



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

**WPCA Public Information Meeting
October 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.
400 Main Street, large conference room
Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877**

WPCA: Amy Siebert, Ron Hill, Maureen Kozlark, Gary Zawacki, Corinne Ketchum
AECOM: Jon Pearson
Attendees: Rudy Marconi, Gregory Kabasakalian, Robert Hebert, Sean Connolly
Linda Lavelle, Debra Franceschini

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

WPCA Public Information Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Ms. Siebert.

- 1) Ms. Siebert gave a presentation on the request by the WPCA to allocate a portion of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that the Town is receiving for the purpose of partially funding the construction of a sewer force main from Route 7 District 2 to South Street District 1 sewer plant. Amount of allocation not to exceed \$2,922,477.
- 2) Debra Franceschini asked why more money was not taken out of the fund balance. Ms. Kozlark mentioned that the money left in the fund balance was for emergency repairs to the plant and the collection system. Ms. Siebert stated that the fund balance goes to operating, maintenance, capital expenses, legal, contractual expenses, and engineering expenses for the sewer districts.
- 3) Robert Hebert questioned the current balance of \$8 million in the fund balance according to the Raftelis spreadsheet. Mr. Marconi asked him to view a different column in the spreadsheet that reflects the balance was \$1.9 million.
- 4) Linda Lavelle asked what would happen if an 8-30g project was approved, since the WWTF has finite capacity, would the WPCA have to accommodate the project? Ms. Siebert stated that the State of Connecticut would not make you expand your WWTF. The DEEP would not change the permit limits for a project. Mr. Pearson noted that the planning for the WWTF upgrade projected future flows based on current zoning and no allowances were made for 8-30g projects.

- 5) Linda Lavelle asked instead of using ARPA funds to keep sewer fees from rising, why not use the fund balance ? Ms. Siebert stated that the South Street bid came in higher than the estimate and the WPCA used \$4 million from its fund balance to cover the difference. Route 7 also came in higher than estimated due to Covid. The fund balance had originally been intended for the Quail Ridge pump station project. Ms. Kozlark stated that they used the \$4 million in the fund balance originally planned for the Quail Ridge pump station project to secure the contract for South Street in order to acquire the grant money from the Clean Water Fund. The Raftelis model was recently updated to determine what additional funds might be available within the WPCA's budget to help reduce the amount of ARPA funds needed to allow the Route 7 project to proceed. It was also stated that if the WPCA acquired more grant funds, this would reduce the amount of the ARPA funds.
- 6) Bob Hebert asked to see the cash-flow analysis. If \$500,000 was comfortable to take out of the fund balance, why not take more out ? Mr. Marconi stated that construction was delayed due to COVID and the fund balance was built up because of the delay in project.
- 7) Ms. Kozlark stated that people have been complaining about sewer rate increases. She stated that everything is going up due to truck driver shortages, can't get supplies, prices of supplies have gone up significantly. She stated that we must secure the bid from M&O Construction before we lose it. If we have to rebid, the price will ultimately be higher.
- 8) Linda Lavelle and Debra Franceschi stated that we need to get the word out to the residents on the need for these funds before the Public Hearing and to use social media.
- 9) Mr. Kabasakalian stated that when the WPCA and BOS met with the BOF we asked for more money which would have forced a referendum. If we have to raise sewer fees it will effect everyone. Ms. Siebert stated that if we don't have to raise rates, this will benefit everyone in town.
- 10) Linda Lavelle stated that we should contact the Democratic and Republican parties to send the Fact Summary Sheet to their voter base.
- 11) Linda Lavelle asked if we have a warranty clause in our contract. Ms. Siebert stated that we have a very rigorous acceptance and testing process before we take ownership and the construction contractor is required to provide a warranty.
- 12) Mr. Marconi asked who was going to simplify the fund balance sheets. Mr. Pearson stated that he would along with Mr. Redmond, Ms. Siebert and Ms. Kozlark.
- 13) Ms. Siebert stated that if we don't get the ARPA funds, the WPCA would lose the M&O Construction low bid contract, have to go out to bid again, would have

potential fines from the DEEP, potentially lose grant money, and all because of the impact of COVID.

a) Meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.

Submitted by Diana Van Ness