

**Representative Policy Board  
Finance Committee  
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District  
Via remote access**

**MEETING TRANSCRIPTION**

**Monday, May 11, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.**

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**ATTENDEES:**   **Finance Committee Members:** Tim Slocum, Tom Clifford, Charles Havrda, Jasper J. Jaser, Vin Marino, Michelle Verderame, and Jamie Mowat Young

**RPB:** Mario Ricoszi, Mark Levine, Stephen Mongillo

**FMA:** David Borowy, Kevin Curseaden

**Management:** Larry Bingaman, Linda Discepolo, Rochelle Kowalski, Ted Norris

**OCA:** Jeffrey Donofrio

**RPB Staff:** Jennifer Slubowski

Tim:

Well, here we are. We've lapsed into 5:01. I don't know if we have everyone on board that we expect, but nonetheless I think I'll proceed with the meeting. Jennifer, do we have a safety moment? There we go. Once again, we're disinfecting clothes and doing our best to stop the spread of covid-19. I'm not sure this is the exact one we've seen in the past, but I'd say it's sufficient to know that we have it in front of us and we'll do our best.

Tim:

So, with that I'm going to move on to ... should I take ... have we been taking attendance, Jennifer? You just sort of log them in as you see them. She may be muted.

Rochelle:

You're on mute, Jennifer. You're on mute.

Tim:

Okay. Well, I think it's ... Jen, I think we know who's here. Right, Jennifer? We don't need to take attendance, right?

Jennifer:

Yes, I've been taking attendance. Yeah, it's in the minutes, so we can see who's here.

Tim:

Just as they log in. Okay.

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Jennifer:

I also just got an email that Jim Zeoli is here.

Tim:

So, that's sufficient for me.

Jennifer:

From Orange.

Vin:

Jen, now you know who sends his emails. No, that was from my phone. It's Vin Marino. I actually ended up back in the hospital

Jennifer:

Oh, okay.

Vin:

... back in the hospital, so I'm present and I can participate through the telephone, but I'm going to keep my video off.

Jennifer:

Okay, all right. Thanks Vin.

Tim:

Okay. That brings us on to number two, which is the approval of the minutes. First we have April 6, 2020. Anyone make a motion to approve those?

Tom:

I'll make a motion, an option for the minutes. Tom Clifford.

Tim:

Okay. Tom has made the motion. We have a second, I believe, from Jay? Discussion?

Jay:

Yes.

Tim:

Okay. No discussion. I assume. All those in favor?

GROUP:

Aye.

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Tim:

Approved. Okay. Very good. Those are approved and we now move to B, which was the minutes of April 22, 2020.

Tom:

I move those, too.

Tim:

Do we have a motion? Thank you, sir, Tom.

Jamie:

I'll second them. Jamie will second.

Tim:

Was that Jamie? Very good.

Jamie:

Yep.

Tim:

Jamie, that's very good. All those in favor?

GROUP:

Aye.

Tim:

Excellent. Okay. We now move onto a discussion of proposed FY 20/21 capital and operating maintenance budgets, and I presume by way of discussion we're not necessarily reviewing the budget, per se, but we did receive a wonderful predicate to any motion we're reviewing and that came from our OCA, Anthony DiSalvo ... No, no, excuse me, he's our big boss. Jeffrey Donofrio. Jeff, that was a really terrific letter.

Jeff:

Thank you.

Tim:

I think it was succinct, clear, and definitely to the point. And I think it did substantially define the efforts on behalf of management to put together a pretty terrific budget review and subsequent cuts and work-arounds, if you will. Do you want to add anything to that, Jeff?

Jeff:

No, I think I covered what I wanted to say in my letter, obviously a lot of work went into it.

Tim:

Yeah.

Jeff:

And the authority set a very good example for all of us in its ability to adapt very quickly to changing circumstances. And that word, which I saw again in Larry's email today, "adapt," is really a key word for all of us to keep in mind.

Tim:

Exactly. And I also think your letter does point out to the fact that none of us have a crystal ball and we're working around some foggy predictions, but at least this is an excellent start and I would be in support of your letter no question at all. Anyone have any comments on that? Larry, management, anyone want to speak to that at all?

Larry:

Yeah, first of all I've got a couple of comments and this may be a repetition of what I've said in the past, but one I've got to give the leadership team and their budget managers a lot of kudos in terms of the work that they did to substantially reduce the operating and the capital budgets. It was a great job by everyone concerned, in a short period of time.

Larry:

Secondly, we would not have been able to do this had there not been the partnership and collaboration between the Authority, the RPB, and management to come up with the policies and practices that significantly increased the strength of the organization that allowed us to be able to cut that capital budget in half and have it all internally funded, have it funded through internally generated funds. So, I think that shows the positive outcome of our partnership and our arrangement, while still maintaining oversight, appropriate oversight, but of us working together toward a common goal.

Tim:

Yeah, I think that's well said. Anyone else? Members of the committee? Okay. Now, as to a resolution that's been submitted to us, I think the resolution speaks to what we've been talking about. Now this is not something we advance as a resolution unto itself. We simply review it. Is that correct? Or shall I stand, be stood corrected? We're not entering this motion in our meeting tonight, are we? A recommendation to go forward?

Larry:

I think what you do is, is I think you adopt that to recommend at a full RPB for their consideration to adopt at their next meeting.

Tim:

Okay. Right. Okay. Then that's basically how I interpreted that as well. So with that I think that is a motion that we do more or less put on the floor, a motion to adopt the wording as specified and read out, declared, on the May 21, 2020 proposed resolution. Do we have a motion to adopt that? Going forward. Yes, go ahead, Jay.

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Jay:

Yeah, I'll make the motion to adopt the resolution as recommended.

Tim:

Okay. Do we have a second? Members of the committee, I haven't heard a second, but if someone would offer one.

Charles:

Oh, this is Charles, I'll second it.

Michelle:

It's Michelle, I'll second.

Tim:

Okay, Charles. Okay, we got Charles on that, Michelle, sorry. There you go. Any discussion, further discussion?

Stephen:

Hey, Tim, this is Steve Mongillo. I'm just curious.

Tim:

Yes, Steve.

Steve:

For your presentation, were there any concerns and if anyone can answer this it was with both presentations, were there any different concerns or questions that came up on the budget?

Tim:

I can't say specifically. I think we were ... I think just to sort of encapsulate what I took away, was that management presented what seemed to be ... and we mostly deemed to say, was a good budget. I mean, they made some substantial cuts where they needed to. They're paying for it based on internally generated funds for the most part. We all recognize we're putting off some pretty significant capital projects with the expectation and hope that they're back on board in the next fiscal budget cycle.

Tim:

And with that, I don't think there was any further concerns that I recall. Not any that I could recall.

Stephen:

Okay. Thanks.

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Tim:

We did discuss some other issues that I believe are unresolved, necessarily, we're not in executive session to really elaborate, but there again I think those were discussed and handled well. So beyond that I couldn't add anything, Stephen, and I thank you for joining us along with Mark Levine tonight.

Stephen:

No, yeah, we appreciated a good presentation and also the work that went into changing the budget at the last minute to react to the current circumstances.

Tim:

Right.

Stephen:

So, in our meeting there were no really outstanding [inaudible].

Speaker 5:

Otherwise your application would never be final.

Mark:

Just want to say ditto for everything that's been said so far. The management has done a great job on this. I just hope it isn't as bad as they're predicting.

Tim:

Yeah. And I guess maybe I could add, I've been around the block for ten years with this organization, so we've had a few firsts since I've come on board. You know, like with the lake falling apart there and then this. But I have to say, to see ... I was surprised with the level of clarity in the cutting and even the depths ... I honestly was. I figured they wouldn't come up with such a solid package, to be honest with you. I don't know why, they never demonstrated anything that would disappoint me before, but I was very pleasantly surprised with the quality and the caliber of the cutting and the examination, the whole thing going forward.

Tim:

Really, also containing the rates for the consumers, recognizing we're going to have a lot of situations with people out there that are in hard times, municipalities and otherwise. So, I think they've done great.

Tim:

I guess is there a vote to be taken now? I think we've discussed the motion that's to forward this to the RPB. So, I'll ask for a vote of all those present who can vote to do so. All in favor?

GROUP:

Aye.

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Tim:

Aye. Okay. I will recognize that as a unanimous vote of the Finance Committee as such. If anyone else voted your vote won't count. So, beyond that, I think that takes us to the attendance at the FMA meeting, coming up in May. Jay, you are on board for the May 21 meeting, it'll be a Zoom meeting. I know you probably want to rush down to the Authority since they're supposed to be open, but they've extended their closure. But beyond that ... I shouldn't say supposed to be, I should say could be, according to the Governor, but Larry's changed that.

Tim:

Will you be able to make that meeting, Jay?

Jay:

Yes, I will. Yes.

Tim:

Okay.

Jay:

That's based on the way we're doing it now. Not being present-

Tim:

Absolutely.

Jay:

... at the [crosstalk 00:14:26].

Tim:

I was just being a smart Alec. So, it is based on current method.

Jay:

Okay.

Tim:

Other than that, is there-

Jay:

I'm going to be there. Right.

Tim:

... okay, very good. So, that's known for the record. Anything under new business? I have nothing. Do any other members have anything to discuss briefly? Well, seeing no discussion, that's the best end to a discussion I could imagine. So, I guess I'm going to ask for a-

Jamie:

Hey, I have one question. I don't ... This is Jamie, can you hear me?

Tim:

I can.

Jamie:

Can you guys hear me?

Jay:

Yes, I can.

Jamie:

Okay.

Tim:

Yes.

Jamie:

[New headphones, 00:15:08] husband's technology and I echo in my ears, but Larry, I was curious if you're hearing back from employees about the ... the budget hasn't been shared with the employees yet, is that correct? Or has it?

Larry:

No, other than the budget managers that worked on their own individual budgets and submissions, it has not been shared generally across the organization.

Jamie:

You can beg off if you don't have a plan yet, but how ... I'm just curious about the impact on employees and if there's going to be a reaction from unions or anything, if there's any worry on your end on how to distribute the information, if you're expecting any kind of pushback from anybody.

Larry:

Well, I don't ... when we'll distribute it after we file it with the trustee, which will happen, it'll be approved by the authority after the next RPB meeting. They'll formally approve the budgets immediately following the RPB meeting. And then Rochelle will work with the trustee in terms of filing those budgets. And then we'll distribute that to operating managers. But the fact that they had input in ... Rochelle did a great job and as did Ted and his crew, of keeping them, keeping budget managers informed about the level of the budget. It shouldn't be a great surprise.

Larry:

I think there is a great deal of concern within the organization about are we going to be able to survive this without furloughs and the like, and we said that that would be the absolute last step that we would take, that we would have extensive shared sacrifices before we'd reach that particular step. But I think

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right now that's their particular concern. Along with those employees that are older employees within the organization are concerned about exposure and coming back to the RWA that they might be unduly exposed to the virus. So, that's something that we're taking into account in terms of ... as part of the return policy, which is another reason why we delayed it until at least June 20th.

Larry:

Rochelle, do you want to add anything to that from the O&M standpoint.

Rochelle:

I think, no, you covered ... I think you covered it. I believe that following the authority meeting there will be a [inaudible 00:17:38] to the employees regarding the budget.

Jamie:

Thank you very much.

Larry:

Ted, you want to add anything on the capital?

Ted:

No, I think I'm all set.

Larry:

Okay.

Tim:

Okay. Well, thank you. I guess that wraps it up then and I will ask for a motion to adjourn.

GROUP:

Move.

Tim:

So, I believe we have a motion. We have a second? We're adjourned.