

SECOND TAXING DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Regular Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2018

Present:	David Westmoreland	Chairperson
	Maria Borges-Lopez	Vice Chairperson
	Harold Bonnet	
	Mary Geake	
	Mary Mann	
	Sandra Stokes	
	Martha Wooten-Dumas (arrived 7:14 pm)	
Absent:	None	
Also Present:	Paul Yatcko	General Manager
	Lisa Roland	District Clerk
	Alan Huth	Director Water Operations
	Mike Sutton	Benefits Planning
	Darlene Young	Treasurer
	Connie Luis	Clerical Assistant
	Kara Murphy, Esq.	Tierney, Zullo, Flaherty & Murphy
	Frank Murphy, Esq.	Tierney, Zullo, Flaherty & Murphy
Public Present:	None	

The meeting was recorded up to Executive Session.

Call To Order:

Commissioner Westmoreland called the Regular Meeting of The Second Taxing District to order at 7:04 p.m. on Tuesday, October 18th, 2018. The meeting was held at South Norwalk Electric and Water, One State Street, Norwalk, Connecticut.

1. Acceptance of the Minutes:

1.1 Regular Meeting Minutes of September 18, 2018

Commissioner Geake moved to accept the minutes. Commissioner Stokes seconded.

The Minutes were approved unanimously. (2018-10-16-1.1)

Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

CONSENT AGENDA

2. Quarterly Electric Write-Offs – July 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018

Commissioner Borges-Lopez moved to accept the write-offs. Commissioner Mann seconded.

The Board voted unanimously to accept the write-offs. (2018-10-16-2)

REGULAR AGENDA

3. Keep Norwalk Beautiful – Thanksgiving Community Dinner – South Norwalk Neighborhood Association

This has become a regular item over the last several years. \$1500 is available in the budget in support of this worthy cause. Paul Yatcko recommended approval without further discussion.

Commissioner Stokes moved to approve. Commissioner Bonnet seconded.

**The Board voted unanimously in support of the contribution.
(2018-10-16-3)**

4. Annual Meeting Schedule – 2017/2018 Audit Report of the Second Taxing District

Lisa Roland presented the anticipated 2017/2018 audit report review and approval schedule for informational purposes. The report is expected to be completed on time, and no action from the Commissioners was required at this meeting.

5. Water Department Update – Director of Water Operations

Alan Huth distributed a written report, with photos, providing the status of water operations equipment and personnel. He conducted an evaluation of the critical systems of the water plant, salvaged old equipment and performed work in-house to save on costs, and has focused on team building.

The salient points of his presentation were:

- Water operations are still using infrastructure dating back to late 19th / early 20th century; for example – the clear well, where finished water is stored, has been in operation since 1906, and some transmission water mains and valves from 1875 remain in service.
- Equipment inspection has been lacking; for example - primary filter water pumps installed in 2008 had not been inspected until just recently, under his direction.
- The filters put in service in 2008, with an expected life span of 10 years, are still in service. To extend the life of these filters and reduce the risk of failure, empty filter bays should be fitted with the filter strand

- membranes, helping to provide redundancy.
- The spillway that is designed to keep the New Canaan Dam intact has a hole in it that needs to be repaired. Engineering and construction for this project will be done in-house.
 - February and March nor'easters caused generator failure in the Wilton pump station. The pump station has an entire zone that needs to run 24/7 in order to provide water to Wilton. A temporarily salvaged generator was rigged up to run the existing pump, but a new replacement pump will be installed. The new pump, running at a lower horsepower, will save thousands of dollars in electricity to run it.
 - Several changes have occurred in the Water organization in the last few months, and Alan Huth has focused on building an effective team. He is on his fourth new hire since he started in February 2018. Employees from First Taxing District have come over to Second Taxing District.
 - The department has worked to foster comradery by participating in social activities.
 - He and Jack Plavnicky came in four weekends in a row on their own time to make improvements to the Water Department's office space at the Wilton facility.
 - The Department fixed/installed the water main across the Norwalk River to East Norwalk. All of the engineering, project management and inspection was done in-house at a cost of approximately \$140,000 – a third of what it would have cost had contractors been used.

Commissioner Westmoreland asked if anticipated work on the Walk Bridge would impact, i.e. cause damage, to the new piping. Alan Huth responded that the State would be liable for damage.

Alan Huth continued:

- The new main is constructed of 850' of high density polyethylene sections with a wall thickness of 1". The sections were melded together – there are no joints – it doesn't rust and is flexible. The piping is virtually indestructible and contained within the old cast iron piping.
- The old wood Pope's Pond foot bridge was replaced with a single span bridge made of steel and without the use of pilings.
- Several safety improvements have been made:
 - An out of service fluoride tank was replaced, pulling staff out of harm's way. Previously staff had to manipulate 55 gallon drums of fluoride acid – a very caustic and dangerous substance.
 - Fencing around dam spillways have been installed to preclude trespassing and potential accidents.
- New focus on performing work in-house in order to save money on maintenance projects.
- Concentrating on reducing unaccounted for water use/losses such as that occurring from unknown leaks, and inaccurate meters measuring

both production as well as revenue water.

- Plan to maximize the Maintenance and Construction Department by performing
 - In-house routine leak detection and repairs,
 - Final paving repairs (Equipment will need to be purchased),
 - Plant and facilities maintenance, and
 - Vehicle and equipment maintenance.

Darlene Young asked if there was sufficient staff to perform all the proposed in-house work. Alan Huth replied that they would very soon be fully staffed and would be able to handle all the work.

Commissioner Geake expressed her appreciation for the informative presentation and photos.

No action from the Commissioners was required.

6. Health Insurance Discussion

Mike Sutton was present. ConnectiCare quoted a *[publically nondisclosed]* single digit increase for renewal of the current plan, and offered a 1.5% reduction if the renewal was locked-in immediately without going out for bid. Mike Sutton recommended going out for bid, however, as he felt the District's prospects are at a better starting point over last year. He also mentioned that 3 large claim histories, 1 of which will be off the books for next year, will be the driving factor in premium rates for 2019.

Other potential players in the health insurance marketplace include Anthem Blue Cross, Aetna, Oxford/UnitedHealthcare and Harvard Pilgrim. Mike Sutton offered the following insights: Anthem BC/BS offers plans of lesser service levels than in the past, Aetna offers a 'level funding' product that is really self-insurance but with additional protections for small employers, and Harvard Pilgrim premiums are on the high side. One of the more competitive bids in 2018 came from Oxford and he was confident that Oxford would again offer a competitive bid for 2019. Mike Sutton requested the Commission's permission to go to bid for the 2019 calendar year health insurance carrier.

Commissioner Westmoreland consented and it was decided a motion was not required. The other Commissioners were agreeable to go to bid.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Strategy & Negotiations involving Collective Bargaining

Commissioner Geake moved to enter Executive Session. Commissioner Wooten-Dumas seconded. All seven Commissioners, Paul Yatcko, Lisa Roland, the attorneys Kara Murphy and Frank Murphy, and Mike Sutton entered Executive Session at

7:32 p.m.

Commissioner Stokes moved to exit Executive Session. Commissioner Wooten-Dumas seconded. Executive Session ended at 8:25 p.m. No actions were taken as a result.

Adjournment

Commissioner Borges-Lopez moved to adjourn. Commissioner Mann seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Attest:

Lisa G. Roland
District Clerk