

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority
Strategic Planning Committee
June 17, 2021
Meeting Transcription

[STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING BEGINS AT 2:52 P.M.]

David:

We are meeting as the strategic planning committee and first item is approval of the minutes meeting. What's your pleasure?

Kevin:

I move the minutes.

David:

Is there a second?

Tony:

Second.

David:

Are there any actions, additions, discussion? Seeing none sensing ready to vote all in favor, signify by saying aye. Those opposed, those abstaining.

Group:

Aye.

David:

This is 4-0-1 with Catherine abstaining. I'm assuming because you were not a member of the time here.

Catherine:

Yes.

David:

Very good. Thank you. All right. We'll move right into the committee charter and the work plan. What do we have coming up? There we go. All right. This is our charter and our purpose and hopefully you all had an opportunity to look at the red line. It defines us a little bit better. It tightens things up a little bit in terms of our oversight of... And getting reports and whatnot and following how we are monitoring the strategic plan and how we're moving along with it. So, hopefully that's ready for your consideration. I'm not seeing any comments or questions, what's your pleasure with regard to.

Suzanne:

Would you like a motion David? Do you need a motion? Do you need a motion to approve the strategic planning committee charter as amended?

David:

Right. Is there a second?

Tony:

Second.

David:

All right. I heard second from Tony. Thank you folks. Discussion. Discussion on the changes. All right. Sensing you're ready to vote all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Group:

Aye.

David:

Passes unanimously with the adjustments and amendments. Thank you very much. The work plan is next and we see certainly what we're covering this month and then our next meeting will be August. We'll discuss succession planning efforts, which are ongoing, and it's a very big effort on our organization's part and this'll be good to get that update. And then some internal business process improvements in November, and then we'll have the six-month progress on the operating plan and the global metrics come next February. Discussion on this?

Tony:

Motion to be adopted.

David:

There's a motion to adopt. Is there a second?

Catherine:

Second.

David:

Second by Catherine. Any further discussion? Sensing you're ready to vote all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Group:

Aye.

David:

I heard five ayes. So passes unanimously. Thank you. Now we'll go right into the meat of the business and that is our strategic plan presentation or update on where we are and the activities and the action items that will move us forward with our plan. So I will hand this over to Larry.

Larry:

Very good. Thank you so much. The way we have this. See Jennifer. There we go. Going to make that a little larger. There you go. Great. Thank you.

David:

That's good.

Larry:

So I'll review, first of all, kind of give an overview of the 2025 strategic plan changes and then turn it over to Beth who will review the fiscal 22 goals and objectives. So back to the first slide, you'll recall that the leadership team has spent quite a bit of time in planning meetings to re-examine the 2025 strategic plan, which was originally developed six years ago. Along with some mega trends, as we looked at our long-term priorities in the 2050 blue sky session.

Larry:

As a result of that work and that thinking we've stepped back and took up a long overall view of the 2025 plan for greater efficiency and effecting this. So keeping in mind that the strategic plan is a rolling dynamic document because situations change and adjustments need to be made to keep it relevant and its implementation moving forward.

Larry:

So we decided to reconstitute the 2025 strategic plan with four objectives in mind, which are the following. First, we wanted to simplify the strategic plan. Second, we wanted to eliminate the guideposts in which there were seven or eight of those and reintroduced the four perspectives of the balanced scorecard system, which is listed here on the left-hand side of the slide, which are the customer and constituent point of view, the employee view, the financial perspective and the internal business process, or how efficiently you are operating efficiently. So we wanted to simplify that plan. Third, we wanted to link each one of these perspectives to an overarching strategy, of which there are a summary of those strategies listed here in the refresh 2050 plan, so that we have the four perspectives and the 12 strategies that we'll be looking at over the next five years and then action plans will be developed for each one of those strategies. And then we wanted to be able to better link our operating and capital budgets to support the various operating initiatives going forward, which are listed on the next slide.

Larry:

So here the five goal areas or the five-year goal areas are summarized on this slide and they grew out of the strategies that was listed on the previous slide. A lot of time was spent to develop the goals that when attain will improve the organization so it achieves a best in class standing, and the goal areas listed here, all connect back to one of the overarching strategies listed on the previous slide and cover all

aspects of the organization that we think about and work organizationally. These include some stretch goals. Consider some of the 2050 priorities that we identified for action. And they are all smart goals, meaning that they're specific, measurable, actionable, relevant, and time bound.

Larry:

So with that as a backdrop for the 2025 plan, I'll turn it over to Beth who will walk you through the fiscal 22 action plan, a link of initiatives that link back to many of the goal areas that were listed on this slide. And she'll also give you a glimpse of our fiscal 22 global metrics. So with that, Beth, I'll turn it over to you.

Beth:

Sure. So we'll run quickly through this. I've tried to highlight some of the main themes in the FY22 action plan. As Larry mentioned, we have our perspectives that align with the 25 plan. First being our customer and constituent's perspective and we've established initiatives that, as Larry mentioned, are smart. So they're very measurable and we are very conscious of that as we built these initiatives. The customer perspective will cover things such as first contact resolution, which was, if you remember, identified as an opportunity in some of our customer satisfaction surveys. We also have a target around our e-billing, as well as our monthly billing conversion project that's going on. And obviously the commercial billing that you just heard us speak about in the previous committee.

Beth:

We also have a focus on our community liaison program. We've had much success in FY22 standing those up, and the focus next year will be, excuse me, this year FY22 will be around public safety officials throughout our service area.

Beth:

In terms of employee learning and growth. Obviously safety is a huge priority for the organization. So there is initiative around developing and executing a new program entitled, "Safety Starts With Me". That'll be rolled out in FY22. Succession planning, which as you saw from the work plan, will be a highlight of one of the committee meetings come August. And this is really to focus on specific areas of where we need to focus in on succession planning and then implementing for those critical positions. Another focus in the employee learning and growth area is our diversity equity and inclusion activities. This specifically talks about an action plan based on the survey that was just completed. Employee engagement is another large initiative, as well as diversity in increasing representation in some under-representative job groups. Jennifer, if you want to go to the next slide.

Beth:

Financial. We focused again on our commercial enterprises activities. You heard a lot about that in the last committee, including the design and standup of the structure of those entered that enterprise. Also, you heard strategic acquisitions being part of the plan. So these have been highlighted in our action plan for FY22, adding an additional non-regulated service offering. Another area is alternative financing in our capital budget. You've heard us talk a lot about state, federal, loan and grant opportunities, so we put a metric around that for FY22. And the last is with regards to our capital budgeting and unplanned

expenditures with an eye on trying to change the culture to more of a planning and execution against that plan in terms of our capital needs. Jennifer if you want to go to the next slide.

Beth:

Internal business process. I'll just highlight the major ones here.

Jennifer:

Looks frozen.

Tony:

Where's IT, where's IT? Come on.

Prem:

Come on Tony. Looks like she just froze. Larry you're calling her, looks like.

Larry:

I'm calling her. Hi kiddo, we lost you.

Beth:

Oh.

Larry:

There you are, okay you're back.

Beth:

Okay. But yeah. My internet connection is unstable, so, I don't know what's going on, but Prem FYI.

Suzanne:

Is that the user of the connection or the actual connection.

Beth:

I don't know Suzanne, good question.

Beth:

Hey! So just getting back to internal business process, I'll highlight a few, our three R's, which I've talked a lot about in terms of risk, redundancy and resiliency. We've captured that in FY22 work plan under our risk mitigation team, really with an emphasis on reviewing our top 10 enterprise risk and associated mitigation plans. The Lead and Copper Rule is going to be a big effort in FY22. That's a revision to EPA's federal rule that will have large implications for the organization, so that we felt as calling out as a very strategic initiative for FY22. As well as asset management, our watershed management, business continuity, process improvements, cyber security and obsolete technologies and I would love to say that this was the original list. This is actually a paired down version of what the leadership team wanted to

work on in FY22, so we've got a lot on our plate, but a lot of good team members to help along the way. If you want to hit the next slide, Jennifer.

Beth:

So this is just a snapshot of our global metrics. Every year, we establish global metrics in addition to some KPI's, these are metrics that will result in additional payout bonus into the 401k. If we meet various numbers and criteria. We've tried to take a snapshot across all those initiatives I just went through, to get a well-balanced scorecard, but e-billing will be a global metric of 30% safety. It's a constant here of, of reaching zero preventable injuries, capital planning management. I mentioned that when I highlighted that and that unplanned capital expenditures will be no more than 5% of the FY 22 budget. Disinfection byproducts is a standard for us. That's a compliance with drinking water standards, which we meet, but it is a constant challenge. And that's because there's a lot of different variables that go into making sure we meet that measure.

Beth:

Process improvements. Again, another focus that I mentioned. From a financial perspective, we've identified coverage of 114% with no shortfall. Again, Michelle tells us that's going to be a stretch goal. Commercial enterprise growth, we mentioned previously our two acquisitions and the last one around our capital spend, which is again, has been a fairly constant for us of 96%, which is typically a stretch for us depending on the year as well. So that's the overview of the FY22 initiatives, as well as our global metrics.

Beth:

And with that, I'm happy to answer any questions.

David:

Questions regarding our goals. A five-year plan that's out of the seven metrics and the 12 of action for this year.

Suzanne:

The only thing I would just say is that it would be helpful to see in contrast to what they are. So for example, 30% e-bill is how much of a lift. Is it a 10%? Is it a 20% of whatever?

Beth:

We're about 27% Suzanne. So it's an additional 3%. Yep.

Prem:

And what is these 42% [end of the year? 00:46:36]

Beth:

And just to clarify, Suzanne, as we do, in next month's report, when we talk about kind of the goals, we can include that in terms of performance against 21. As we round out the FY22, roll up of the strategic plan. So that'll be in July's reports.

Suzanne:

Okay. Thank you.

David:

Other questions or comments? You were on one page, but now I have to scroll. I don't see any other questions or comments. Okay, we'll move on to the, did you want to highlight in the next presentation a bit as well. Larry, or is that just the detail behind the,

Larry:

Just the detail behind the presentation that we made.

David:

Okay, that's what it looked like. But after reading that and still being awake, I thought, I'd ask tonight. All right. Seeing that there are no other questions or comments regarding our update, I will ask that we adjourn as the strategic planning committee and resume as the full Authority. Who would like to move that? Is there a second?

Kevin:

Second.

David:

Second by Kevin, all those in favor, signify by saying, aye.

Group:

Aye.

David:

Passes unanimously, first I was remiss, I did not welcome Mark. He came in while we were doing this. So welcome our RPB member here. Thank you. Thank you for your patience.

[STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING ADJOURNS AT 3:09 P.M.]