

**Representative Policy Board
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
March 24, 2022
Meeting Transcription**

Mario:

We're all being recorded. It is 6:30. Welcome to the regular meeting of the Representative Policy Board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District for March 24th, 2022. It's 6:30. I'm Mario Ricoszi. Going down into the agenda, the first item of business is the safety moment. And we're talking about the March thaw, so everyone should be happy [crosstalk 00:01:10] with March's thaw. I'm sorry, if you're an avid skier, you can go North. And it is spring, so be very careful during the mornings and the evenings, possibly black ice and very, very slippery when you don't even expect it, which is the worst kind. So please be careful. The next item of business is the approval of the minutes of February 24th, that there's a motion?

Greg:

So moved.

Mario:

Okay, we have a motion. Second. Any additions?

Mike:

I will abstain.

Mario:

Okay. We have an abstention. Any additions, corrections, or amendments? Okay, hearing none. All in favor?

Group:

Aye.

Mario:

Opposed? And abstentions. Mike abstained.

Mario:

Okay. Thank you. Welcome everyone. Piece of communications, our April meetings as of today are still on for being live and in person, or if you prefer, we anticipate having a digital option that you can join that way. So it will be a hybrid meeting. If the conditions change, which they've been fairly stable for the last couple of weeks, we'll obviously let you know and we'll go to just the virtual meetings. But I think everyone that was at the EXCOM committee meeting was comfortable in going to, at least allowing people to come live. When you do get your invitation, if you are planning to do the meeting virtually, if you'd please let Jennifer know or let her know either way, whether it's a committee meeting the full RPB meeting, or the budget meetings, because Prem wants to know and try and figure out how to set up the room as best he can for the audio. Okay? So please...

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Brian:

[crosstalk 00:03:34]. When is a good [inaudible 00:03:36].

Mario:

Thank you.

Brian:

When are the budget meetings? Just to confirm.

Mario:

I'm sorry, what was that?

Brian:

What are the dates of the budget meetings just to confirm? Because...

Mario:

The Finance committee budget meeting is April 20th. That's a Wednesday, at 5:00 PM. That will include an executive session if there are questions about the commercial business enterprises. They'll be covered at a high level during the budget presentation, but then there's an executive session afterwards in case there are questions that really should not be answered in public session. And then the Consumer Affairs committee and Land Use committee's joint meeting is Monday, April 18th at 5:30. And that's the regular meeting for consumer affairs. That will also include the executive session at the end of the agenda. And you're obviously welcome to attend one or both of the meetings. So if you can't make Wednesday night, go Monday. If you can't make Monday night, go Wednesday. But it's important that we obviously all get an understanding of what the budget is being proposed. Okay? [crosstalk 00:04:59] Anything else?

Mike:

Mario?

Jamie:

Did I understand you? Because I had written down five o'clock on the 20th and then I had written down five o'clock on the 18th, but we only need it's 5:30 on the 18th? Is that right?

Mario:

5:30 on the 18th.

Jamie:

Is that right? And but, only one or the other? We don't have to be at both.

Mario:

You do not have to attend both.

Jamie:

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Okay. Thank you.

Mario:

Some of us like to go to both because we just enjoy it so much.

Bruce:

Hey Mario, it's Bruce McDermott.

Mario:

Yes, Bruce.

Bruce:

I'm sorry, to the point about Prem needing to set up the room. How is the RPB meeting being noticed for the public?

Mario:

We're... At this point, the anticipation is we're noticing it as an in person meeting, because we anticipate having a forum in person.

Bruce:

Okay.

Mario:

At least that's my understanding. Unless someone...

Jennifer:

[crosstalk 00:05:58] Can I?

Mario:

...knows differently. Jennifer's going to correct me please.

Jennifer:

Yes. I'm going to note it as in person with an option to join remotely.

Mario:

Right.

Tim:

[crosstalk 00:06:11] That's correct. That's...

Jennifer:

[crosstalk 00:06:11] Because I have to notify the public about that, but they are able to join in person or by whatever method we use, teams, digital, whatever.

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Brian:

Do we have to also vote whether masks are required?

Mario:

We could do that, if in fact that is the policy for the RWA. At that point in time.

Mike:

What was the question?

Mario:

If there would be a requirement to wear masks.

Mike:

Oh, I see.

Mario:

Because that's the policy of the RWA for their facilities, then that will be noted in the meeting announcements.

Mike:

Thank you.

Mario:

Okay. Any other questions on the budget meetings? Or any...

Larry:

Mario? This is Larry. Just for the record we have made wearing of masks in the building, I think as of March 20th or so... Anyway, we've made it voluntary. So if an individual wishes to wear a mask they're they can, but they're not required to.

Mario:

Yeah, that's what I anticipated, but just in case things change. Okay. Thank you very much, Larry. Appreciate that. Okay. Nothing else on going live? I guess Jennifer may very well provide cookies for the RPB meeting, but not the committee meetings. We'll see. She'll let us know. Depends on the budget. We're up to items for consideration and action. The first item is the final decision recommendation and Jamie Mowat Young, if you wouldn't mind.

Jamie:

Okay. The Representative Policy Board of the South Central Regional Water Authority proposed resolution dated March 24th, 2022 for the authorities application for the approval of the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant, clarifiers, recycle pump station, concrete restoration project, and the HVAC and electrical improvements located in North Branford, Connecticut. Be it resolved that the proposed findings of fact, conclusions of law, and final decision of the Representative Policy Board with respect to the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authorities application for the Lake Gaillard Water

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Treatment Plant, clarifiers, recycle pump station, and concrete restoration project, and the HVAC and electrical improvements located in North Branford, Connecticut, which copy is attached hereto, be and hereby is approved in the form, submitted to the meeting.

Mario:

Is there a second to that motion?

Tim:

Second.

Mario:

We have a second. Thank you, Tim. Discussion questions. We had the public hearing. I want to thank Jamie for sharing that public hearing and Jeff Donofrio 00:09:20 for providing his report. Okay. After hearing no questions, all those in favor of the resolution. Say aye.

Group:

[crosstalk 00:09:30] Aye.

Mario:

Any opposed? Any abstaining? Okay. Thank you very much, Jamie. Passes. In that case, we go on to the financing resolution. Tim was on standby in case the first resolution passed and Tim, if you would.

Tim:

Well, I'm printing the resolution now since it passed. No, I will go forward with the resolution. Thank you. This is a representative policy board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District, proposed resolution approving the issuance of bonds. Whereas the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, the authority proposes to issue its bonds, which may be issued as project loan obligations delivered to the state of Connecticut. The bonds in accordance with special Act 77-98 of the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut has amended the act on a parody with, or subordinate to, bonds issued pursuant to the water system, revenue bond resolutions, general bond resolution adopted by the authority, and approved by the Representative Policy Board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District, the RPB, on July 31st, 1980, as amended and supplemented, the general bond resolution, and whereas the act authorizes the authority to borrow money and to is its bonds subject to the approval of the RPB.

Tim:

Now therefore, be it resolved that, number one, the RPB hereby approves the issuance of the authorities bonds in an aggregate principle amount, not to exceed \$7 million.

Tim:

Number two, the bonds may be issued as obligations in one or more series, pursuant to a supplemental resolution, to be adopted by the authority for each series of bonds, each of which shall specify the amount of the bonds, the purpose for which the bonds are to be issued, the date or dates, maturities, sinking fund installments, if any, interest rates, serious denominations, form redemption prices, security

provisions, and other details of the bonds as the authorities shall determine in accordance with the limits established by the applicable provisions of the general bond resolution.

Tim:

And hereby, number three, the purpose of the bonds shall be to finance or refinance the construction costs of the Lake Gaillard Water Treatment Plant that is, LGWTP Clarifier Project. And to pay costs of issuance of the bonds, the project, and associated reserves.

Tim:

Four. The bonds may be sold by negotiation, or serial, or term bonds with state of maturities and may be sold in a private placement to the State of Connecticut or a purchaser approved by the authority. Here ends the resolution.

Jamie:

I'll second that.

Mario:

[crosstalk 00:12:31] Thank you, Jamie. We have a motion and a second. Just one comment. Because I had to check with Rochelle. The reason this is a \$7 million, is that it, this is the portion that's going for drinking water state revolving fund. So that requires the separate resolution. We've already approved the total of bonds for, as part of the budgeting. So any discussion questions, comments? Okay. Hearing none. We'll try your minds. All those in favor, say aye.

Group:

Aye.

Mario:

Opposed and abstaining. Thank you very much, Mr. Slocum.

Tim:

My pleasure.

Mario:

[crosstalk 00:13:21] And that brings us to reports, and since you have the floor, continue.

Tim:

And I have a report. Essentially, the report is our meeting of March 14th, which took place remotely. Everyone present, including Mario. It was a good meeting. Basically, essentially called for the purpose of Mr. Nossak, of CliftonLarsonAllen, the new firm name, basically for the firm we've been working with for a while now, to be the external auditor. Their purpose is to review the authorities audit plan and process for fiscal year 2022. And he also discussed the firm's scope of engagement, current future accounting standards, he discussed cybersecurity matters, risk assessment, consolidated entities, and audit areas with committee members.

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Tim:

We did ask a few additional questions in other... There were some questions about the entity that's owned within the organization. That's semi-private, if you will, they're functioning, that's the well drilling company. We queried whether or not that would be included in the audit. It is because, it's a new situation sort of, and he said, it's absolutely included. It's wholly under the umbrella of the organization, it's not a private enterprise, so to speak. So he clarified that absolutely would be included in the audit.

Tim:

And there were some other questions answered, well addressed, and answered. And we had a level of confidence that things were going to take place. He assured us that it's not a humdrum thing they do every year. And we expect hearts and flowers at the end of it. They do look at it as if they're starting afresh. So with that, we had a report after the conclusion of that from Rochelle about updating some of the other systems, other projects that are in work. And finally, that pretty much closed out the meeting. It was not a real long meeting for us. And our next meeting will be April 20th, which is the, no, our next meeting will be April 11th. And our special meeting, which Mario had announced will be April 20th, regarding the budget. So we welcome me to both of those, or certainly you get to read the minutes anyway, of the first one. So that's my report, Mr. Chairman.

Mario:

Thank you very much. Questions, comments, for Tim? Okay. Thank you, Tim. Appreciate it. The Land Use Committee, Chair Betkoski.

Peter:

Good evening, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Tim. For your report. Also, we had our meeting Wednesday, March 9th. It was very interesting. As usual, land use is the most interesting board. We went through our safety moment. You were talking about the safety moment, we're going into spring, preventative mold maintenance, so... Clean in your house and your gutters, et cetera.

Peter:

We did our approval minutes and then we had an interesting discussion from [John Triana 00:16:48] on, in 1901 the typhoid epidemic. It's really in depth. It's all in our minutes, all the information. If you have time, I would suggest that you read it. John does an amazing job with his research and keeps us up to speed with our predecessors. We came a long way, but how you filter the stations now and everything you want, you'd be amazed how they started all this, but it was very, very interesting. Then he went over his, our RWA properties, all the invasive species updates. We're trying to get outside for next meeting. So, and that was about it. Our next meeting will be April 13th. If there any questions, I'd be happy to answer if I could.

Tim:

Peter?

Peter:

Yes.

Tim:

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If I may, Tim Slocum. You know, Peter, some of these reading and reviewing your minutes, you guys do have a very interesting committee. You get to hear a lot of stuff and we get to read about it in the minutes, but some of those things like the one you just talked about with typhoid and stuff like that, probably some of those conversations might be of interest to the consumer. And I was wondering if we could think of it as an organization, to maybe make some of these special case presentations available on the website as a video. If it's feasible, if it's of interest, because you know, everyone looks at videos and stuff like that. And that might be just an interesting history ticker, that the public could enjoy. That's just a thought, not a conversation to have here, but maybe your committee would want to review it because you're right. You get to see and hear about a lot of interesting stuff that other YouTubers might love to see.

Peter:

I agree. That's a very good point, Tim. I will bring it up to the committee and see what their intention, or, I agree. Anyone? Well, I don't know if we want to get comment on it now because we have quite an exciting committee and they'll probably all comment on it.

Tim:

Yeah. I think it can go back to the organization as a whole. I think if you took it up there or Mario decides to take it up with EXCOM or something like that, or probably should take it up with leadership first, but...

Jamie:

Right.

Peter:

Good point, Jennifer make a note of that for me. So when we put our next agenda together to land use, we'll bring it up. Thanks so much.

Jamie:

Tim. [crosstalk 00:19:21] I think it's a great idea, but I do think it's probably better suited going to Larry and the executive team because they...

Tim:

That's what I...

Jamie:

To run that through their communications and PR team rather than land use.

Tim:

Right. And I actually said it probably should be seen by the leadership first so that I agree with you completely, Jamie.

Peter:

Yeah. You did clarify that. Thank you.

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Mario:

Okay. Thank you. Any other questions for Land Use Committee? All right. Thank you very much, Peter. Chairman Mongillo, Consumer Affairs Committee.

Stephen:

Good evening. Everyone. Consumer affairs has met twice. Our February meeting, Rochelle was there to give the same presentation that finance had on the refinancing of the bonds. Good effort there to reduce cost and substantial savings was realized. Went over details of that process for us. She was also kind enough to go over several consumer bills that I had submitted to her. The transition in January had two things happening. We had a rate increase that impacted on January 5th, and also we went to monthly billing and depending upon the cycle, some things were kind of in both areas and they had those particular changes had to be meshed for that period of time. So she did a good job of explaining it to us, which we appreciated.

Stephen:

We met this past Monday, had just a great update from the IT department on cyber resiliency and cyber technology. And also the threats they're in. Prem was there with both Kevin Schnaitmann and Laura Gonzalez on his team. That particular update was held in executive session because of the nature of it. So I can't go into detail, but I will go over some of the topics we covered. Starting with the governance for his group, was really helpful to have an organizational chart of everybody and what their roles were. And also realize there are external stakeholders and partners that also have concerns about cybersecurity that work with the authority and can help the authority and vice versa.

Stephen:

Next, they presented us with an enterprise security roadmap to go over all the activities that were current and planned for the next couple of years, followed by a presentation of their dashboard so that they could keep track of all of the different things that they were doing. This is an effort that really has multi levels and many things that they're working on at the same time. So the dashboard helps them organize that.

Stephen:

And lastly, they presented the state of the business, cyber initiative dashboard, went over projects that were completed, some other... I'm not going to go into detail, right. But other activities that were included under that. So it was very substantive report on consumer affairs because of the impact of this issue on the organization will continue to monitor cyber security, get updates periodically. And we thank Prem and his team for the information. Jeff reported in both meetings that we've had no consumer issues, which is great. And he also reported he had been working on the Lake Gaillard improvements and also currently working with reviewing bids that are coming in, working with the RWA on the sort of the impact and how to process those. And also has some meetings internally with RWA on some other issues. So again, our next meeting will be the special meeting to go over the budgets on April 18th. And that's my report for consumer affairs.

Mario:

Thank you very much, Steve. Questions? Okay. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Stephen:

Sure.

Mario:

The next committee's the Executive Committee. We met on March 16th. We discussed over back and forth, as far as open, not open in April. So you got the results of that. We'll be having our meetings in person, but we wanted to make sure that we offered some sort of a hybrid and remote option as people may not feel comfortable coming in. We also looked at what the RWA is looking at for some of the capital projects coming up that may need public hearings and would come to the RPB. It's a very busy schedule. So we'll be looking for people to tap for holding those public hearings and being the presiding member. So if the phone rings and it's me please pick it up.

Mario:

We also have a couple of nominating committees that will be coming up. The near term one, which will be convening in May, so it's not immediate, will be for RPB officers. So if you're interested in that one, please let Jennifer know, because she's better at writing things down than I am. If you called me. And this way we'll put together a group of people to look at our RPB officers. And then over the summer, we'll be putting together another nominating committee for the authority position that's coming due. And then we talked a little bit in big picture terms about the commercial business enterprises and we look forward to the budget meetings on that. And that's all I have if there's any questions? Okay. If you were on earlier, you heard David explain why the authorities meeting is postponed for a week, but David, if you have any brief report. And Larry, send it over to you.

David:

Sure. I'll. Yeah, thank you. I will repeat to be official. We did postpone our meeting till next week. We combined it with our budget workshop that we're having. We had a member who is away on service us to our country this week and he's chairman of the two committees that are scheduled to meet this month. So it just made sense to combine it with our meeting for next Thursday. So thank you for your indulgence. I do want to thank you for your support of the application, a little while ago, when you voted, we really do need to take care of Lake Gaillard and all of our facilities and the fact that you support our keeping them in good condition and solid shape for the whole system, we greatly appreciate that. And now what I know you really wanted to hear, Larry's got the water level.

Larry:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, just a general comment that the authorities doing well. We're ahead of plan in terms of our financial results, still with some uncertainty on, with the impact of COVID, but we're doing well. And now for the reservoir levels, the latest numbers that we have as of March 15th, our current reservoirs are 98% compared to the previous year of 91% and an historical average of 87%. So we're well situated for having a warm summer. So that concludes my report for this evening.

Mark:

Lots of sun and no rain this summer.

Larry:

Right. I agree. Do the no rain dance Mark.

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Mark:

I'll try.

Mario:

Okay. Thank you very much. Any questions?

Tim:

I have a quick question and it's not specifically, it's just a question that can get answered later, but it comes out of a municipality report for Cheshire. And it happens to do with my drive by of that property and the forest and stuff. And it looks like the forest is under some distress and I just was questioning whether that is my imagination, or if it's something recognized. I know there's none scheduled maintenance on the forestry aspect of it. But if someone could get back to me on that, I would love it.

Larry:

Sure. We'll have Sunny, that falls under his area of responsibility. And so Sunny will probably confer with either John Triana or others in that section. And we'll get back to you with an answer. And maybe what we'll do is report that at the March 31 or no, wait, I'm sorry. We'll get back with an answer.

Tim:

And my reference is specific to the pine growth, that aspect of it.

Larry:

Okay.

Mario:

Thank you. Any other questions? All right. Thank you very much, David. And Larry, appreciate that. Yeah.

David:

Thank you.

Mario:

OCA, Mr. Donofrio.

Jeff:

It's been pretty quiet as Steve indicated. There's no pending consumer complaints. I did, yesterday was regional water day in my life. I did have a meeting with Prem and Dana, via zoom and then an in person meeting with Sonny. So I had the pleasure to meet Sonny for the first time, and we talked about a couple of potential projects down the road that he wanted me to be aware of. And I really appreciated the opportunity to talk to him about some capital projects.

Mario:

Good. Thank you very much, Jeff. And Mr. McDermott, I want to thank you for your assistance during this switching to virtual meetings and your input this evening, and making sure that we stay on the

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straight and narrow, and as far as helping Jennifer out with making sure we put our right notices out there. Any words of wisdom for us?

Mr. McDermott:

No, thank you. It's been my pleasure. And I look forward to seeing everyone in person. Hard to believe it's been two years.

Mario:

Yes, it has.

Mario:

We have no further business listed, scheduled. Looking for a motion. Anyone wish... [inaudible 00:31:21]
We have a motion. Second. We're adjourned at 7:01, Jennifer. Thank you all for attending. And can't wait to see everybody in person.