

**Representative Policy Board
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District**

**Application for Approval of the North
Branford Water Storage Tank Replacement
Project, in North Branford, Connecticut** : : **November 20, 2025**

**Final Decision, Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law
of the Representative Policy Board**

A. The Applicant’s Request

On July 29, 2025, the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA” or the “Applicant”), through the Authority, submitted an application to the Representative Policy Board (“RPB) for approval of the North Branford Water Storage Tank Replacement Project in North Branford, Connecticut (“Application” or “Project”).

The existing water storage tank is a 3.3 million gallon (MG) welded steel tank constructed in 1977. It is fed by the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant through the North Branford Pump Station, providing storage for the North Branford, Cherry Hill, and Stony Creek service areas.

During a project in 2016, structural issues were identified on the interior roof. Short-term repairs were made due to the risk associated with keeping the tank offline and the higher summertime demands. The repairs were designed to maintain structural stability for a period of 3-5 years. During this time, the condition of the tank was monitored through regular inspections. In 2024, an interior inspection was performed while in service and although it was stable photographs confirmed that the condition of the tank continued to decline with age. Although the repairs have lasted longer than anticipated, a permanent solution is necessary in the next few years to continue to provide a reliable supply for customers and emergency storage for fire protection, main breaks, and other emergencies.

Once the new tank is built and placed into service, the existing tank will be removed from service and demolished. By keeping the existing tank in service during construction, service to the supply areas will remain uninterrupted. The Project will also improve water quality by increasing mixing within the new tank and tank turnover.

The proposed Project cost is approximately \$10.2 million and includes a 10% contingency.

The Application for approval of the Project was filed pursuant to the statutory authority set forth in Section 19 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended.

B. Participants

In addition to the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”) and the RWA, the Office of Consumer Affairs (“OCA”) participated in this proceeding. The OCA is authorized by Section 15 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended, to act as the advocate for consumer interests in all matters that may affect water customers in the RWA’s District (“District”).

C. Statutory Standard

Pursuant to the legislation cited in paragraph A above, the RWA is required to obtain approval from the RPB prior to commencing any Project costing more than \$3.5 million dollars to repair, improve, construct, reconstruct, enlarge, or extend any of its properties or systems.

D. Notice and Procedures

Effective July 1, 2021, Senate Bill 1202, Section 163, permitted the RPB to hold the public hearing on the Application using electronic equipment or technology that facilitates real-time public access to meetings, including, but not limited to, telephonic, video, or other conferencing platforms. Other procedural requirements were also met. On August 28, 2025, the RPB voted unanimously to accept the Application as complete and called a public hearing on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., at the office of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water

Authority, 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, and via remote access. The RPB designated Jamie Mowat Young (Killingworth) to serve as Presiding Member at the public hearing.

As required by Section 10 of Special Act. No. 77-98, as amended by Public Act No. 02-85, the RPB published in the *Connecticut Post* and the *New Haven Register* the date, time, and place of the public hearing to be held by the RPB to consider the Application for approval. The date of publication was October 1, 2025. A copy of this notice was filed with the Office of the Clerk of each city and town within the district. The notice was posted on the RWA's website, including information about electronic participation for the meeting.

The Application also contained confidential information subject to protection under C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(E), for matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(19)(i)(ii), pertaining to safety risk.

E. Public Hearing

At the public hearing on October 23, 2025, the Applicant provided sworn testimony from Victor Benni, the RWA's Director of Engineering, and Orville Kelly, the RWA's Manager of Design and Construction. Messrs. Benni and Kelly provided a presentation that addressed the project background, approach, scope, need, alternatives analysis, project schedule, and budget. Project engineers, Christopher C. Bone, Jennifer Reynolds, and Heather Doolittle from Tighe & Bond were also present to answer questions.

The OCA provided a summary of his analysis of the Application as noted in his memorandum to the RPB dated October 16, 2025. Attorney Donofrio stated that the water storage tank is necessary for treated water and fire protection in North Branford. Based on his review of the confidential information provided with the Application, including the alternatives, and business case evaluation, he concluded that the integrity is compromised and that the alternative chosen is

the superior alternative. For these reasons and the reasons stated in his memorandum, the OCA recommended approval of the Application.

Members of the RPB asked questions of the Applicant regarding spending to date, project cost, salvageable items, tank capacity, unique factors, future needs, and prior tank replacement project cost comparisons.

F. Analysis

After considering all the evidence presented, the RPB believes that the Application is necessary and advances the policies and goals of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, is included in the five-year plan of capital improvements, and is in the best interest of the RWA and its customers. The presentation at the public hearing reinforced the need for and importance of the Project.

G. Conclusion

We therefore conclude that the Application for the North Branford Water Storage Tank Replacement Project should be approved. Separately stated findings of fact and conclusions of law are attached hereto as Exhibit A.

Exhibit A
Representative Policy Board
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District

Application for Approval of the North :
Branford Water Storage Tank Replacement : **November 20, 2025**
Project, in North Branford, Connecticut :

Findings of Fact

1. The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA”), through its five-member Authority, submitted an Application to the RPB for the North Branford Water Storage Tank Replacement Project (“Application” or “Project”) on July 29, 2025.
2. The Project is included in the FY 2026 Capital Improvement Project budget. The Project located in North Branford, Connecticut will commence in FY 2026, with completion planned in FY 2028, at a total Project cost of approximately \$10.2 million.
3. The Project provides the most efficient solution to the structural concerns and system operations of the existing North Branford Tank.
4. The Project maintains the necessary capacity to supply the North Branford, Cherry Hill, and Stony Creek service areas to meet the current and future needs.
5. The Project will improve water quality by reducing water age and in turn will help to ensure that chlorine residuals are maintained.
6. The proposed Project is consistent with, advances the policies and goals of the RWA, and is in the public interest.
7. The OCA recommended approval of the Application.

Conclusions of Law

1. The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority's ("RWA") application for approval of the North Branford Water Storage Tank Replacement project ("Application") on July 29, 2025, was filed pursuant to the statutory authority set forth in Section 19 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended.
2. Notice of the public hearing to consider the Application and to allow interested persons, including water users and property owners, within the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority District, to be heard was properly made on October 1, 2025, pursuant to Section 10 of Special Act No. 77-98, as amended.
3. Pursuant to Sections 10 and 19 of Special Act 77-98, as amended, the public hearing was held on October 23, 2025.
4. Based upon the above Findings of Fact, the Representative Policy Board concludes that the RWA's Application meets all requirements for approval.