

Northern Westchester Joint Water Works
NWJWW Board of Trustees Meeting – May 13, 2022

Convened at 10:07 A.M.

Adjourned at 10:50 A.M.

Present:

Richard Becker, Chairperson	Ray Reber, Consultant
Jeffrey Scott, Vice Chairperson	Tom Wood Esq., Attorney
Robert Scorrano, Treasurer, via zoom	Donna Albanese, Recording Sec’y
Matthew Slater, Trustee, via zoom, arrived at 10:31 A.M. left at 10:46 A.M.	Ken Rundle, Yorktown Water Service Superintendent, left at 10:40 A.M.
Matthew Geho, Operations Director	
Catherine Paget, Business Director	

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to adopt the April 22, 2022 minutes. Motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

Review results and request award of Bid #2022.3 Emergency Response Contractor Services

Mr. Geho reported that we had 3 companies turn in a bid in the event we have an emergency on one of our transmission mains or if the Montrose Improvement District needs assistance. The company, Ground Control Excavating, was the lowest bidder. The award is contingent upon the need for their services and we are not guaranteeing them the services. If other municipalities needed assistance, we would go through the IMA.

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to award Bid #2022.3 Emergency Response Contractor Services to Grounds Control Excavating. Motion seconded By Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

Mr. Geho mentioned to Trustee Scorrano that even though Mr. Adam Smith is self-sufficient in the Town of Somers, we can call in assistance if need be to the Town of Somers. Since Mr. Smith is retiring soon, Mr. Fred McQuillan will step into that position. Trustee Scorrano stated that we should have a meeting with Mr. McQuillan and fill him in.

Review results and request to reject Bid #2022.4 Distribution Materials and Supplies

Mr. Geho reported that we had advertised a bid for a 24” Resilient Wedge Gate Valve to have

in stock and also allow hydrants to be purchased on behalf of the Montrose Improvement District. Only one bid was turned in and it was \$10,000 more than what we had originally budgeted for. There was an issue the way it was bid for the hydrants because we had asked for a lump sum and they gave us a price for one hydrant. We would like to reject the bid and rebid it so that we can receive a better turnout and cheaper price on that valve. The price of the valve was about \$37,000. Mr. Geho said that there was additional equipment we had discovered that we needed.

Mr. Ken Rundle mentioned that he wondered if the Joint Water Works can piggyback off of the Town of Yorktown's bid. Mr. Geho asked if they have a bid for a 24-inch valve and Mr. Rundle said no. Mr. Geho suggested that maybe we can just put out a bid for the 24" valve only. We advertised the bid award for a lump sum for the valve and hydrants and we cannot award just the valve. Mr. Geho feels that we need to get additional bidders instead of just one bidder. He really wants to get the 24" valve and Mr. Wood said he should talk to Mr. Steve Ferreira. Mr. Rundle said that he will send over their materials bid to review.

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to reject Bid #2022.4 various Distribution materials and supplies. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

PERMA Workers Compensation Policy Renewal

Mrs. Paget mentioned that since the inception of the Joint Water Works, PERMA has been our worker's compensation carrier. At times we do discuss whether we should market workers comp insurance through our broker. What we have found because of our experience, the modification factor has been routinely low throughout the years. We fall far below the standard of point 1.00. We usually go between 0.79 and 0.85. It was predicted that the premium would go about 3% to 4% higher than last year. The premium has come in flat and PERMA is offering their policy holders additional credits which would decrease the premium from \$94,000 to \$89,000 which is what we paid last year. All of our employees are covered. If we make that premium payment by June 1st, we can take those credits. Mrs. Paget is asking to formalize the renewal.

Trustee Scott asked about our claim history and Mrs. Paget said that we had one claim in late 2020 which required absence and some surgery costs. Prior to 2020, the last claim of any significance was in 2016 for an operator who has since retired. From time to time we have first aid claims as well as absence from work but not surgery.

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to approve the renewal of Northern Westchester Joint Water Works worker's compensation policy through PERMA. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

Discuss plan for June 17 meeting at Amawalk Plant

Mr. Geho mentioned that last year we had the June Board meeting at the Amawalk Water Treatment Plant parking lot. We did a small box lunch for the Trustees and whomever attended. He reached out to the DEP to request a tour of the Amawalk dam in which they will talk a little bit about the dam. He said this is a good opportunity for everyone to see the assets we have at the Amawalk Plant. The Board meeting will be held on June 17th at 11:00 A.M. followed by lunch then the tour of the dam. If the weather is not good, we can have the Board meeting in the lunchroom. Mrs. Paget suggested that we would spend about \$200-\$300

on lunch.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to approve the June 17, 2022 Board meeting at the Amawalk Water Treatment Plant with a box lunch totaling between \$200 to \$300 followed by a tour of the dam. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 3-0.

Business Director

Mrs. Paget mentioned that she has been interacting with the Town of Cortlandt and the Town of Yorktown on water billing to make improvements and ways to make efficiencies in the operations and communication.

Trustee Becker told the Board that Mrs. Paget came by Town Hall this week and met with his staff, the water department and comptroller's office and talked about the 40% unaccounted water loss and ways to minimize it. He said that we have a plan we initiated and we can start with the commercial properties.

Trustee Becker also stated that Cortlandt is also looking to replace some of the residential valves which are 18 years old and upgrading them. We are also looking to see what new technologies are out there so we can have more accurate valves and incorporate the GIS so that the routes are easier instead of having just zone 1, 2 and 3.

Trustee Becker said that we talked about leak adjustments and we will revisit the one-time leak adjustment which they are still in favor for. We are not going to find the leak that explains it all. It is going to be a process in identifying the many smaller parts that add up to the total loss of water. We want to get closer to what the Town of Yorktown has which is a 17% range. As long as the numbers are going down, we will be very happy.

Mr. Ken Rundle said that if Yorktown can be of any help to please reach out to him because the Town of Yorktown does their own in-house leak detection. He said they use their own staff and perform the leak detection off hours usually at midnight and it is only the overtime cost for employees. Mr. Geho said maybe we can use the IMA to utilize their crew to help isolate some leaks. It is the intent of the Joint Water works to consolidate some services.

Mrs. Paget mentioned that Mr. Cliff Kummer received an email regarding the meter project and Mrs. Paget asked if there was a change in status on the project. Mr. Rundle explained he met with the Town Board on Tuesday night and they issued a resolution to complete the water meter project which had originally started in 2012. We have about 4,500 meters that are still providing manual reads. Mrs. Paget mentioned the Flex Net system has all the repeaters installed and that data comes in via network connection and it is easier. She does not know how many repeaters they have or if they had to add some in certain areas which had become a concern.

Trustee Becker asked if they have to go out on a physical route to read it? Mr. Rundle said no when it is completed. Mr. Geho reported that the meter data is sent via radio to the repeaters and from the repeaters to the Flex Net server in which we log on to obtain data. Mr. Reber said that as you get into Yorktown, you have elevations changing constantly so the question is how many repeaters need to be put in to make sure the signals get carried. So far there has not been any major dropouts but it is a concern.

Mr. Rundle stated that we had 2 fixed stations in one section of Town and the topography was not favorable. We were able to work with the vendor/supplier. They came in and installed another antenna and picked up the cost. We have about 97 or 98 percent coverage. Mr. Geho said that we tested some of the meters down by Veplanck by the low service and it was picked up by Rockland County. We identified the location for a new tower off of Route 9 by Watch Hill Road that would be enough to get out of the shadow of Blue Mountain and get to the French Hill radio tower. He spoke to Mr. Steve Ferreira regarding the Route 6 corridor because the Mohegan tank antenna is in line of sight of the Town Center. We might be able to take advantage of their bid. Mrs. Paget asked if the meter company had to guarantee to capture a certain percentage of reads the first go around.

Mr. Rundle said that the original investment was in 2012 and he was not privy to the contract so he does not know. He knows that the supplier came in, did a fly over of the town and figured out where these repeaters would go. We had a problem in the one area. He mentioned to the vendor that the Town was considering finishing the project out. The supplier decided to put a tower up at no cost. Yorktown has a great partnership with Sensus. Mr. Geho mentioned that Sensus, Masters and Neptune are the 3 biggest vendors. Trustee Becker asked if they put the upgrade through and added it as an-add on to the water bill like a surcharge? Mr. Rundle said that it is funded through their operating cost out of their budget with the anticipation that their revenue should rise a little bit. The old meters are running at 90% and we are losing 10 cents on the dollar. The new meters are running at 100% accuracy.

At this time, Trustee Slater jointed the meeting virtually.

Trustee Slater said that we have a bond anticipation note coming due for the water department and there is no impact to our budget to renew it to finish the project, which is the reason why we went through with it. We have been waiting 8 years to do this. We have meters that are 30 plus years old and we are finally crossing the finish line. We have to go through the motions on the financing side.

Trustee Becker asked Trustee Slater how is the installation process when you have all these homes? We are going to do proactive outreach and coordination with the company. The installation takes about 30 minutes and they are confident they can do this in an expedited manner. Sensus had held on to the meters and honored the price. Trustee Becker asked if we can go on the Town of Yorktown's RFP? Trustee Slater said that this is something we should be doing together. It makes sense from an economic and buying power standpoint. We have 4 different types of meters, 4 different billing programs and 4 different processes. It is important for us to look at ways to save money which we can do through the large purchases. It makes sense for all of us to be on the same page.

Operation's Director's Report

Mr. Geho said the work is proceeding on clarifier 1 and it should be complete by July which is just about our peak production time.

He did look into the WIIAA grants and at this time they are not offering another round of grants but based on the state they will be doing WIIAA grants annually. Communities that are lower income or northern communities tend to get the money. He feels that we should

continue with the application process and if we get money then spread it out. We can as an entity apply for the grants. Trustee Slater asked Mr. Geho if he checked on the shared services side even though from the income level he agrees and acknowledges the fact that we are at a disadvantage standpoint. The shared services that does score very high on their rubric. It may help us overcome where we would lose out from the income threshold. There is a strong possibility that we can make that up on the shared services side. Mr. Geho said that he will definitely look into it and that there is a lot of merit to that statement. The key is emphasizing the shared services aspect of the organization. Trustee Slater feels that when you talk to the grant writers this is something they will highlight and say is a strongpoint of the application. Mr. Geho said it seems like there is a 6 to 12-month lead.

Mr. Geho said that if we were to continue replacing the 16” main proceed with that process and award the bid that is where the money would come in if money was to be granted. When the grant application is due, we will apply. Trustee Slater said we should try to reengage the County on their federal funds. If you look at what Putnam County is doing, each municipality received a certain allocation and then the County is throwing more at each municipality. We should see if there is an opportunity from the County perspective with their federal funds.

Mr. Geho stated that we had a surprise site inspection by the Department of Health for our bulk petroleum storage at the Amawalk facility and there were no deficiencies. Our crew stays on top of standards. We like to have inspections done because it brings deficiencies to the forefront so we can get it corrected.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker at 10:40 A.M. to enter into Executive session. Motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker at 10:46 A.M. to exit Executive session. Motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 3-0.

It was reported that Trustee Slater left the meeting during executive session, and that he wished that it be recorded that he votes in favor of the following two resolutions.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to agree to a ratified 2-year agreement with Amalgamated Local 298 in accordance with the attached schedule. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker with a proposal to raise the wages of the Administrative staff and Directors by 2.75% for 2022 and 2023 along with a one-time payment of \$2,500 payable on July 1, 2022. Also, to renew agreements with the 2 Directors to be treated the same. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Trustee Becker at 10:50 A.M. to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 3-0.

Resolution # 2022-43

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to adopt the April 22, 2022 minutes. Motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

Resolution # 2022-44

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to award Bid #2022.3 Emergency Response Contractor Services to Grounds Control Excavating. Motion seconded By Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

Resolution # 2022-45

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to reject Bid #2022.4 various Distribution materials and supplies. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

Resolution # 2022-46

A motion was made by Trustee Scott to approve the renewal of Northern Westchester Joint Water Works worker's compensation policy through PERMA. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scorrano. Motion approved 3-0.

Resolution # 2022-47

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to approve the June 17, 2022 Board meeting at the Amawalk Water Treatment Plant with a box lunch totaling between \$200 to \$300 followed by a tour of the dam. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 3-0.

Resolution # 2022-48

A motion was made by Trustee Becker to agree to a ratified 2-year agreement with Amalgamated Local 298 in accordance with the attached schedule. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 4-0.

Resolution # 2022-49

A motion was made by Trustee Becker with a proposal to raise the wages of the Administrative staff and Directors by 2.75% for 2022 and 2023 along with a one-time payment of \$2,500 payable on July 1, 2022. Also, to renew agreements with the 2 Directors to be treated the same. A motion was seconded by Trustee Scott. Motion approved 4-0.