

Northern Westchester Joint Water Works

NWJWW Board of Trustees Meeting – January 17, 2025

Raymond A. Reber Catskill Water Treatment Facility 2065 East Main Street, Cortlandt Manor, NY

Convened at 10:06 A.M.

Adjourned at 11:02 A.M.

A.M. Present:

Robert Becker, Trustee	Matthew Geho, Operations Director
Ed Lachterman, Trustee	Catherine Paget, Business Director
Charles Peterson, Trustee	Michael Cunningham, Attorney
Robert Scorrano, Trustee	Donna Albanese, Recording Sec'y

Organizational Business:

Trustee Lachterman called the meeting to order at 10:06 A.M.

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano to acknowledge the following member Trustees as officers to the NWJWW for the year 2025, following the scheduled rotating succession:

Town of Yorktown - Chairperson
Town of Cortlandt – Vice Chairperson
Montrose Improvement District - Treasurer

The motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0, and each Trustee immediately assumes their designated officer role.

Organizational Motions requested:

- #2025-02 Adopt the recommended 2025 Trustees meeting schedule (as attached)
- #2025-03 Designate the depository for monies of the NWJWW with J. P. Morgan Chase Bank.
- #2025-04 Designation of media that will represent the NWJWW for all public newspaper notifications is the Journal News, with alternate as The Examiner, with WHUD as the designated radio channel. Public notification will also occur on the NWJWW website www.nwjww.com
- #2025-05 Maintain the Petty Cash allotment amount of \$200.00 for the year 2025, and

appoint Catherine Paget as Petty Cash custodian for the year 2025.

- #2025-06 Appoint Catherine Paget as Records Retention Manager.
- #2025-07 Establish the mileage reimbursement rate at the 2025 IRS designated rate, \$0.70 per mile. If the IRS makes further change to this rate in 2025 ,this designation will automatically adjust in accordance with that change.
- #2025-08 Authorize the Business Director to make decisions about delayed openings or closing due to weather and road conditions.
- #2025-09 Establish the member bulk water rate at \$4.22 per thousand gallons as per the 2025 adopted budget.
- #2025-10 Renew the 2024 adopted Purchasing and Procurement Policy for 2025.
- #2025-11 Renew the 2024 adopted Investment Policy for 2025.
- #2025-12 Renew the 2024 adopted NWJWW policy for billings to and payments from members for 2025.
- #2025-13 Authorize the Business Director to award formal public bids budgeted for and authorized by the Board of Trustees in the operating budget, not to exceed \$25,000 or exceed a period of one year, without vote of the Board of Trustees, subject to prior review by the NWJWW Attorney. This authorization excludes bids for capital projects and items/services not planned for in the budget, and is subject to report to the Board of Trustees at the next formal meeting.
- #2025-14 Authorize the Business Director to execute routine operating contracts budgeted for and authorized by the Board of Trustees in the operating budget, not to exceed \$7,000 and not to exceed a period of one year, without vote of the Board of Trustees and subject to prior review of NWJWW Attorney.
- #2025-15 Authorize the Operations Director to execute routine operating contracts budgeted for and authorized by the Board of Trustees in the operating budget, not to exceed \$20,000 and not to exceed a period of one year, without vote of the Board of Trustees and subject to prior review of NWJWW Attorney. This is subject to report to the Board of Trustees at the next formal meeting.
- #2025-16 Authorize the Business Director to make individual budget transfers up to \$2,000 between object codes in the functional budgets for Administration, Billing and Distribution, and make individual transfers not to exceed \$5,000 between function and object codes in the budgets for the Catskill and Amawalk Buildings and Treatment Plant budgets, without vote of the Board of Trustees.
- #2025-17 Reimburse the Town of Cortlandt for legal counsel services provided to the

NWJWW for the year 2025 at an annual cost of \$15,000.

- #2025-18 Reaffirm that in accordance with the Montrose Improvement District's request, to compensate Patrick Murphy, Water Foreperson, at the rate of \$230.77 weekly to act as the Responsible Operator in Charge for the District. This cost and applicable benefits will be billed back directly to the District.
- #2025-19 Authorize the payment of salaries for all employees in accordance with their current negotiated contract or previously adopted Board resolution.

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano to adopt the above Organizational Resolutions numbers 2025-02 through 2025-19. Motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0.

Request Adoption of the December 13, 2024 minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to adopt the December 1, 2024 minutes. Motion was seconded by Trustee Peterson. Motion approved 4-0.

Designate the remediation of and replacement of the septic system at 82 Locust Avenue an emergency, and authorize this as a capital project

Mr. Geho reported that our property at 82 Locust Avenue which is being rented by our Chief Operator, Phil Walko, had a problem with the septic which had started out as a leak. The original cast iron pipe leaving the basement going into the septic field had failed. The top of the pipe split because of gas buildup on the downstream side of the house trap. We had replaced that but we had continued backup. Digging had started outside. We realized that the leach fields had collapsed and was clogged. The tank was only a 500-gallon tank.

When the Department of Health got involved they discovered they had no record of it. They allowed us just to replace the existing tank and fields with a 1,000 tank without going through the engineering and design. The tank and new leach fields have been put in, a new line leaving the home has also been put into the tank. We now have a whole new septic field at 82 Locust Avenue. The work was done by Pizzella Brothers with the total cost of \$21,470. Mr. Geho had to get this done because of the public health issue with the resident and the proximity of the water treatment plant. He mentioned that once we found out that there was raw sewage leaching out, we had to address the situation immediately.

Mrs. Paget mentioned that there were other miscellaneous expenses such as the actual inspection itself which is not reflected in that cost as well as waste hauling. She said the complete total is roughly \$23,000. Trustee Becker said that because the situation was an emergency, we could not go out for an RFP and Mr. Geho deemed the situation as an emergency. Mrs. Paget said that we had to worry about the property to the left of 82 Locust Avenue. Mrs. Paget mentioned that we would acknowledge it as an emergency and also as a capital project. We would fund it through the capital reserve because it is a site improvement.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to approve the remediation of and replacement of the septic system at 82 Locust Avenue as an emergency and authorize the spending as a capital

project. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 4-0.

Discuss 2025 Intended Capital Projects Plan, and request adoption of Plan with authorization of specific projects to be advertised for bid and to begin.

Mr. Geho reported that the Capital Projects spreadsheet is the intended request for 2025 capital projects. If you look at the top it says 2022 and 2023 approved and 2024 approved. We have projects going for 3 years. Monies have been requested and approved and not spent such as the backwash pump B and check valve, 1mg gallon storage tank to be painted and decant pump number 2 upgrade. For example, when we bid out the tank, it came in 3 time higher than we estimated so we did not do that work. Status is delayed until Amawalk plant upgrade. We have only done essential minor improvements for the Amawalk Plant to keep that facility running. Everything else we will delay until we do the major work at Amawalk in 2027, 2028 and 2029.

Currently, we are finalizing the RFP for engineering services for the Amawalk Plant. In February or March, we will be looking to award an engineer to start that project. In that RFP Mr. Geho put a timeline for when the work has to be complete. Full compliance has to be by 2029. Mr. Geho said that in 2026 we will spend time putting the plan together, getting the Department of Health approval and figure out the funding and in 2027, we will start the project. This will give us 2 years to do the actual work.

Trustee Lachterman said that there were capital projects approved so is that money in the fund balance and Mr. Geho said yes. It is tagged but we are going to use it for Amawalk projects. Mr. Geho said with the \$650,000 in the 3 projects, we did not spend the money but it has been accrued in the capital 20 cents so it is in our account. He feels that between Montrose's fund balance and the Water Works fund balance we can have a big portion of it about 30% to 40% before the project starts. We would then figure out how to get the rest of the money.

Mrs. Paget said that she received an inquiry from 2-member comptrollers about the value of the project and being prepared for the future whether it is to be bonded.. Prior to the pandemic, we had a finance committee which consisted of water superintendents and comptrollers. She is going to start that again and as this develops we will meet and discuss those particular factors, like the bonding and the timing. If we should explore grant opportunities, does a member have to be the lead agency. We would put together a team so everyone is prepared and nothing will be held up. Some of fund balance we already have is on deposit and being invested and not used is a good opportunity to use as a start up cost. If the member says I need another year before I can actually bond. We want to get this on everyone's schedule so they can plan accordingly and no one is left in a bad position. Mrs. Paget said that 25 to 30 years ago when they first talked about building the Catskill Plant, this was the same process. We have the money for certain projects but after that we would have to bond with the members to help us

Mr. Geho said that with previous Boards, we attended a few of the Town Board meetings to have discussions. Right now, the Catskill Plant is producing water for all the members because it is cost prohibitive to run the Amawalk Plant. When the Catskill facility is offline and with the DEP, we have to have a backup and Amawalk is our backup. It has the PFAS situation and if things change that price can drastically change as far as regulations. If regulations do not come forth with the timeline of 2029, we may not have to do as much work.

Mrs. Paget said that overall, the Board is authorizing as capital projects and authorization for formal bids. Mr. Cunningham mentioned that any bid over \$35,000 will have to come back to the Board for their approval.

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano to adopt specific multiyear capital projects plan whereas the Board had previously reviewed. This is a 5-year capital plan with proposed projects as well as estimated budgets with a funding plan for 2025. A motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0.

Request to reimburse the Operations Director expense paid to repair a flow transmitter

Mr. Geho said that we have flow meters at the Catskill Plant that are aging out and the transmitter which is the electrical component that takes the mechanical flow measurement and transmits it to our computer system is failing. We had a company that we were working with which is Miller Electrical that they subcontracted with ABB in England and it was costing us \$3,000 to have this repaired. Mr. Geho found Radwell International located in New Jersey that was able to do the repair for \$1,779 which is a great deal less. We can actually get it back on the shelf. He did not want to go over the holidays without it and by the time we sent the email out we had the unit back. Moving forward we will continue to use them. This was a onetime charge on Mr. Geho's credit card.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to approve the reimbursement of \$1,779 to the Operations Director for costs related to the flow meter at the Catskill Water Treatment Plant when it failed to operate. The former vendor went out of business and the new vendor was needed for repair. Due to the holiday timing, Mr. Geho incurred the cost of the repair performed Radwell International LLC. A motion was seconded by Trustee Peterson. Motion approved 4-0.

**An Executive Session is requested:
To discuss specific personnel**

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano at 10:34 A.M. to enter into executive session. The motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker at 10:54 A.M. to exit executive session. The motion was seconded by Trustee Peterson. Motion approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to authorize sick leave for a written request from Brian Bradley to care for an immediate family member from December 26, 2024 through January 22, 2025. A motion was second by Trustee Peterson. Motion approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano to utilize extended sick leave for Phil Walko to care for an immediate family member from December 9, 2024 through December 17, 2024. A motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0.

Attorney's Report

Mr. Cunningham mentioned that we are hoping sooner rather than later how much we are receiving from the PFAS remediation. We have no indication on the monetary amount. Trustee Becker said is there a case coming around to lower those requirements. Mr. Cunningham said there are so many cases going on and does not know.

Business Director's Report

Mrs. Paget reported that our new Accountant, Ms. Linda Taber, started January 13, 2025. She has been punctual, attentive, works well in a group and we will continue to acclimate her to our processes.

Mrs. Paget also mentioned that the financial audit for the Joint Water Works will begin on February 24, 2025 and will be working on closing the books for 2024 with a report in February.

Operations Director's Report

Nothing further to report.

Resolution #2025-01

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano to acknowledge the following member Trustees as officers to the NWJWW for the year 2025, following the scheduled rotating succession:

Town of Yorktown - Chairperson

Town of Cortlandt – Vice Chairperson

Montrose Improvement District - Treasurer

The motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0, and each Trustee immediately assumes their designated officer role.

In addition to resolutions #2025-02 through #2025-19 listed above, the following resolutions were also adopted:

Resolution #2025-20

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to adopt the December 1, 2024 minutes. Motion was seconded by Trustee Peterson. Motion approved 4-0.

Resolution #2025-21

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to approve the remediation of and replacement of the septic system at 82 Locust Avenue as an emergency and authorize the spending as a capital project. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 4-0.

Resolution #2025-22

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano to adopt specific multiyear capital projects plan whereas the Board had previously reviewed. This is a 5-year capital plan with proposed projects as well as estimated budgets with a funding plan for 2025. A motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0.

Resolution #2025-23

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to approve the reimbursement of \$1,779 to the Operations Director for costs related to the flow meter at the Catskill Water Treatment Plant when it failed to operate. The former vendor went out of business and the new vendor was needed for repair. Due to the holiday timing, Mr. Geho incurred the cost of the repair performed Radwell International LLC. A motion was seconded by Trustee Peterson. Motion approved 4-0.

Resolution #2025-24

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to authorize sick leave for a written request from Brian Bradley to care for an immediate family member from December 26, 2024 through January 22, 2025. A motion was second by Trustee Peterson. Motion approved 4-0.

Resolution #2025-25

A motion was made by Trustee Scorrano to utilize extended sick leave for Phil Walko to care for an immediate family member from December 9, 2024 through December 17, 2024. A motion was seconded by Trustee Becker. Motion approved 4-0.