevin Watsey's group [inaudible 00:12:24] went tree planting. So last year we were in New Haven. So the goal is to move around the service territory and plant trees on [inaudible 00:12:52]. Good neighbor exercise.

Speaking of good neighbor, I want to show a video that Josh Tracy worked, excuse me. Kevin Watsey worked with Jim Hill's group and Sunny and it's a one and a half minute video that's going to be put up

on the website. It's going to be shown public hearings. But it shows what we're going to be doing when we pothole a property in order to determine what the service line is [inaudible 00:13:22]. I thought it was in case somebody drives up and asks you, you'll have first hand knowledge. They did a nice job with this.

[VIDEO PRESENTATION]

Mario:

Motions that we just passed was a delay in this vacuum excavation because of municipal permitting. What do you need for a City permit?

Larry:

You need a City permit.

Mario:

You need a city permit?

Larry:

We've received it from one city.

Mario:

Okay.

Larry:

Another city that we were piloted in, we've not received yet.

Mario:

Oh, okay.

Larry:

Sorry, I didn't-

Mario:

Which department?

Larry:

Take a guess.

Mario:

Oh, so building?

Sunny:

Probably though, yes.

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Mario:

Should have retired here.

Sunny:

Correct. [inaudible 00:15:52].

Mario:

I was going to say, there's a long list.

Larry:

So those are all my updates. I have one more, but I'm going to do it in one of the executive sessions.

David:

And did you get a chance to use the steamer with Josh?

Larry:

It's not here.

Catherine:

It's not here.

David:

Oh. I thought it was here. Okay.

Sunny:

It's being built suburban main module.

David:

I should remember that.

Sunny:

[inaudible 00:16:34] from the presentation, it's a customized machine.

David:

So with that we can, I think go to the RWAY update.

David:

We should have an executive session on that because it does involve discussion of negotiations. Motion to go into executive session to discuss RWAY CIS update pursuant to Connecticut, general Statute Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-201(b)(5)(B) pertaining to commercial and financial information.

Kevin:

So moved

David:

Is there a second?

Mario:

Second.

David:

Inviting the senior executive team. Okay. All those in favor say aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

David:

Unanimous.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION FROM 2:35 P.M. TO 2:50 P.M.]

David:

Motion to go into executive session to discuss pending litigation pursuant to Connecticut, general Statute Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters pertaining to litigation. Inviting the senior executive team and members of Grant & Eisenhofer.

Catherine:

So moved.

David:

Is there a second?

Mario:

Second.

David:

Okay. All those in favor say aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION FROM 2:50 P.M. TO 3:26 P.M.]

David:

Motion to go into executive session pursuant to Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(5)(B), pertaining to commercial and financial information. Inviting the senior executive team.

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Suzanne:

So moved.

Kevin:

Second.

David:

Okay. All those in favor say aye.

Authority members:

Aye.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION FROM 3:26 P.M. TO 4:42 P.M.]

David:

So what's your pleasure?

Suzanne:

Let's adjourn

David:

Okay, second?

Kevin:

Second.

David:

All those in favor?

Authority members:

Aye

David:

Thank you everybody