



**Approved
Town of Ridgefield
Water Pollution Control Authority**

**WPCA Special Meeting Via ZOOM
February 23, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877**

WPCA: Amy Siebert, Maureen Kozlark, Ron Hill, Gary Zawacki
Absent: Corinne Ketchum
AECOM: Matt Formica, Jon Pearson
Veolia: Ryan Richmond, Jeff Pennell
Raftelis: Dave Fox
Finance: Kevin Redmond

**These are not verbatim minutes of the proceedings but identification of
general items and specific actions undertaken.**

WPCA Regular Meeting was called to order by Ms. Siebert at 7:00 pm.

1) New Business

a) Approval of Minutes

**i) Motion to approve January 26, 2023 minutes by Mr. Hill, seconded by
Ms. Kozlark, passing 4-0.**

b) Raftelis Rate Model Review

i) Mr. Pearson summarized the need for a budget increase on both projects due to the extended construction schedule, estimated at approx. \$1.3 million. Mr. Fox presented the updated rate model for review that considered the impacts of the budget increase on the sewer rates and several scenarios. The results of the updated rate model confirm that the WPCA's Fund Balance can support the \$1.3 million budget increase if the Ramapoo Road PS project was bonded or funded from the Clean Water Fund loan rather than being funded from the fund balance as has been historically done on similar projects.

(1) Discussed annual rate increase for sewer fees, with Mr. Fox recommending to maintain the planned 4 percent increase in the upcoming year until final costs on the 2 construction projects are better defined.

(2) Discussed meeting with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to provide an update on the project.

Mr. Redmond and Mr. Fox left the meeting at 7:35 pm.

c) Charter Revision Review

- i) Discussed sending letter to the Charter Revision Committee to request two alternate WPCA members be appointed.
- ii) Mr. Zawacki stated that it might be a conflict of interest to have a member of the Board of Selectmen on the WPCA.

2) Old Business

a) Sale of Route 7 Treatment Plant Property.

- i) The WPCA will need to request to be put on the Board of Selectmen agenda to discuss the sale of the property. The middle of March had been discussed as a target time for the meeting, but Ms. Kozlark noted that this could be done later if needed.
- ii) Mr. Zawacki once again questioned why the money from the sale of the Route 7 WWTF property would go to the Town general expense fund instead of the WPCA accounts since the WPCA is incurring the cost for decommissioning the WWTF. He felt strongly that the proceeds from the property sale should be returned to the WPCA, especially since they could be used to offset the needed increase in the project budget for the Route 7 Project.

3) AECOM

a) Route 7 Pump Station, Force Main, and WWTF Decommissioning Construction

- i) Mr. Formica discussed that the monthly virtual progress meeting was held today with Mr. Zawacki, Ms. Kozlark, Ms. Van Ness, Mr. Pennell, and Mr. Richmond attending. As noted last month, with the arrival of winter weather the bituminous pavement plants closed in Mid-December and M&O Construction shut down the force main installation crew after December 16th. As of the shutdown, approx. 11,040 feet of FM and fiber optic conduit have been installed, which is 81% of the total force main. Their latest schedule shows that the force main installation and testing work will resume in second week of March and continue until Mid-May. The pump station schedule is being affected by delays in obtaining key components and work onsite is scheduled to begin in late May and continue through October. However, the generator may be delayed longer than that date. As noted last month, AECOM has requested that M&O support the extended schedule with documentation of the delays in obtaining key pump station equipment, and we believe that this will necessitate a time extension. Mr. Formica noted that AECOM drafted a letter confirming that this a priority government project, and that letter was signed by Ms. Siebert and provided to M&O Construction in the hope of helping to prioritize the Town's project equipment. The letter was just issued, and it is too early to know yet what effect, if any, this will have on the schedule.
- ii) Mr. Formica noted that M&O has continued with minor site cleanup activities this past month and addressing minor pavement repairs in various locations. They have also continued to make shop drawing submittals on the pump station components during the field work shutdown. M&O Construction has also proposed a change to the proposed location of the force main from the Route 7 PS to Haviland Road. The design showed the force main in the right side of the southbound travel lane on Route

7, and this work was to be done at night to minimize traffic impacts. M&O is suggesting it would be less costly to move the force main off of the road into the shoulder/grass area which would reduce the pavement restoration cost and also allow the work to be during the day. Mr. Formica discussed that AECOM has reviewed the concept and is in agreement there is a benefit to the project to implement this change. AECOM has also discussed this change with both the DOT and Planning & Zoning, and are in the process of securing approvals from both agencies to implement this change. Ms. Kozlark asked if there would be any concerns or issues with the adjoining property owners with this change? Mr. Formica noted that the proposed revised location of the force main is still within the Route 7 right of way, and not on private property, and following construction the disturbed areas would be restored to pre-construction conditions.

- iii) Mr. Formica discussed that AECOM has submitted progress Payment Estimate No. 12 for the Route 7 project in the amount of \$8,740.00 for M&O Construction. AECOM has reviewed it and recommend that it be approved for payment. The hard copies of the payment estimate have been submitted to Ms. Van Ness for execution.
- iv) Mr. Formica discussed that with the winter shutdown, AECOM worked with Ms. Van Ness to reduce the frequency of construction updates posted on the WPCA website to monthly. AECOM will prepare a Construction Update as the date that M&O plans to remobilize to start work approaches. Going forward, the update frequency will return to weekly.

b) South Street WWTF Upgrade Construction

- i) Mr. Formica reviewed that the monthly construction progress virtual meeting was held today and Ms. Kozlark, Mr. Zawacki, Ms. Van Ness, Mr. Pennell, and Mr. Richmond participated. Significant activities this past month included:
 - (a) Influent Building Exterior - Exterior installation of the new thin clad masonry veneer façade continued, the Electrical Room interior walls and painting were completed, and the MCCs were placed in the room.
 - (b) Operations Building. - Completed temporary relocation of Veolia staff to the Control Building and temporary lab in Blower Building garage. Work on the filter area continues with hydrostatic leak testing of the 2 new filter cell walls ongoing, and filter equipment installation continuing in the 6 existing filter cells. Continued plumbing/HVAC/Electrical work in the lab. Started the demolition work and painting in the 2nd floor office and HVAC work in the shower and locker room.

Mr. Formica noted that Spectraserv has focused their efforts this month on advancing the work on the Phosphorus Sand Filters in the Operations Building, and their latest schedule received on 2/10/23 shows the startup of the first 6 (out of 8) filter cells the week of March 7th, which we do not believe will be achieved. He also noted the

process of the relocation of the Veolia staff out of the Operations Building temporarily both to the Control Building and the temporary laboratory location in the Blower Building Garage has been completed to allow work on the second floor of the Operations Building.

- ii) Mr. Formica reviewed progress Payment Estimate No. 41 for Spectraserv that covers the month of January in the amount of \$827,662.85 and recommended it be approved. It includes the caveat that since the contract substantial completion date has passed that the WPCA reserves the right to assess liquidated damages if a time extension is not justified and executed in a change order. It was noted that this payment amount was larger than the amount of \$758,582 for January contained in most recent cash flow projection from Spectraserv, an indication that they have increased the pace of work this month.
- iii) Regarding the project schedule, Mr. Pearson discussed that as of the end of January Spectraserv has expended 112% of the contract time for completion and 83.5% of their contract value expended. Spectraserv's schedule update for this month showed a projected final completion date of 9/14/23, a months slippage from the last update. He noted another contract date of interest is the startup and testing of the phosphorus removal filter system. The last schedule update from Spectraserv shows the filter performance testing beginning on March 15th before all 8 filter cells are completed which will not be acceptable. The schedule shows the remaining two filter cells being completed and started up in the first week of April. Mr. Pearson noted that this date is after the revised date of April 1, 2023 under the current DEEP Administrative Order to meet the new effluent phosphorus limit.

Also related to the filters, Mr. Pearson discussed that after last month's WPCA meeting the quarterly report required as part of the Administrative Order which extended the permit compliance date a year to this April from last April was prepared and submitted to DEEP. As he discussed last month, this report indicated that the Town and AECOM do not believe that Spectraserv will meet the April 1 date. AECOM is extremely skeptical that the first 6 filter cells will be operational by April 1, and will continue to monitor the construction progress, but Mr. Pearson anticipates that in March AECOM on behalf of the WPCA will need to submit a letter notifying DEEP that this date will not be met.

- iv) Mr. Pearson reviewed that as a follow up to last month's discussion of the need to secure approval from the Solana property owner and the Treetops condos to allow entry on their property to setup a temporary bypass pumping system from the manhole on their property (66 Grove St) to allow the influent sewer manhole replacement work to proceed. With Ms. Van Ness's help, in discussions with representatives of both entities, both have agreed to allow this work with Treetops requesting a letter from the WPCA defining the work and responsibilities. This letter is being drafted by AECOM to be issued by the WPCA. After meeting with the property owners AECOM made the request to Spectraserv to advance a plan to complete this bypass work. Spectraserv met early last week with their site work subcontractor that would provide the vehicular access to the manhole at 66 Grove St.

but AECOM has yet to receive that requested plan. Mr. Pearson noted that AECOM will continue to request their plan.

- v) Mr. Pearson reviewed that as discussed last month, as requested by the WPCA AECOM we had developed the milestone schedule to move forward to address the needed project budget increase. AECOM did receive updated schedules from both Cspectraserv and M&O Construction by the target date of February 10th, and AECOM then prepared an updated project of the estimated budget increase that is needed for each project and AECOM had submitted project status updates for both projects that included the estimated budget increase on February 17th.

Mr. Pearson discussed the project status updates and projected budget increase to address needed increase in contingency and engineering costs due to the longer construction period for each project. For the South Street update, since the WPCA and AECOM have no faith that Spectraserv's schedule will be achieved, and no scheduled milestones have been achieved on schedule on the project, AECOM has based the projected engineering costs on the expenditure rate projection for the completion date rather than on Spectraserv's schedule, and this puts completion in mid-January 2024. This is well beyond the April 12, 2023 date that was the basis for AECOM's costs due to the extended schedule in Amendment No. 1 approved in April 2022. Mr. Pearson noted that the additional engineering cost for this additional extended construction period is about \$850,000. He noted that AECOM has also reviewed the interest incurred on Clean Water Fund loan on the basis that the loan amount borrowed through March 2023 would be permanently financed at the time the Route 7 project is added to the Grant/Loan Agreement. The additional loan amount borrowed after March would then be permanently financed at the end of the project. This approach will actually slightly reduce the total interest that would be incurred as indicated in the project status update. This results in a needed budget adjustment for the South Street project of approximately \$740,000.

For the Route 7 project, Mr. Pearson discussed that M&O Construction's latest schedule shows final completion being achieved by January 31, 2024 due to delays in obtaining key components of the pump station. AECOM's current budget was based on completion in March 2023. Mr. Pearson noted the projected additional engineering cost for this extended construction period is based on the projected January 31, 2024 completion date and is estimated at approximately \$206,500. In addition, due to additional costs incurred to address paving on Ligi's Way and other changes to date, AECOM is recommending an increase in the project contingency in the amount of approximately \$360,000. The total budget increase for the Route 7 project is then approximately \$565,000. In response to a question, Mr. Pearson noted that the additional contingency is warranted as the pump station construction has not yet started, and there is still about 20 percent of the force main yet to be installed. Mr. Pearson concluded that the total recommended budget increase is approximately \$1.3 million as indicated during the Rate Model update discussion. Mr. Pearson stressed that it is important to recognize that this budget increase amount does not include any costs associated with delay claims, or any costs recovered thru application of liquidated damages, on either project as there is no basis for identifying these costs at this time.

Mr. Pearson discussed that after tonight, the next step in addressing the budget increase would be to schedule a financial meeting with Mr. Redmond, the Town's Bond Counsel, perhaps Mr. Marconi, Ms. Siebert, AECOM, and the Clean Water Fund staff at DEEP to review this, the status and steps needed to bring the Route 7 project into the grant/loan agreement, the interim permanent financing of the loan, and to address the extended construction schedule impacts on the schedule for final permanent financing of the loan.

Lastly, Mr. Pearson discussed the article in the Ridgefield Press this week on the new Police/Fire building at 36 Old Quarry Road. He noted that this is the same parcel where the relocated Quail Ridge Pump Station is to be located, approximately behind the Goodwill Trailer. Ms. Kozlark suggested reaching out to Jake Muller for better definition of the locations of the new Police/Fire building, so that the two project can be coordinated. Ms. Kozlark noted the the Norwalk River Riverwalk has been discussed as being extended along the bottom of the wooded slope in the area near the Goodwill Trailer, so that will need to be coordinated also. Mr. Pearson noted that the Rate Model shows the Quail Ridge PS project moving to construction in FY 24. AECOM agreed to contact Mr. Muller, and the next steps on the Quail Ridge PS. can be discussed at the next meeting. Ms. Kozlark also suggested the long lead time for the generator on the Route 7 project should be considered as the Quail Ridge PS design is finalized,

4) Veolia

- i) Mr. Pennell presented the January 2023 Monthly Report. The NPDES Discharge Monitoring Report for the Route 7 facility and the South Street facility met compliance for the month of January 2023. Veolia discussed the 2 New Smartcovers being installed and how they installed an anti-grease enzyme drip into the manhole near Marty Motors to help combat the grease problem in front of Union Savings Bank from the Commons across the street. They also have been jet rodding that line to get all the grease out so they can attempt to camera the line soon.
- ii) Veolia also had a callout to the Middle School Pump Station for a pump fail alarm but they were able to reset the pumps. A repair quote was submitted to The Board Of Education from Kats Pump Service for a check valve replacement and is awaiting approval.
- iii) Mr. Pennell noted the wipes/rag problem has again become an ongoing problem at 901 Ethan Allen Highway. The Route 7 Pump Station pumps need regular cleaning/unclogging, at a minimum twice a week. There was discussion of a follow-up visit to the staff in this facility to again reinforce the concerns with wipes entering the sewer system.

5) Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27p.m. by a **Motion made by Ms. Kozlark seconded by Mr. Zawacki, motion passed unanimously, 4-0.**

Submitted by Diana Van Ness