



Established

1996

SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION

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SPRINGFIELD WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting

July 30, 2019

The Springfield Water and Sewer Commission held a meeting at the John J. Lyons Administration Building, Agawam, MA, on July 30, 2019.

Chairwoman Vanessa Otero called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and Commission Secretary Jaimye Bartak called the attendance roll:

William E. Leonard, Present
Daniel Rodriguez, Present
Vanessa Otero, Present

Also Present

Joshua Schimmel, Executive Director
Norman J. Guz, Commission Counsel
Anthony Basile, Comptroller
Domenic Pellegrino, Director of Finance
Bob Stoops, Chief Engineer
James Laurila, Director of Water Operations
Bill Fuqua, Director of Wastewater Services
Nicole Sanford, Water Resources Manager
James Richardson, Director of IT
Scott Loomis, Procurement Officer
Jaimye Bartak, Communications Manager/Secretary of the Commission
Dr. David Reckhow, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Peter Karalekas, Consultant to the Commission
Sue Tower, Laboratory and Regulatory Manager
John Liebel, Attorney for the Commission

Business Matters

1. Election of Board of Commission Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for Fiscal Year 2020.

Commissioner Rodriguez nominated Commissioner Otero to be chairwoman for fiscal year 2020. Commissioner Leonard concurred. Commissioner Otero nominated Commissioner Rodriguez to be vice-chairman for fiscal year 2020.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to appoint Commissioner Otero as chairwoman for fiscal year 2020.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER OTERO AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to appoint Commissioner Rodriguez as vice-chairperson for fiscal year 2020.

2. Approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 20, 2019, without reading, because copies were furnished to each member of the Commission for their review.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 20, 2019, without reading, because copies have been furnished to each member of the Commission for their review.

New Business

3. Disinfection By-Product Update: Report by Director of Water Operations.

Executive Director Josh Schimmel introduced Dr. David Reckhow of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Dr. Reckhow is an internationally recognized expert on disinfection byproducts (DBPs). Mr. Schimmel noted that a panel of experts was convened several years ago to review chlorine residual levels, which included representatives from UMass such as Dr. Reckhow. Director of Water Operations James Laurila discussed a graph of bacteriological test results over the past decade, indicating the beneficial impact of increased chlorination. The graphs indicate the impact of large amounts of rainfall to water quality, such as after Tropical Storm Irene in 2011.

Mr. Laurila and Laboratory and Regulatory Manager Sue Tower described the required sampling protocol for coliform and *E. coli*. Mr. Schimmel explained that bacteria drive the use of chlorine. Increasing chlorine decreases the pathogenic risk, but increases the risk for DBPs. Water treatment is a balancing act of competing risks, known as “simultaneous compliance.” Bacteria pose an immediate threat, while DBPs are a long-term threat.

Dr. Reckhow commented that protecting the public from primary acute risks is the primary goal of water treatment. Long-term chronic risks like DBPs must be managed at the same time, but the number one priority is reducing potential pathogens. Commissioner Otero noted that long-term risks are still risks. Mr. Schimmel responded that the long-term risk cannot be addressed in a short period of time because the solution requires major capital projects. The increased chlorine levels in addition to a period of drought and heavy rains has worked to elevate DBPs.

Mr. Laurila added that there has been a 50-60% increase in organics levels entering the plant. The plant is designed to remove only so much organics, so chlorine levels are adjusted to mitigate pathogenic risk.

Commissioner Otero asked how the balance between competing regulations can be reached. Mr. Schimmel responded that the chlorine levels are in accordance with national standards and after consultation with national experts. The pilot plant currently under construction will test technology that exists to better maintain the balance.

Drinking Water Consultant Peter Karalekas added that one of the underlying principles of EPA drinking water regulations is for water systems to achieve simultaneous compliance for all regulations. But treatment practices should always be tilted towards addressing the acute/biological contaminants. The pilot plant will help resolve the DBP issue. Chlorine levels also assist with addressing other known potential recontamination issues at Provin Mountain. Mr. Schimmel added that capital projects addressing the clearwell and Provin Tank 2 are currently in planning and design phases.

Commissioner Rodriguez inquired about the acceptable level of coliform detections. Ms. Tower stated the goal is always zero. Dr. Reckhow noted that most systems of Commission's size have a low number of detections.

Mr. Schimmel reported that the amount of lab analysis has increased, and data are now being mapped more frequently to inform chlorine usage, flushing, and other operations in the distribution system. Mr. Laurila added that cross-sectional organics samples are also being taken at Cobble and Borden Brook Reservoirs. Current results indicate that organics levels are still elevated, particularly at higher depths, but returning to normal. Regardless, HAA5 compliance will not be reached next quarter due to the locational running annual average.

Dr. Reckhow explained that the 2016 drought may have had an impact. All watersheds produce organics due to accumulating plant matter. Organics degrade at a certain rate regardless of rainfall. When there is a drought, a large amount of organics wash in all at once when the rain returns. Mr. Schimmel noted that there have been DBP violations across New England. Peter Karalekas added that the worst kind of violation is a boil water alert, which would be related to bacteria.

Commissioner Otero asked if the issue of simultaneous compliance has been conveyed to customers. Commissioner Rodriguez acknowledged that even though the risk is associated with long-term exposure, the language that is included in the public notifications is bad because customers feel that there is nothing they can do (compared to if they were asked to boil water). Mr. Laurila noted that boil water orders have far-reaching impacts, because it results in hospitals and restaurants shutting down, among others. Commissioner Rodriguez continued that he felt it was important for customers to understand that a boil water alert would be worse than having to deal with a DBP violation.

Communications Manager Jaimye Bartak shared the number of customer calls about HAA5 since January, and noted that the public notification distinguishes that HAA5 is not an emergency.

Mr. Schimmel explained that the data from the pilot plant will inform the design of treatment alternatives. Commissioner Otero asked that capital investments be explained as part of the September public notification. Commission Counsel Norm Guz added that public notifications every three months remind customers there is a problem; that customers may associate it with unrelated issues that occurred in Flint; and that trust needs to be rebuilt. Mr. Schimmel thanked the experts for sharing their expertise at the Commission meeting.

4. Discussion of FY19 Claims: Report by Attorney John Liebel.

Attorney John Liebel reported that the number of claims in FY19 was up a little, but fairly consistent historically, and less money was paid out overall. There were more motor vehicle claims, but that may be because there are more Commission vehicles on the road. There were not many personal injury claims. The rise in claims for FY19 was mainly due to the Ludlow pressurization incident. There were 56 claims related to that incident. Overall the number of claims is manageable.

Mr. Liebel also updated Commissioners on a case pending with the Supreme Judicial Court. A claim made by a homeowner in Gardner against the local public water system has raised the question as to whether public water systems serve a proprietary function or municipal function. The Commission may wish to file a brief, which needs to occur 21 days after oral arguments are set. The existing Massachusetts Tort Claims Act was created to prevent claims rising above a certain level.

5. Financial Update: Report by Comptroller.

Comptroller Anthony Basile reported \$94,072,220 in cash. This was a decrease of \$1.378 million due to advanced funding for projects. The operating budget closed the year 97% expended. There was just under \$2.4 million in unexpended appropriations. Expenditures will increase as the Connecticut River Crossing Project gets underway. There is currently \$150 million in projects on the books.

The revenue budget is \$4.4 million more than anticipated. This is attributed to power generation and interest earnings on cash. Of the cash trend, \$94,072,295 is unrestricted. Restricted cash constitutes 70%.

There was \$1,692,127 over 60 days old in receivables at the end of June. There was \$473 million in assets and \$318 million in liabilities, which includes the OPEB trust. There is \$3,087 million in the OPEB trust. Overall FY19 was a positive operating year.

Mr. Basile reported the release of the debt service reserve was estimated at \$12 million would be released since the SRF reserve is no longer required by CWT. The \$12 million was earmarked to offset the budget gap for the next few years. Final calculations indicate that the reserve release will only net \$7.2 million, leaving a \$4.6 million gap to stabilize rates in future years. Mr. Basile reported it is necessary to move \$4.6 million from unrestricted cash into a special funding category that will be used to minimize the impact on future rates.

Mr. Schimmel added that the bond to be issued in September will probably be the last revenue bond for a while, which will result in less cash-on-hand.

6. Consideration of Utility Billing Credit Summary and Summary of Accounts Receivable for June: Report by Director of Finance.

Director of Finance Domenic Pellegrino reported on receivables activity thru 2019. There is an accounts receivable balance of \$4.5 million. There were 5,492 accounts with receivables over 60 days old totaling \$1.1 million. A utility billing credit was issued for \$9,520.52.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve credits in the amount of \$9,520.52.

7. Capital Improvement Plan Quarterly Report: Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Schimmel requested that Commissioners review the CIP quarterly report for the next Commission meeting. There is an executive summary for each cost center.

8. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2020-01 (Pilot Plant Study): Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Pellegrino reported that \$100,000 is needed from Project 005-0071 for Project 005-0074 to include UMass in the pilot plant operations and data assessment.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve CIP Amendment 2020-01.

9. Consideration of Work Order R-1702-17B-14 for Two-Season Water Treatment Process Piloting Study: Report by Director of Water Operations.

Mr. Laurila reported that MassDEP has approved the scope of work for the two-season water treatment process piloting study. The pilot plant will run from September 1 to December 1 to test late-summer conditions, and then again in the spring. There will be bi-weekly meetings to discuss the study as it evolves. The study will result in a mid-season and final report.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve Work Order R-1702-17B-14 for Two-Season Water Treatment Process Piloting Study.

10. Consideration of Agreement for Professional Services of David Reckhow, Ph.D.: Report by Director of Water Operations.

Mr. Schimmel reported that the contract with Dr. Reckhow will include his services to review the piloting results and contribute to the decision making process.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve Agreement for Professional Services of David Reckhow, Ph.D.

11. Consideration of Agreement for Professional Services of John Tobiason, P.E., Ph.D.: Report by Director of Water Operations.

Mr. Schimmel reported that the contract with Dr. Tobiason will include his services to review the piloting results and contribute to the decision making process.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve Agreement for Professional Services of John Tobiason, P.E., Ph.D.

12. Consideration of Interdepartmental Service Agreement for UMASS-Amherst West Parish Filtration Pilot Study: Report by Director of Water Operations.

Mr. Schimmel reported that UMass would conduct bench-scale evaluations and precursor assessments for DBPs in support of the pilot plant.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Interdepartmental Service Agreement for UMASS-Amherst West Parish Filtration Pilot Study.

13. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2020-02 (Ludlow Construction Sewer Infrastructure): Report by Director of Finance.

Chief Engineer Bob Stoops reported that bids came in high for a sewer construction project. In response Mr. Pellegrino increased the appropriation for consideration by the Board. The increased funding will be covered in September's bond sale.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER OTERO AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve CIP Amendment 2020-02.

14. Consideration of Construction Contract CA-1912-19 Ludlow Construction Sewer Infrastructure:
Report by Chief Engineer.

Mr. Stoops reported on the contract supported by CIP Amendment 2020-02. Commissioner Leonard inquired about the bidding process. Mr. Stoops responded that there were only 2 bidders, but 10 planholders. Only the base contract was awarded as East Longmeadow declined to be a part of the project when bids came in higher than expected.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER OTERO AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve Construction Contract CA-1912-19 Ludlow Construction Sewer Infrastructure.

15. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2020-03 (Close and Transfer Funds from WPF Clearwell System Design): Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Pellegrino reported that both the Provin clearwell and tank 2 roof projects were included under one bid. The clearwell is going to be replaced, not repaired, so the design funding for the repair is no longer needed. This funding is to be transferred to the tank 2 system design and the CIP reserve account.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve CIP Amendment 2020-03 (Close and Transfer Funds from WPF Clearwell System Design).

16. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2020-04 (Provin Tank 2 Roof System): Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Pellegrino reported that the isolation of Provin tank 1 and the cover for tank 2 was combined in one bid. The appropriation needs to be increased by \$3.8 million to be included in the bond sale in the fall.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve CIP Amendment 2020-04 (Provin Tank 2 Roof System).

17. Consideration of Contract CA-1916-19 for Provin 2 Roof Liner and Provin 1 Isolation by Northern Construction: Report by Chief Engineer.

Mr. Stoops recommended that the contract for the Provin tank 1 isolation and Provin tank 2 roof liner be awarded to Northern Construction.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve Contract CA-1916-19 for Provin 2 Roof Liner and Provin 1 Isolation by Northern Construction.

18. Consideration of CDM Smith Work Order 17A-20 for Provin 2 Roof Liner and Provin 1 Isolation Construction Engineering Services: Report by Chief Engineer.

Mr. Stoops reported that CDM Smith will provide construction management, on-site management services, small design repairs, and geotextile testing for the Provin tanks 1 and 2 project. The contract is through June 2020 for \$430,000.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve CDM Smith Work Order 17A-20 for Provin 2 Roof Liner and Provin 1 Isolation Construction Engineering Services.

19. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2020-05 (Transfer from Provin Tank 1 Isolation to Information Systems): Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Pellegrino reported that the original Provin tank 1 isolation project is now defunct. Funding from this project is to be transferred to support a cyber security software purchase since the bid came in \$257,440 higher than budgeted.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve CIP Amendment 2020-05 (Transfer from Provin Tank 1 Isolation to Information Systems).

20. Consideration of CIP Amendment 2020-06 (Close-Outs for CIP Reserve Account): Report by Director of Finance.

Mr. Pellegrino reported that the cleanup of project accounts is complete. This amendment is to transfer residual funds to the CIP Reserve account.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve CIP Amendment 2020-06 (Close-Outs for CIP Reserve Account).

21. Consideration of Amendment No.1 CA-1901-19 Ludlow Construction Co. FY2019 Water Infrastructure: Report by Chief Engineer.

Mr. Schimmel reported that this contract amendment was for additional work to be completed in the distribution system. The additional work is in the same vicinity where the City has paving planned, so it is a good opportunity.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve Amendment No.1 CA-1901-19 Ludlow Construction Co. FY2019 Water Infrastructure.

22. Consideration of Contract R-1702-17A for One-Year Renewal for Professional Engineering Services for CDM Smith Inc.: Report by Chief Engineer.

Mr. Schimmel reported that this and the next two contracts are one-year renewals for professional engineering services at West Parish Filters. The contracts are at the same rates as the previous year.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to approve Contract R-1702-17A for One-Year Renewal for Professional Engineering Services for CDM Smith Inc.

23. Consideration of Contract R-1702-17B for One-Year Renewal for Professional Engineering Services for AECOM Technical Services: Report by Chief Engineer.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to approve Contract R-1702-17B for One-Year Renewal for Professional Engineering Services for AECOM Technical Services.

24. Consideration of Contract R-1702-17C for One-Year Renewal for Professional Engineering Services for Tighe and Bond Inc.: Report by Chief Engineer.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to approve Contract R-1702-17C for One-Year Renewal for Professional Engineering Services for Tighe and Bond Inc.

25. Consideration of Kleinfelder Project Order No. 66 for Collection System Cleaning and Assessment: Report by Director of Wastewater Operations.

Mr. Schimmel reported that this project order is a continuation of an annual project order for the cleaning and assessment program, which has been an effective tool over the past seven years. This project order is part of an on-call contract.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to approve Kleinfelder Project Order No. 66 for Collection System Cleaning and Assessment: Report by Director of Wastewater Operations.

26. Consideration of Amendment No. 1 of Kleinfelder Project Order No. 58 YSPS/CT River Crossing Project Construction Phase Services: Report by Director of Wastewater Operations.

Director of Wastewater Operations Bill Fuqua reported on an amendment to the current construction agreement with Kleinfelder that reflects the increase in rates for the fifth year of their contract.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to approve Amendment No. 1 of Kleinfelder Project Order No. 58 YSPS/CT River Crossing Project Construction Phase Services.

27. Consideration of Agreement for Professional Services of Michael Mauri, Consulting Forester: Report by Water Resources Manager.

Water Resources Manager Nicole Sanford reported on an agreement with Michael Mauri for continued services as a consulting forester.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Agreement for Professional Services of Michael Mauri, Consulting Forester.

28. Consideration of Interagency Municipal Agreement with the Town of Granville: Report by Water Resources Manager.

Mr. Schimmel reported on a proposed agreement with the Town of Granville for the Commission to support some of the culvert replacements within the watershed. The Commission will support the purchase of the materials while the Town will do the replacement work themselves. Both the Town and the watershed benefit from the replaced culverts.

Commissioner Leonard asked if this is normal procedure. Mr. Schimmel and Mr. Guz replied that the Commission has contributed to watershed projects in the past. Mr. Laurila added that the culvert drainage projects are in close proximity to the reservoir. Pipe will be purchased by the Commission for the projects. These projects might not otherwise happen without the Commission's support. Mr. Guz added that the agreement stipulates that the Town still owns the roads.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to authorize the executive director to execute the interagency municipal agreement with the Town of Granville.

29. Consideration of Town of Agawam Water Supply Agreement: Report by Commission Counsel.

Mr. Guz reported on the five-year wholesale water supply contract with the Town of Agawam, which is substantially similar to the one five years ago. Commissioner Leonard asked if they are consistent in their water usage. Mr. Pellegrino replied that usage has decreased in the last two years from the average.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the five-year water contract substantially in the form presented except Section 408 which will be changed to July 1, 2019.

30. Consideration of Customer Service Manager – Field Services Job Description: Report by Human Resources Manager.

Mr. Schimmel reported on a job description that will create a customer service manager for Field Services, similar to the customer service manager on the billing side. The starting salary will be between \$60,000 and \$80,000.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Customer Service Manager – Field Services Job Description.

31. Consideration of Engineering Inspectors Job Descriptions: Report by Human Resources Manager.

Mr. Schimmel reported on four job descriptions that will provide a pathway for inspectors to progress in their careers. A III position has been created and the senior inspector position has been modified. The starting salary for each of these will be \$41-50,000, \$45-60,000, \$60-70,000, and \$65-75,000.

Commissioner Otero asked whether this was a reorganization and whether the positions will be posted.

Mr. Schimmel replied that this was a reorganization that will provide inspectors with a pathway to progress in their careers. The positions will be offered through internal and external postings and as promotional opportunities.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Construction Inspector I job description.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Construction Inspector II job description.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Construction Inspector III job description.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Senior Construction Inspector job description.

32. Consideration of Educational Outreach and Communications Specialist Job Description: Report by Communications Manager.

Mr. Schimmel reported that this new position would be half focused on developing an external education program to reach high school and vocational school students, and half focused on filling in the gaps in internal and external outreach. The goal would be to increase the number of events and become more involved in communications and engagement opportunities such as citizen council meetings. The starting salary range will be \$55-75,000. The position will be externally advertised. Commissioner Otero suggested that the Commission could also become more involved in Mass Hire and job fairs.

Mr. Guz recommended editing the job description to clarify that serving as Secretary of the Commission in a temporary capacity is within the purview of the Commissioners (not executive director).

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Educational Outreach and Communications Specialist Job Description.

33. Consideration of Manual for Non-Bargaining Employees: Report by Human Resources Manager.

Mr. Schimmel reported that Human Resources Manager Stephanie Douglass worked intensively on the new manual. The new manual includes policies related to dress code, vehicle use, sick/vacation time, performance reviews, and parental leave, among others. The new manual also includes some pre-existing policies that need to be edited and updated at a later time. The manual is expected to evolve over time.

Commissioner Otero commented that she was surprised this manual did not exist previously.

Ms. Douglass noted that the manual would be included in new-hire orientation and new employees would sign off on it.

Commissioner Otero asked whether progressive discipline can be outlined so that disciplinary action is the consistent for everyone. Mr. Schimmel replied that the Commission's employment counsel reviewed the document and did not recommend progressive discipline because employment is at-will. Ms. Douglass noted that the handbook tried to be consistent with collective bargaining agreements. Ms. Douglass also added that under the scope of EEO, the disciplinary policy applies evenly.

Commissioner Otero noted that she is worried about treating other people differently and wanted to manage risk. Mr. Guz suggested including disciplinary action procedures.

Mr. Guz inquired about the handbook's treatment of marijuana. Ms. Douglass replied that marijuana would remain under a reasonable suspicion policy.

Commissioner Rodriguez requested more time to review the handbook. The item was tabled until the next Commission meeting.

34. Consideration of Grant for World is Our Classroom for 2019-2020 School Year: Report by Communications Manager.

Mr. Schimmel recommending renewing the grant for World is Our Classroom for the 2019-2020 school year. The goal is to expand this program in the future.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Grant for World is Our Classroom for 2019-2020 School Year.

35. Consideration of Grant to Walk Bike Springfield for Connecticut River Walk Interpretive Signage: Report by Communications Manager.

Communications Manager Jaimye Bartak reported on a request by Walk Bike Springfield to contribute funding for the development of three interpretive signs along the Riverwalk. The signs will highlight the water infrastructure present along the Riverfront as well as the history of the water/wastewater system in Springfield.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD

VOTED UNANIMOUSLY: to approve the Grant to Walk Bike Springfield for Connecticut River Walk Interpretive Signage.

36. Update on Water and Sewer Activities: Report by Executive Director.

Ms. Bartak reported on the upcoming Source to Sea Cleanup, which is organized by the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC). CRC shares many of the same values about protecting the Connecticut River as the Commission, and Commission employees are being recruited to volunteer on September 27 to help clean up the Bondi's Island Boat Ramp. Ms. Bartak recommended the Commission become a "River" sponsor for the event, along with other water utilities, to demonstrate its commitment to a clean Connecticut River.

UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY:

to approve a "River" sponsorship for the 2019 Source to Sea Cleanup event.

Director of Field Services Dan DiRienzo reported that water main replacement continued on Plainfield Street and Hyde Avenue. Flushing and painting hydrants also continues.

Ms. Douglass reported on continuing work on the employee handbook and working with employees on safety training and certification.

Mr. Stoops reported that the 42" main project is substantially complete and will be online in mid-August. The Westfield private wells treatment systems will be advertised on August 14. The in-line hydro-electric evaluation and buried chlorine line projects should be completed by September 1.

Mr. Laurila reported that Cobble Mountain Reservoir is 83% full, and that the West Parish Filters treatment plant has been in heavy production mode due to the summer months. A new operator was recently hired.

Mr. Basile reported that the full audit will commence in September.

Ms. Sanford reported that a new watershed parcel across the street from Borden Brook reservoir was recently purchased. Recent forestry activities have yielded \$120,000 from 139 acres. The crew at Borden Brook is replacing culverts.

Mr. Pellegrino reported that a recent consultation with the Commission's wealth management firm identified \$1.6 million to accumulate in interest this year. Expectations should be reduced for next year.

Mr. Fuqua reported that construction activity is slowly underway. The pre-purchase of bypass pipe has been received. The RFP for the new wastewater services contract will be advertised tomorrow.

Director of IT James Richardson reported that the GIS team finished adding water service lines to the GIS database. IT staff is replacing computers that have gone out of support. The email system will be transferred to the cloud next month.

Mr. Schimmel reported that he met with STCC last Friday regarding the online water operator training. The online class will start on September 9. This class is the first of its kind in Massachusetts, and is very exciting because there is still a tremendous need for more water operators. The class will include micro-internships at the water utilities. It is hoped that another online training course will be developed for distribution. This class will change the way people have access to water careers.

Mr. Guz reported that an audit of all Eversource bills was ongoing and would be presented at the next meeting. Mr. Guz also reported that Clean Water Trust loan commitments were received.

Mr. Schimmel reported that the Commission recently submitted comments on the nitrogen limits of three NPDES permits. The comments questioned the technical merit and legality of the new nitrogen limits. Mr. Guz added that submitting comments is extremely important for the Commission. There appears to be an effort between Connecticut and EPA to mandate nitrogen limits in Massachusetts. The permits issued for the smaller communities (which have less ability to respond) will set precedent.

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

None considered.

The next Commission meeting was scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2019, at 9 AM.

38. Update on Eastern Avenue Parcels: Report by Executive Director.

AT 11:25 AM UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD, THE COMMISSIONERS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to enter into executive session to discuss potential property purchase on Eastern Avenue. It was determined that holding the discussion in public session could be detrimental to the Commission's negotiating position. It was announced that public session will not resume at the end of executive session.

39. Discussion of Cyber Security: Report by Director of IT.

AT 11:26 AM UPON MOTION DULY MADE BY COMMISSIONER RODRIGUEZ AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEONARD, THE COMMISSIONERS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY to enter into executive session to discuss the deployment or use of security personnel or devices. It was determined that holding the discussion in public session could be detrimental to those systems in place. It was announced that public session will not resume at the end of executive session.



Jaimye Bartak, Secretary

