

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority
August 19, 2021
Meeting Transcription

David:

Hi, Jim. Jim's on there. Ted's on there. Good. Yeah, looks like we've got everybody. All right. So then I will call this August meeting of the Regional Water Authority to order at 12:30. And I would ask that Jeanine do our safety moment, first.

Jeanine:

I got to unmute myself, sorry.

David:

Okay.

Jeanine:

Very apropos, maybe, with whether we might be having shortly. But this safety moment is all about flood safety and preparedness. And making sure that you know the difference between a flood watch and a flood warning. Flood watch means a floor or flash flood is possible. And a flood warning means flooding or flashing is already occurring or will occur soon, so take immediate precaution. I learned something by reading this because I didn't realize what the difference between those two were. In any event, be prepared. Create an evacuation plan. Of course, that includes your little pets. Ensure family members know how to get in touch with each other if they are separated. Prepare emergency kits and construct barriers to stop flood water from entering your home. That is about it.

David:

All right. Thank you, Jeanine.

Jeanine:

You're welcome.

David:

We will be cautious for that.

Jeanine:

Yes.

David:

And as we're in hurricane season, that's good.

Jeanine:

Yes.

David:

All right, so we'll go right to item B and our guest this afternoon. Brian Stone, the President of the Claire C. Bennitt Watershed Fund. And we're anxious to hear your report. Of course, we've all seen it and hopefully had a chance to read it. But always good to have you say hello and welcome.

Brian Stone:

Thank you. So, I'm sure you've all reviewed the package of documents that [inaudible 00:28:02] sent out. It's been a very good year for the Watershed Fund. Certainly from an income standpoint, because of the stock market taking off. We broke the \$2 million mark. If you look at the cover letter, we have between the two funds as of August 13, \$2,158,000+.

Brian Stone:

To put that in some perspective, I think we started with a million dollars when the Watershed Fund was founded. We've given away some over half a million dollars, and we have \$2,100,000. So from a financial standpoint, we're in pretty good shape. Looking at our income statement that Rob put together. You can see, most of that gain is from investment performance. We are at \$568,000 in our investments. Obviously, that's variable from year to year, but it was a bang up year.

Brian Stone:

Golf tournament revenues. I think that's the highest we've obtained. Well, it's actually a little more than that, when we found after they ended the fiscal year, monies that have been received.

Brian Stone:

Grants. You see the grants is 15 grants. That's actually a two year period. That's because of COVID. We kicked over to this year. There are this past year with some of the grants. Total grants are \$114,291. Actually, it's \$12,000 more than that, because there's actually two years for St. Martin de Porres. It was \$12,000 each year. And those two years have been, the second year has passed. So if you look at, that's why there's a differential between what you see on the income statement and what you see in the list of grants.

Brian Stone:

Scholarships were way down this year for a number of reasons. One, we had a lot of seniors last year. And two, COVID again. Getting the word out, we had very significant fewer applications this year, this past year, for scholarships. But very good candidates. I think there's 12 scholarship recipients this year. And that total scholarship award is

Brian Stone:

Total scholarship awards at \$36,250. That concludes the report, anybody have any questions, I'll be happy to answer them. [inaudible 00:31:22].

Mark:

Does anybody mind if I speak?

David:

No. Mark.

Mark:

This Watershed Fund was started when I remember starting it a long time ago, and the purpose of the fund was to buy land, to help to buy land from grants from the state and stuff like that. In the last year or two, how much money have we used towards purchase of land? Any, Brian?

Brian Stone:

Zero.

Mark:

Zero. So are we not doing it? Are we not... I know we've bought some land, and I don't know why we haven't used that money to buy some of the land.

Brian Stone:

If you bought land, you haven't brought an application before us to contribute to that.

Mark:

You haven't gotten an application from the water authority for the use of that money to buy land.

Brian Stone:

That's correct.

Mark:

Is there a reason for that? Does anybody know the answer to that?

Brian Stone:

It's a good question. You're absolutely right, that along with the education side is the prime markets for the fund.

Mark:

Oh yeah, and this year you gave out a lot, a lot of money. Was it \$100,000 or something, right?. I don't have it on screen.

Brian Stone:

That's actually two years.

Mark:

Okay. Most of our land purchases are between probably 200,000 or \$500,000, and that kind of money could help defer costs from the water authority for purchasing those lands. I don't understand why we haven't used it. It's just a question that I had.

Larry:

Mark, this is Larry. Typically, when we do buy land, John Triana includes an application in his planning to the Watershed Fund. I'm not sure whether he has anything planned yet or not, and maybe Ted's got a

better handle on that, but he typically is very diligent about applying to the Watershed Fund to help offset the capital cost of buying land.

Mark:

Okay. That's a question that I'll have to ask them and land use, but I know we've bought some land in the last two years.

Rochelle:

Mark, just to let you know, we have gotten, on our last two purchases, we did get open space grants from-

Mark:

I know, I understand that, but that wasn't for the full amount.

Tony:

Has there been any land that we have not been able to buy because we didn't have funds for it?

Mark:

No, we are using our funds to buy the land, and that was the Watershed Fund's premium purpose. In other words, I'm just giving you example, you buy something for \$100,000 and you get a \$75,000 grant from the state to buy the land, then we would take \$25,000 from the Watershed Fund and buy the land. It wouldn't affect the water company's bottom line, that's what I thought it was used for.

Rochelle:

Mark, just to mention how we actually are doing that, how we're not using debt to finance the land acquisition. When we sell land, we put it in a particular account, and that's going to be used using to purchase in addition to the grants on there that I mentioned. But we could definitely... Excuse me?

Mark:

We're not using the Watershed Fund, which has a lot of money.

Rochelle:

Right.

Mark:

We're not using money from the Watershed Fund.

Larry:

Mark, you make a very good point, and we'll look into it and get back to you.

Mark:

Thank you. That's all I [crosstalk 00:35:09].

Tony:

I want to continue to talk about this, because the question assumes that we are not spending money on land because we don't spend money on land. The issue is, there's been no land for us to spend money on, so we've been looking at the alternative missions part of that, which is the education of the people in our region.

Mark:

I have no problem with that, believe me.

Tony:

You asked the question though, Mark, and you always do that. It throws a bomb into the middle of everything, so that people have to say, why aren't we doing that? There's a reason why we're not doing it.

Mark:

That's the question, why aren't we doing that? That is the question, why aren't we taking money from the Watershed Fund to buy land?

Tony:

Because there's no land to buy Mark.

Mark:

We've bought land in the last two or three years.

Tony:

But we didn't need the Watershed money.

Mark:

But why don't we use it?

Tony:

Why should we use it?

Mark:

Why do we use that, if you say that you don't want to use it, fine with me, but that was the purpose of the fund. I'm only a visitor, so I'll bow out.

David:

No, Mark, I appreciate your comment, and it's good to keep it top of mind. But I would say that if we have the money available from other land purchases, other landscales I mean, and that is part of the purpose of that money is to use to buy additional lands. I would rather see the money taken from there, so that the money that's in the Watershed Fund can continue to be invested and continue to grow with interest. Because it is invested in a more aggressive way than what we're able to invest our different funds in because we have to keep them more [inaudible 00:36:48].

Mark:

Fine. I was just looking for an answer.

David:

I'm not adverse to putting in an application, but if we've got the funds available through grants and through previous sales of land, as Rochelle explained, that that might be the way that we're going on purpose. However, you bring up a good point, because it hadn't actually been overtly talked about. I think that's something that next time we have a land purchase, we certainly are going to do, and I appreciate you bringing it up.

Mark:

Sorry to cause a tussle, but I'm glad I found out the answer.

David:

Okay. Thank you, Mark.

Brian Stone:

I would just say, Dave, that historically, in the early years particularly, we had purchases which were much more substantial in acreage and expense than these. Those were what I remember seeing years ago, when we would go getting more regular applications. We were contributing a portion that deferred part of the cost.

Mark:

I just wanted to say, I'm not against what you're doing with the money, because that's fantastic, the scholarships and the money you're giving up. I have no problem with that.

David:

All right. Thank you. That was a lively discussion about an important issue, so that was good to keep it top of mind for us when we have the next land purchase that may come up. Are their questions regarding Brian's report to us? There are some action items on here. Brian, do you want to elaborate a little bit on that? I think in your comments, you did mention that you'd like to add a couple of directors.

Brian Stone:

Yes, we would. First we have four directors whose terms are expiring, including yours truly. That's Tom Clifford, Elizabeth Moore, Kate Powell, and myself. We all would like to continue on as members of the board, so we would ask for reappointment of those members. We have two members that will propose, both, one directly in one kind of indirectly from Tony, who brought them to us. They were interviewed by our nominating committee, approved unanimously by our board to recommend those to you. I've spoken to both gentlemen, they're excited about being on the board, they're both well-spoken, outgoing.

Brian Stone:

I had fairly long conversations with both, and I think they'll be welcome additions to the board.

David:

Good. Helps spread the workload a little bit.

Brian Stone:

Yes, and hopefully help to generate more projects, both money outgoing and money incoming.

David:

Just a technical question, if I could, regarding that. Since you will have 12 members, would it not make sense to align their terms to be four in each year, because they are three year terms. Would we not want to, instead of making the new people's terms till 2024, then you would have six members of the 12 member board up in one year. Could we do one of the new members where their term is till '22 and then one of them till '23? That'll spread it out, similar we did when the RPB expanded with the new land acquisition.

Brian Stone:

Yes, I think that makes sense, actually.

David:

Okay. As long as you don't object to that, I think that's what I'm going to suggest. Are there questions regarding the additional members or the renewal of the four existing members?

Kevin:

I make a motion to approve the first resolution or both resolutions, if we can act simultaneously.

David:

Okay. I'm sorry?

Tony:

Second.

David:

Second, okay. Brian has seconded it. I would ask that in the resolution proposing the new members, that they be listed as one, having Scott having a term ending in 2022 and Marco having a term ending in 2023.

Tony:

Now those would be three year terms, those are at the expiration dates, for the existing members.

David:

They're replacing existing members?

Tony:

No, no, no, but the terms are for three years, so you want to make one two years and one three years from now. That would be 2023 and 2024.

David:

But we'll have the same problem then for 2024, 3 years from now, then there'll be board members already coming up. So one is going to have to be a one-year term, one's going to be a two year term, because you've got four of your 12 members now that will already be up in three years. Just to even them out and make four, four and four.

Brian Stone:

Oh, I see what you're saying.

David:

One person's term expires a year from now, one of the new people, one of the new people's terms to expire two years from now, and then you existing four people being-

Brian Stone:

And then we'll go back, okay, that's fine. I'm sorry. I misunderstood what you were saying before.

David:

Okay. I just think that just-

Brian Stone:

Now that I'm looking at the list I got it.

David:

Okay, yeah, that's what I was looking at. Kevin, is that all right with you, that that's part of your motion?

Kevin:

I can amend, yes. I can make that part of my motion, correct. Yes, no problem.

Brian Stone:

I don't care which one, just pick one.

David:

Just the way they were in order on the motion, Scott's name was first, so we'll give him a one-year term and give Marco a two year term.

Brian Stone:

Okay.

David:

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority
August 19, 2021

Then you can certainly ask for the renewal a year from now with their other three colleagues, if they so choose and you so choose.

Brian Stone:

Remember this isn't the full... or was it, yeah it is. Yeah. I'm sorry, go ahead.

David:

I'm sorry?

Kevin:

[inaudible 00:43:27].

Tony:

We can't hear you, Brian.

David:

Yeah, I can't hear you too clearly.

Brian Stone:

[inaudible 00:43:31].

David:

I heard you say that.

Brian Stone:

Okay. I'm sorry. There's nothing I was [inaudible 00:43:38].

David:

Okay. All right, so are we ready to vote on the renewal of the four directors who are retiring for three additional years and then the two new members, one for one year, one for two years. Ready to vote folks? I see some yeses. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

Participants:

Aye.

David:

Those opposed, those abstaining. Passes four to zero with those present and voting. Perfect. Now, I believe is the only action we needed to take. Brian, is there anything else?

Brian Stone:

Somebody put on your agenda fundraising.

David:

Oh, yeah, there was the talk. We did talk at a meeting a couple meetings ago about the fact that there was a couple of the donations, a \$10,000 donation, a fund made, and the \$5,000 one as a one-time off to help with COVID, which wasn't necessarily part of the mission of the group, as Mark clearly reminded us, thankfully, but earlier.

David:

We just didn't know whether we wanted to have a continuation of that discussion or not. I think at the time we felt that it was unusual, but COVID certainly was unusual. We were willing to say that that was fine, because it was a one off or two off situation, and we appreciate that you were trying to help the community.

Brian Stone:

I can tell you regarding that, that in my time I spent a lot of time in the distribution committee and now as president, those are the best grants, donations that I think we've ever made. I tried to call, [inaudible 00:45:37], with the first one, the \$5,000, which the [inaudible 00:45:39] paid ours. They just did an amazing job, I went to their kickoff event, and it was inspiring. They did a great job getting out with the interview they got done at the [inaudible 00:46:00].

David:

Thank you. Any further discussion regarding that? All right. Well, Brian, I thank you very much, maybe next time we get together in person and we can provide you lunch.

Brian Stone:

It would be nice, I was hoping that would be the case by now, but not to be, unfortunately.

David:

We were too. You're welcome to stay, as you know, as an old RPB member. What's coming up.

Brian Stone:

I have a few little work items I need to take care of, so thank you for the invitation, but I'm going to take my leave.

David:

All right. Well, thank you so much for your hard work and pass it along to the board.

Brian Stone:

Thank you. Everybody have a good weekend.

David:

Thank you, you too. All right, folks, that moves us on to item C in the agenda, to me is the Environmental Health Committee. Who would like to move that we recess the Authority [inaudible 00:46:56] committee? Don't all jump at once. Catherine moves, who seconds?

Kevin:

Second.

David:

It's Kevin second, all right. All those in favor, say aye.

Participants:

Aye.

David:

Passes as unanimous. Actually heard all the ayes, that's good. All right, so Kevin, it's your meeting now.

[ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETS FROM 12:51 P.M. TO 2:30 P.M.]

[RECORDING FOR CONSENT AGENDA WAS ACTIVATED. ON MOTION MADE BY MR. CURSEADEN, SECONDED BY MS. LAMARR, AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THE AUTHORITY VOTED TO APPROVE THE ITEMS IN THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. CHAIR BOROWY DISCUSSED THE CANCELLATION OF THE AUTHORITY'S REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 16, 2021. THE MEETING HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED AS A SPECIAL MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 23, 2021, SEE MINUTES FOR DETAILED INFORMATION]

Kevin:

That'd be filed with the RPB and that it's complete. A public hearing be held on Thursday, September 16th, which I believe now has probably moved to September 23rd. Is that correct?

David:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Kevin:

Rochelle discussed the ten-year model. There was discussions. It was a nice presentation and there was always a good discussion about different scenarios and things that are considered and pointed questions for Rochelle about certain aspects of it, pension funding, trends, leverage and timing of the next model. That was essentially it.

David:

Thank you. Catherine, you want to let us know about the Land Use Committee that continue your hat trick here?

Don:

Since the last meeting of the Authority, I have attended five committee meetings and let's see, there were two July 19th. There were two; there was Finance and Consumer Affairs, since the last meeting and then also, in August, Land Use and Consumer Affairs. So-

David:

We'll block off some time here and let's hear the reports.

Catherine:

So on July 19th, I attended the Finance Committee Meeting. RPB, let's see..

David:

That's right. There were two the same night.

Catherine:

Yes and one ran a little late, but that's okay. I'll try to run through this as quickly as possible. Although, this was the fun part for me. So the Chair of the committee was reelected, Mr. Slocum, as a Chairperson for this current fiscal year. What's more than 10 minutes were accepted and that thing. Rochelle Kowalski gave a comprehensive financial report and analysis covering the balance sheet statement of revenues and maintenance of a 10 year test operating and maintenance, key variances, and capital expenditures. Some things that I found interesting that I'll just highlight a few things; the audit was beginning that week and something also I found interesting is that there were deferred charges on the OPEB and pension plan that needed an update from the actuaries. So, that's something that she was working on.

Catherine:

I'm going to highlight this because I continue to say that the RWA should be complimented on the management of expenses through the pandemic, which resulted in a strong year and results. Skipping through a lot of things. There were a lot of adjustments that were made with respect to the capital budget that assisted in getting those to the year end. Sorry, I thought I had just turned all my phones off. The investment returns that we had lower interest rates, which really hurt our investment returns, but good news, no change in the credit rating and the official statement was being updated.

Catherine:

Rochelle also went through a dashboard of metrics for the fiscal 2021, fourth quarter. I think that's about it for that meeting. We went into the Consumer Affairs Committee meeting where the highlight of that meeting was far too many minutes here [inaudible 02:29:31]. The highlight of that meeting was a presentation by Prem of the strategic plan and objectives; focusing on what the mega trends were for the strategic plan, how we need to force our agility and looking at telecommuting as a norm going forward, what types of government involvement needed to be incorporated the importance of financial integrity and generational changes of between customers, employees, and clean and safe water.

Catherine:

Let's see... The next meeting I attended was... Kevin already talked about that, the Finance Committee of August 9th. There was the Land Use Committee on the 11th of August. That was nice. We were out at Lake Gaillard. It was a hot day, but still, it was very pretty out there. Jim and I were suffering because we both hate humidity. There was a really good presentation about the history of Lake Gaillard that was done by John. A really comprehensive report on a number of activities, including, some of which we've actually heard about today like how the water company is dealing with forestry related issues, update on the rental houses, which we already know about, the need for addressing the land we need for the water we use and how we're addressing various properties. Interesting report on the recreation activities. There was a butterfly walk, where 20 participants were acquitted. There were a number of the fishing at Lake Maltby.

Catherine:

Two people caught tag fishing and won prizes. That's fun news. Something that I found very interesting, we talked I think, they would go about an encroachment that happened by a property owner in east Haven; who did quite a bit of damage to RWA property that is moving along. The landowner has claimed that he's completely innocent, but it looks like the RWA is taking appropriate, in my opinion, of very appropriate steps to make sure that we are not only compensated. This is never going to happen again on that property. A fence is being put up on the property line. Then-

Tony:

Can I interrupt you for a second?

Catherine:

Absolutely.

Tony:

On the houses, was there a mention of what the intent and the disposition is on the Skiff Street house?

Catherine:

Yes. The 233 Skiff street?

Tony:

Yeah.

Catherine:

The town attorney's office has pushed it to the town engineer. There was a need with them and consultants and an updated map was sent into town engineered for review. So it's still in the works. I'm sorry, there's a lot of material here. I'm just trying to go quickly. The last meeting I attended was the Consumer Affairs Committee.

Tony:

Thank you very much for doing that.

Catherine:

Yeah, that's fine. That was easy. That was Monday and... Tough when have to read my own handwriting. I know what my secretary goes through now. When you think I would have had because it's the most recent one. Prem provided a very interesting update on the pipe state benefits. In particular, this is something I found personally a little bit disconcerting, is that there's a competitor that has been approaching municipalities to get those municipalities to endorse that their product over ours. As a person who's worked in government for a couple of decades, I've found that incredibly offensive and probably illegal for a government to promote one of-

Catherine:

For the government to promote one product over another in the marketplace. That was something that friend talked about. We also went into making some changes to the rules and regulations for water

service and water rules that was approved to move to the full RPB. There were no active consumer complaints. The very low bill for our Office of Consumer Affairs was approved. That's about it.

David:

All right.

Catherine:

I don't get to go to any more meetings for the next two months. Right?

David:

You are signed up for the next one, which is fine.

Catherine:

Yes, I will be there.

David:

Well again, thank you for filling in for Tony at the last minute of the Consumer Affairs.

Catherine:

Not a problem.

David:

Questions on the reports? Seeing none and sensing you're ready to move on. The next item is the Strategic Planning Committee. So I'll ask if we could recess as the authority and meet as a Strategic Planning Committee.

Kevin:

So moved.

David:

By Kevin. Second by Catherine, all those in favor, signify by saying aye passes unanimous.

[STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETS FROM 2:52 P.M. TO 3:35 P.M.]

David:

All right. We have next on our agenda, act on items arising from committee meetings. I don't think we had actions in our committee meetings, so we shouldn't have any item here that we can move on to updates. Which is going to include a possible executive session. Then we will have an executive session regarding real estate. Larry, if you can give us what you're available to give us a public session, then we'll go into executive session to discuss the items that you have.

Larry:

Right. We've had had some activity around the COVID issue. I thought I'd have Jeanine give a quick update on COVID, I'll do my highlight report, then I'll ask that we go into executive session to discuss a

cybersecurity matter. Just to give the board a heads up on an issue that we experienced at the end of July. With that Jeanine, do you want to talk about COVID?

Jeanine:

Sure. I'd hate to talk about COVID, but I know we have to talk about COVID. I think we announced that Beth's last meeting in June, that this was all going to be your last COVID report. But unfortunately here we are back at it. Just wanted to let you know that as of our last report, at the end of June we had 33 confirmed cases from March of 2021. We have since had two that have tickled up in the months of July and the beginning of August. Both of those cases originated from daughters of both of those individuals. They weren't transmitted from employee to employee. In addition, both of those individuals are unvaccinated. That's probably not a surprise to most of you. I'll let you know about that. Both of them are back and feeling fine. But it did tick up a little bit.

Jeanine:

You are probably aware that the return to work committee has decided to require masks in the office, regardless of vaccination status. We did that actually a couple of days, maybe four or five days in advance of Mayor Elickers mandate, because we felt it was in the best interest of our employees. Everybody that is in this 90 Sergeant Drive office, if they're outside of their own office space, they're wearing masks. We've also had to re-institute midday cleaning of offices and the bathrooms. So again, trying to stay ahead of what might turn out to be an uptick in cases as we've all seen across the country. And we are re instituting the weekend, Clorox 360 treatments, where we spray down everything at 90 Sargent Drive and all of our treatment plans. We are going to be asking employees next week to provide us with their vaccination status and give us proof of their vaccination card.

Jeanine:

Right now we did a survey months ago. We asked people just informally, we didn't require it and we didn't get a total response. But of the people that responded, we estimated about 67% of the staff are vaccinated. We believe that number is higher just anecdotally people have told me in the last couple of weeks that they've gotten vaccinated. So I know that number is higher. The idea behind asking for their status and getting proof is using it to help us make decisions going forward. I think it's critical that we know the vaccination status of our employees before we make any more decisions about whether it's mandating vaccines or mandating testing for non-vaccinated people or anything like that. So I think it's good to know that. So we'll know that within the next couple of weeks.

Jeanine:

I believe the executive order around virtual meetings expires on 9/30. I'd imagine that might be extended based on the little bit of a crisis that we're going through. I think this is round four of the COVID crisis. Lastly, we are currently planning to begin to start sending letters around shots the end of this month for a 9/30 implementation of shots. I know that the group is monitoring pure as guidance and whatnot. But right now that's the date that we have and that we're working with that is it for my update.

Catherine:

Are you taking steps to verify the vaccination cards?

Jeanine:

There's this whole market out there. I don't know. I will tell you, I haven't really thought about what that would look like. I mean, frankly, we could ask them to provide us from their providers. But you know that during this time a lot like myself, I drove up to a place. I didn't have a doctor's order for one and I got it and they gave me my card and I walked away. So I'm not sure what that would look like. I will tell you that we have already a large amount of people that we are aware. Because when we sent out a spreadsheet before and asked people to fill it out, they gave us the exact dates of what they have. I want to trust and rely that our people are fairly trustworthy. But we all know that that's not always the case. But I really, Catherine, I don't really know how to do that. I haven't really thought that part through.

Catherine:

If you want to talk offline.

Jeanine:

Okay, perfect.

Catherine:

How I've been thinking about this.

Jeanine:

Okay, great.

Catherine:

Okay.

David:

All right. Any other questions on the COVID update?

Larry:

Okay. I'll give you a few highlights and key points from my monthly board letter. First, I advised you that the initial month of revenue from our Roche plumbing acquisition are better than target. So that was some good news there. And I let you know that we're continuing work on advancing our commercial business expansion. We have some valuations underway on a potential lab acquisition. We're doing a financial assessment on another plumbing services company. So that's moving along. We're also have initiated talks with a multi-state well services company. And we just engaged at no cost, a business broker who will reach out and contact companies that fit within our enabling legislation. So that will help us, I think, develop a better pipeline of companies for us to consider. On the pipe safe front Prem reached out and met with town officials from Wolcott and Waterbury on the potential of extending the RWA's PipeSafe service to the residents. We're looking at scheduling a meeting with the town of Meriden to do the same thing.

Larry:

I also let you know that our year end audit is underway. And Rochelle and her team are hard at work moving that along. I think she'll provide you with fiscal 21 audit statements at the September board meeting. Thirdly, I provided you with some information on our efforts to pursue federal water

infrastructure funding. Including, reaching out to representative Johanna Hayes, to familiarize her with the issues surrounding RWA not being eligible for that funding in prior efforts, because it's a water district. A meeting is being set up for next week to meet with her staff. I also sent out personalized letters to all the towns CEOs in our water district, asking them to consider allocating a portion of their ARPA funds to the RWA.

Larry:

And as a result of that, we had meetings with the Mayors of Ansonia and East Haven. As well as meeting with some of the staff of New Haven. Which resulted in some positive indications. I'm also really pleased to report that as you may recall, that Senator Murphy staff contacted RWA about submitting some treatment projects for consideration of a list that they were putting together. Ted and Rochelle put that information together. And we just found out that our treatment projects that were asked for are on that list of that congressionally directed spending. And we asked for about \$4.8 million in funding on a cost of about 6.9 million. So that will hopefully will be positive. And the interior subcommittee that has jurisdiction over part of this process will report their recommendations after Labor Day. So hopefully we'll continue to have positive results there.

Larry:

And as you know, the Senate recently passed their \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill. Investment for the water infrastructure totals about \$55 billion, which is probably going to be the largest investments in clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in American history. So the house will debate that when it returns after the summer break in late September.

Larry:

So just to give you a feel for what we've been doing about our extensive efforts. I provided an addendum to this month's board report that outlined past efforts for outreach, and then also what our strategy is going forward. Thirdly, on the infrastructure funding front. Ted and Rochelle, again, partnered up and they submitted a letter to WIFIA to ask for partial funding of our improvements on the Lake Whitney dam. While the WIFIA loan cannot exceed 49% of the eligible costs, it can be used in combination with the state revolving fund in the form of loans and grants. So hopefully we'll be eligible there and maybe get as much as 80% of the cost of that dam covered through loans and grants.

Larry:

Lastly, I let you know that that operations is deploying a water conservation main flushing technology called No-Des, that began piloting actually last year. And it's use is not only a process to flush our mains, that results in little to no water being wasted. But also it can help assess the condition of our water mains. So the NO-Des system cleans our water mains using a special filtration system that uses less water, minimizes the impact on customers in terms of water quality. And last month, the crews use No-Des to clean water mains at East Haven. And this month they're doing that in New Haven. So far, we haven't had any complaints based on that flushing activity. Good news there. So those are the highlights from my monthly board letter and I'd be glad to take any questions.

Catherine:

Couple of questions.

David:

Sure.

Tony:

What's happening with our staff, in relationship to the work at home, work in the office, kind of arrangement. Is there discussion going on? Is there a general sense of where our staff is in relationship to this? Is there a general sense of where we are in relationship to this?

Larry:

Yeah. I think as you know, we instituted a policy when the employees came back in June. That they could work two days at home in consultation with their manager, for those that can work at home. And three days in the office feedback has been very positive from employees that they liked that flexibility to do that. It seems to be working well. I'm certainly not aware of any issues and I'll ask Jeanine to chime in there, whether or not she is aware of any issues, but I think it's working well, Tony. And the employees seem to like it.

Tony:

Good.

Jeanine:

No problems that I've heard and it's going to become necessary. It is necessary for us to recruit people to. Because everybody is looking for that sort of flexibility.

Tony:

A hybrid of some kind.

Jeanine:

Exactly.

David:

Absolutely.

Tony:

What if anything is happening with the Sargent Drive building? I haven't heard anything, but every so often I hear a whisper.

David:

We're going to hear something on next agenda item.

Tony:

Okay.

David:

Any other questions?

Catherine:

Larry, it's not a question, but a comment. I think the work that you're doing with respect to our congressional delegation is excellent. And you know this is the time to be aggressive it's exactly what you're doing. So good job.

Larry:

Thank you. Thank you very much. Appreciate your support and suggestions.

David:

No other questions or comments. Larry, I think we need to do is go into executive session to discuss [inaudible 03:03:03]

Larry:

Cybersecurity issue that I'd like to bring to the board's attention.

David:

Right. And then also real estate negotiations.

Larry:

Correct.

David:

So if I could have a motion for that, that would be great. Inviting senior executive team and our members. So moved by Catherine, is there a second?

Tony:

Second.

David:

Second by Tony? All those in favor signify by saying aye. [crosstalk 03:03:27]

[AUTHORITY MEETS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION FROM 3:50 TO 4:56 P.M.]

David:

So I will declare us out of executive session and we are back in regular session and I will move to, is there a second that big smile by Kevin as a second. Good. All right. All those in favor, signify by saying, aye.

All:

Aye. Aye. [crosstalk 03:03:49]