



*Established*

*1996*

## SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION

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**VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING**  
**SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION**  
**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 – 9 A.M.**  
**JOHN J. LYONS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**  
**250 M STREET EXT. AGAWAM, MA**

### Minutes of Meeting

September 14, 2023

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission held a public meeting on September 14, 2023, in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023.

Chairwoman Otero called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and announced the Commissioners that are participating. Secretary for the Commission Jaimye Bartak called the attendance roll:

Daniel Rodriguez, Present  
Vanessa Otero, Present  
Matthew Donnellan, Present

Also Present

Joshua Schimmel, Executive Director  
Anthony Basile, Comptroller  
Domenic Pellegrino, Director of Finance  
Theo Theocles, Director of Legal Services  
Jaimye Bartak, Communications Manager/Secretary to the Commission

Also Participating Remotely

Katie Shea, Educational Outreach Manager  
Darleen Buttrick, Director of Engineering  
Steven Frederick, Director of Wastewater Operations  
Jim Laurila, Director of Water Operations  
Jennifer Boulais, Director of Human Resources  
Rick Gomez, Director of Engineering  
Kristin Monfette, Safety Manager  
Raemarie Walker, Assistant Procurement Officer

### **Business Matters**

1. Approve the minutes of the meeting held on July 27, 2023, without reading, because copies were furnished to each member of the Commission for their review.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to approve minutes of the meeting held on July 27, 2023.

**New Business**

2. Financial Update: Report by Comptroller.

Comptroller Anthony Basile reported a decrease in cash flow of \$9.4 million in the first two months of the fiscal year due to large project payouts in the month of July, and over \$8 million in debt payments. The cash will be recouped as the year progresses.

Mr. Basile reported a projected revenue shortfall attributed to lower water and sewer usage. Revenue is estimated to be down 3%, resulting in a projected variance of \$ 1.4 million for the year.

Mr. Basile reported \$92.2 million in total projected expenditures, which is \$1.3 million less than anticipated. There is a positive variance resulting from funded vacancies in the personal services budget.

There was \$13.4 million in capital spending in the fiscal year through August, with a total remaining CIP authorized appropriations of \$520 million.

The total cash on hand at the end of August includes unrestricted/working capital cash of \$16.8 million or 16% of the total cash.. The balance remaining cash is restricted for the purposes of meeting the Commission bond covenant reserves, stabilization fund, or required reserves for capital projects.

There was \$5.3 million in total receivables, with \$1.4 million being over 60 days old.

There was \$968.3 million in assets, and \$730.4 million in liabilities.

Mr. Basile reported the audit started this Monday.

3. Consideration of Utility Billing Credit Summary and Summary of Accounts Receivable July & August 2023: Report by Director of Finance.

Director of Finance Domenic Pellegrino reported net billings of \$8.9 million, collections of \$12 million, and an accounts receivable balance of \$4 million.

There were 5,159 accounts totaling just under \$1.5 million.

There were 118 credits issued in the amount of \$15,013.99.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:** to approve credits in the amount of \$15,013.99.

4. Consideration of 49th Supplemental Resolution for Financing with the MA Clean Water Trust for the Grit Removal System Upgrade Project at the WWTP: Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Pellegrino reported on 2 BANs – a 2023 Series B in the amount of \$18,627,000 and a Series C in the amount of \$3,362,339.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:** to approve the 49<sup>th</sup> Supplemental Resolution.

5. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2024-03: Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Pellegrino reported on a transfer of funds into the Bulk Chemical Storage project from the WIFIA Project Management account.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:** to approve CIP Amendment 2024-03.

6. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2024-04: Report by Director of Wastewater Operations.

Director of Wastewater Operations Steve Frederick reported on an amendment to increase the appropriations for the York Street Pump Station project due to need to complete restoration of soil contaminated by coal tar. Eversource will reimburse the Commission for these expenses.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ  
COMMISSIONER OTERO  
COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to approve CIP Amendment 2024-04.

7. Consideration of HG&E Capital Work Plan CWP #23-02 Transmission Power Line #637 Reconductoring: Report by Director of Engineering.

Director of Engineering Darleen Buttrick reported on a contract to put new conductor on electric transmission pole purchased last year.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY  
COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ  
COMMISSIONER OTERO  
COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to approve and authorize the Executive Director to execute HG&E Capital Work Plan CWP #23-02.

8. Consideration of Kleinfelder Task Order No. R-21-01\_KLF\_39 for Peer Review for the West Parish Water Treatment Plant: Report by Director of Engineering.

Ms. Buttrick reported that this task order includes 3<sup>rd</sup> party peer review of 90% drawings and specifications, probable construction cost, and maintenance of operations for the new treatment plant.

Commissioner Otero asked when construction work begins. Ms. Buttrick responded that bidding would take place in February, with a contract award in June.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY  
COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ  
COMMISSIONER OTERO  
COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to approve Kleinfelder Task Order No. R-21-01\_KLF\_39.

9. Consideration of Amendment #1 to Kleinfelder Task Order No. 29 under contract R-21-01: Report by Director of Engineering.

Ms. Buttrick reported on an amendment to the FY23 sewer improvements project, including construction administration and observation services, and several areas of system failures. The anticipated completion is December 2023.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to Amendment #1 to Kleinfelder Task Order No. 29 under contract R-21-01.

10. Consideration of Wright-Pierce Task Order #13 under contract R-21-01: Report by Director of Engineering.

Ms. Buttrick reported that the task order includes subsurface investigations and 60/90/100/level of completeness for 7 distribution system projects under the WIFIA program. Bidding documents are expected by FY24.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to approve and authorize the Executive Director to execute Wright-Pierce Task Order #13 under contract R-21-01.

11. Consideration of Wright-Pierce Task Order #14 under contract R-21-01: Report by Director of Engineering.

Ms. Buttrick reported on a task order to support sewer infrastructure improvement projects in the WIFIA program, including subsurface investigations and CCTV video.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to approve and authorize the Executive Director to execute Wright-Pierce Task Order #14 under contract R-21-01.

12. Consideration of Request for Commission to Sign on to NACWA Amicus Brief: Report by Director of Legal Affairs.

Executive Director Josh Schimmel requested approval for the Commission and Executive Director to sign on to an amicus brief to support an appeal by San Francisco Public Utilities concerning their NPDES

permit. Their appeal is similar to the Commission's appeal a few years ago. There is no risk or cost to the Commission.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to authorize the Executive Director and Board to sign on in the support of the NACWA Amicus Brief.

13. Consideration of Deputy Director of Finance: Report by Executive Director.

Mr. Schimmel reported on a job description for Deputy Director of Finance. The new position is being created as part of a succession plan for that department. The proposed hiring range is \$95,000-115,000.

**UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**VOTED YES –**

**COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ**

**COMMISSIONER OTERO**

**COMMISSIONER DONNELLAN:**

to approve Deputy Director of Finance Position.

14. Water and Sewer Updates: Report by the Executive Director.

Mr. Schimmel reported on the September 12, 2023, water main break and thanked the staff for their work. An after-action report will be created. Mr. Schimmel noted that MassDEP directs the issuance of boil water orders and wholesale communities are responsible for their own sampling and consultation with MassDEP for boil water orders if necessary.

Mr. Schimmel reported the water main break was caused by a clogged culvert that failed due to heavy precipitation the prior day. The soil around the pipe then collapsed. Staff are looking into ways to regularly inspect the cross-country pipes, such as by using drones.

Mr. Schimmel reported a new team focusing on business intelligence has formed in the IT department.

Mr. Pellegrino reported that LIHWAP funding is wrapping up, and the customer assistance program is ongoing. This year the CAP program has been adjusted so that accounts will not end up with a credit on their account.

Mr. Basile reported ongoing work for the audit.

Director of Wastewater Operations Steve Frederick reported that the York Street Pump Station is going through a final punch list, and that he is working with DOC on the transfer to Veolia. The pump station is working well and a few minor issues on the influent structure are being worked out. The ICI projects are

going well and the #3 basin should be operational soon, and draining #4 will be next. Ventilation equipment for the grit removal project is arriving.

Educational Outreach Manager Katie Shea reported that planning for the Pipeline Program is starting, as well as planning for co-ops and internships.

Director of IT Rick Gomez reported on ongoing hardware and cybersecurity upgrades.

Ms. Buttrick shared a progress report for the WIFIA program.

Director of HR Jennifer Boulais reported on efforts to compile HR data and move more paper processes online, and on improving payroll and information services.

Deputy Director of Field Services Ryan Windgerter reported that he remains in communication with the Water Operations group following the main break, and crews are continuing to flush.

Director of Legal Services Theo Theocles reported on working with Attorney Liebel on a claims list, and ongoing work with collections on claims and outstanding balances. The water treatment plant will be going out to bid in February.

Mr. Schimmel reported on an upcoming meeting with Commissioner Heiple on Monday, and that DBP results from September indicate another likely public notification. Mr. Schimmel reported the City Council Subcommittee on Health and Human Services requested a meeting with the Board and staff on September 21.

The next meeting will be on October 26 at 9 AM.

Unanimously adjourned at 10:30 AM.

15. Consideration and/or action on any other matters that may come before the Commission at this meeting.

None considered.

### **Old Business – Executive Session**

16. Status Review of Litigation Matters of the Commission: Report by Atty. Liebel.

Tabled.

Submitted By:



Jaimye Bartak, Secretary

Exhibits Considered:  
NACWA Amicus Brief; San Francisco En Banc Petition  
August 2023 Financials

2023 August Finance Director Rpt  
Amendment 2024-03 (Tnfs 090-0030 to 005-0079)  
Amendment 2024-04 (Incr 003-0043)  
CWP # 23-02 - 637 Line Reconductoring - Partially Signed  
Task Order R-21-01\_KLF\_39 Peer Review West Parish WTP  
R-21-01\_Kleinfelder-29\_Amendment No. 1  
R-21-01\_Wright-Pierce\_13-Task Order # 13  
R-21-01\_Wright-Pierce\_14-Task Order # 14  
49<sup>th</sup> Supplemental Resolution  
Contracts Signed by Josh Schimmel  
Cobble Mountain Reservoir Levels  
Meeting Minutes from July 27, 2023  
Thank You Letter to Senators Markey and Warren