

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

**May 26, 2022
Meeting Transcript**

Chairman: Welcome everyone to the meeting of the representative policy board, of May 26th. It is 6:36 and we'll start the meeting. As we start, I would like to ask if we could do a moment of silence for all the activities and issues that have come up over the last couple days in Texas, send our collective prayers and thoughts to the community and the families.

Thank you very much.

First item on the agenda is the approval of minutes of April 28th. After the safety moment on water safety month. Don't swim in reservoirs, supervise children while they're doing that. And use your life jackets. Please read through all the details Jennifer put together. Thank you.

Now onto the minutes of April 28th. Is there motion to approve?

Tim: Motion.

Chairman: Thank you Tim. Second,

Charles: Second.

Chairman: Second. Thank you Charles. Any amendments, corrections, additions, to the minutes?

Okay. All in favor? [crosstalk]. Opposed? And abstaining? Approved. Thank you very much. Few communications; one is the special RPB meeting for Thursday, June 9th, 6:30 PM. What we're going to do is open the RPB meeting, we're then going to put it in poll [inaudible], have a public hearing, which the finance committee recommended on the authorities' application for the Lake Whitney Dam initial design project phase. And then there was some information on that in your packet. And then after the public hearing, we'll reconvene the RPB meeting and discuss public hearing and the application. And if appropriate, we will make motion on the application.

So just read through the information in your packet. Also on the June 19th meeting we will have, should the application be approved, there's also a funding resolution that the financial committee has moved forward. So that's also in your packet. There are several members whose terms expire June 30th. Please be reminded that the term will continue until someone else is appointed or you've been reappointed. Tim, we did receive yours and we also received Jamie's. Jamie has a new position with the state treasurer's office. She's done some extensive research as far as checking on whether or not she can continue on the RPB and has the legal opinion from the state treasurer's office attorney regarding that. So please congratulate Jamie on her new position and she will be

continuing on the RPB. She just got reappointed. I believe letters went out to everyone else whose terms are expiring and to your first selectman or mayors, requesting that they reappoint you. So be on the lookout for that. I think that's all the communications that we have currently. We do have an item for consideration and action, a resolution on the authorities' proposed fiscal year of 2023 budget. And Tim, if I could ask you to,

Tim: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Yeah. Be happy to put the motion on the table. This would be a proposed motion dated May 26th, 2022. Whereas the regional water authority requested the representative policy board to review the author's FY 2023 proposed capital and operating budgets. And whereas the RPB held workshops on April 18th, 2022 and April 20th, 2022, at which time, management and the authority presented the proposed budgets and responded to questions in a professional, concise and articulate way. And whereas the RPB has the duty to review the budgets and to comment, but has no other statutory obligation or authority, now therefore be resolved of the RPB wishes to express its appreciation to management and to the authority, the professionalism of their presentation and express its overall support of the FY 2023 proposed budgets, and further resolve that the RPB also agrees with the recommendations contained in the OCA's budget review letter dated April 27th, 2022, and support the budgets and further resolve that the RPB consensus regarding the proposed budgets is that they are reasonable and supported and further resolve that the RPB believes that the RPB's questions were adequately addressed and the members were satisfied. The management's responses. Here ends the motion [crosstalk]

Chairman: Thank you, Charles, for seconding the motion. Any discussion?

Jay: Second, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Jay. Any discussion, comments, Mr. Donofrio anything else you wish to add to your memo?

Jeff: No, thank you.

Chairman: Okay. Thank you very much. Hearing no comments after everyone's been through the budget. All those in favor, sign by saying aye.

Group: Aye.

Chairman: Anyone opposed? Anyone abstaining? Okay, the ayes have it. Thank you very much management and the Authority for the budget. Thank you for your support.

David: Yes. Thank you for your support. Absolutely.

Chairman: We now go to reports and the first one is the Finance committee.

Ti,: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Finance met on Wednesday, May 18th at five o'clock. Our principal responsibility that evening was really to go over two resolutions, which have been distributed with tonight's packet. Basically, it was the committee to move the Lake Whitney Dam Initial Design Project motion. They passed along by us for approval and then to set the public hearing date and for this important project. And that was essentially what we did in that meeting as there's any further resolution or discussion on it. And we're obviously dealing with the Lake Whitney Dam Initial Design Application. So that would be my report. Our next meeting is slated for, I'll have to remind myself, but it will be, it doesn't say here. I guess I left that out. So it's next month.

Chairman: It'll be in June.

Tim: It'll be in June.

Chairman: Second Monday.

Tim: Second Monday. I'll be there.

Chairman: Questions for the Finance committee.

Tim: Keep them brief.

Chairman: Okay. Thank you very much.

Tim: Thank you.

Chairman: Land Use committee, instigating as he has on many occasions, Bob Harvey.

Bob: Thank you, Mario. We had our meeting on May 11th and it was held at the Waite Street Gardens. We had a special presentation from Mr. Ron Walters, who is a Senior Environmental Analyst for the water company. And what they did was tell us a little about the backgrounds of the pollinator gardens, where they have collaborated with other entities to start them. And you also expressed to us that it was a three year plan, getting them all going, but it was very informative. And if anyone has any questions, I'll try to answer them.

Chairman: Questions. Were you able to get everyone safely in and out of the pollinator garden?

Bob: Yes, we were.

Chairman: Okay.

Greg: I actually have a question, Bob, on pollinator gardens.

Bob: Yes.

Greg: Because it's sort of an interesting concept in a way, there's always been pollination, we assume, seeing butterflies. Why are these gardens becoming an issue? Is it because of the increased forestation, degradation of sort of like these flora type of, milkweed type of plant? What's going on.

Bob: There's special plants that are planted so that the fauna can stop at them as they migrate. And some of the plants that they like to stop at are becoming diminished due to invasives.

Chairman: Thank you Bob.

Bob: And then help keep the pollinators alive.

Chairman: Other questions for Bob? Okay. Thank you very much. Appreciate that.

Bob: Very welcome.

Chairman: Consumer Affairs committee, Steve.

Stephen: Yeah. Thanks Mario. Consumer Affairs met on the 16th of May and Tom Barger, who is Manager of Water Quality, was at our meeting to provide an update on the proposed lead and copper rule. This rule is a complex issue with major issues where RWA, because it involves many areas of the RWA over several years. It's even more difficult because the final rule has not been set. And also the funding for this, what will be available is also not completely known. As a reminder, this issue involves all service connections, which has to be evaluated for type and that info to come from RWA records, town records and physical inspection. RWA has to also provide private management as other tasks that are identified may be required. So he talked about work, that it includes inventory mapping, conversion of paper electronic [inaudible] control treatment procedures, because depend on what the connections are proposed. Field investigations, communications plan, very complex communication with the towns, customers, schools, daycare facilities, and also back and forth with federal and state agencies. Scheduling on this is also complex because of a project [inaudible] and again, financing the project, and that's as far as in terms of what those sources may be. We don't know what the resources are, so all of those areas are involved in it and their resources are going to be [inaudible] number of years.

So Tom went into detail on what's been done so far and all those areas, what they're currently doing and what future plans are. So very comprehensive report appreciated. Jeff reported that Consumer Affairs has been working on a bunch of new [inaudible]. There will be meetings June, September, and our next meeting is June 27th. So that's what Consumer Affairs has been doing.

Chairman: Thank you, Steve, any questions for Consumer Affairs? Thank you very much. On to the Nominating Committee, Charles.

Charles: Nominating committee has been put in place now. And we will make the report which is required. We had one person express some interest.

Chairman: Questions for Nominating committee? Thank you very much. Left enough time for Authority and management, David and Larry.

David: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mario. We'll be brief. In lieu of the time we met as the Audit-Risk committee. So if we can have Catherine give a brief report.

Catherine: All right, I'll make it as brief as possible. The Audit-Risk committee met earlier this morning or earlier this afternoon, we viewed a [inaudible] concerning for updating the RWA's risk management plan, the committee also viewed the work plan for fiscal 2023, which includes a plan for the audit. Also an internal audit, and decided to report on specific measurements at the May 2023 meeting. That concludes my report.

David: All right. Thank you, Catherine. Any questions? All right. We also met as the Environmental Health and Safety committee and Kevin has a report.

Kevin: Yes, good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the commission. The first thing person we heard from was Will Henley, Senior Aquatic Resource Specialist regarding the implementation of the new stream flow standard that's put in place of DC 11. The RWA is ahead of schedule with that, doing a great job, making sure that they're compliant with the standards. We also heard from Donna Verdisco and Amanda Schenkle, who uphold health and safety updates and environmental compliance updates. With respect to the health and safety, they are working on the Safety Starts With Me training and updates on the health and safety of RWA [inaudible]. They went over the current fiscal year preventable injury goals and the steps being taken to achieving goals of preventable injury with focus on hazard identification and misreporting. And then with respect to the environmental compliance update, they discussed how they're keeping the company safe through strong risk and compliance controls. We had another extensive conversation about the risk matrix and their plans and opportunities, also challenges, and they presented updates related to significant industrial user permits. Beneficial use determination permits, as well as our ozone monitoring efforts at the Whitney Water Treatment Plant. And that's my update.

David: Thank you, Kevin. Are there questions for Kevin? All right. Not seeing any. We also met in our rather long and long thorough discussion regarding an application that we voted unanimously to support and sent forward to you folks regarding the comprehensive Customer Information Systems. And you'll be receiving that in the coming days and we recessed our meeting and we will be meeting after your public hearing to finalize our budgets and file them, taking into consideration your comments, we appreciate you for that. And now Larry, you've got the business partner meeting.

Larry: All right. Thank you. Well, first of all, from a COVID update, since our last report, we've had 11 new cases impacted two departments. And since May of 2022, as of May 2022, we've had a total of 82 confirmed cases since 2020, when the COVID began, which prompted us to send everybody home and have as many people work remotely as they

can. In terms of the financial report, our up requirement, our operating revenues are over budget by about \$2.3 million operating expenses are under budget by about \$4 million. When we do all the puts and takes, we are projecting a coverage ratio of 129%, which is four percentage points higher than last month. And of course, we've got two weeks left for the fiscal year. So we're keeping fingers crossed that nothing changes on the expense front. Now for all the news that I know you've been waiting for on May 16th, our reservoir levels were at 98% compared to a long term average of 94%.

So we're doing well there. And I also wanted to mention that all the issues with the Derby tank have been settled. We anticipate beginning construction in the first quarter, of our fiscal year, 2023. So because the approved price for that project is over what the RPB approved we'll be bringing it to the finance committee for the June meeting, having a discussion on that. And hopefully the finance committee would be agreeable to recommending that to the RPB. So we'll have that discussion at the June meeting. And I also wanted to say thanks to Steve Mongillo for his participation in the Whitney community meetings, he was actively engaged and answered a lot of the questions from the community members we had about 26 people in two meetings, one virtual one in person. And Steve did a great job answering the questions, I understand. So thanks Steve, for taking time out and for your participation in that meeting.

Stephen: Thank you. I was glad to be a part of it.

Larry: Well, thank you. And with that, I think that's the highlight. So I'll answer any questions that you might have.

Stephen: Was there any concentration of the COVID cases in particular?

Larry: There were two departments where the 11 cases that happened this last month occurred, and that's really the reason why we sent people home because this is the first time we experienced knowingly where employees have apparently given it to one another, given it to another employee, it's all been to the outside in prior, in prior months.

Mark: And did the Hamden meetings generally go as positively as we could hope for at this point?

Larry: Yeah, well the Whitney meeting, there was a lot of questions asked, but it was around things like construction schedule, what's going to be the impact to the environment. What's, what's the impact of the lake. Some questions about, who's going to pay for this, some questions about the look of the dam when the work is done. So they all seemed to be kind of neutral in terms of tone, just looking for information. We'll have another information session, probably sometime this summer.

Sunny: We reached out to the, guess it's not newspapers anymore, media or whatever. We could go in that direction too, just to stay ahead.

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Larry: Yeah. Yeah. April has a pretty extensive outreach plan. She's keeping in touch with local government officials, the mayor of the town of Hamden, the board of legislators. And she's doing things about social media, which I'm sure when it's appropriate she'll include the print podcast media as well.

Mark: That brings me into the Derby situation. Most of the cost increase being driven because of construction costs and engineering and that type of thing, or because of struggles.

Larry: It's really both. It's because of the delays that we had to keep extending the contracts. We made interim payments to the contractor to keep the contractor on board. Since that contractor was the low cost provider, we felt like every time it came time to decide whether we rebid the contractor, make a small payment, it was always to our advantage to make a small payment and not rebid. So recently it's been because of the projected increase in materials cost.

Mark: That was going to be part of my next question, was the location, the present accepted location, the cost for building the tank. That's not a remarkable difference.

Larry: It's greater than 10% of the original price. I'd rather not go into numbers. It's greater than the number, but is it because of the new location? No.

Sunny: Let me just add to what Larry said. Just one small clarification. We executed change orders to the contract, but we didn't actually pay the contractor. So one small, sorry, one small clarification, the change orders we executed for the escalation three change orders and all of them have been approved by the Connecticut DB as well. So I mean the contract was just awarded last week and we actually gave the notice to proceed today. So just one small clarification for that.

Chairman: Any questions? Additional questions. Okay. Thank you very much. With that, I think we'll be adjourning our meeting at 7:01 p.m.