



**Town of Berlin – Water Control Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 27, 2023**

The Berlin Water Control Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Bruce Laroche, at 7:00 p.m., June 27, 2023 in the Public Works Department (Room 120), 240 Kensington Road.

ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Bruce Laroche, Commissioners: Barry Fairwood, Tom Lasker, Liam Mitchell and Alvaro Garcia, Jr. (via Zoom). Staff – Ray Jarema, P.E., Berlin Water Control.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the April 25, 2023 meeting were previously mailed (and e-mailed) to the Commissioners for review.

Commissioner Lasker made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 25, 2023 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Stan Chem – Fire Line

Mr. Jarema reported that a meeting was recently held with Stan Chem, Cromwell Fire District (CFD), and Town Staff to determine if some interconnections between Cromwell at Berlin Street which will allow Stan Chem to connect and achieve the pressure they need for fire protection is feasible. A potential connection with CFD would allow Stan Chem to abandon their pump system for fire protection from the Mattabassett River.

RFP – Bid Opening June 15- Evaluation

Mr. Jarema reported that there was a bid opening June 15, 2023 for the Evaluation of Berlin Water Control Assets. DPC Engineering, LLC was the sole bidder at a price of \$118,749.94. This proposal cost was higher than the budgeted amount.

RFP – District Study - Status

Mr. Jarema reported that a bid opening was held February 21, 2023 for a study of the Water & Sewer Utilities. There were two bidders: DPC Engineering, LLC and Haley Ward, Inc. Haley Ward was the low bidder. Both were more than anticipated and Town Council is hesitant to award the bid if the other Districts won't participate.

Continued

Baxter Avenue Meter Status

Mr. Jarema reported that Staff recently met with Wright-Pierce regarding the Baxter Avenue meter. The existing meter is not accurate and was likely installed incorrectly. It will be a significant purchase for a new meter, but is the best solution for accurate readings/billings for the future.

Policy Reimbursement for cancelling site visits

Mr. Jarema reported that a customer recently requested reimbursement for time lost waiting on the water department to show up for a repair. Mr. Jarema explained that our small crew must respond to urgent calls first, and sometimes show up later than anticipated. Mr. Jarema explained the situation to the Commissioners and asked them if they wanted to establish a policy to reimburse people who wait at home for appointments.

Commissioner Lasker moved not to establish a reimbursement policy, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mattabassett Billing

Mr. Jarema reported that he received the annual Mattabassett District invoice and calculated the shared costs with the other districts. He received correspondence from Worthington Fire District requesting more 'back-up' documents. Mr. Jarema gathered additional information and sent it to them. Water Control must still pay the bill to the Mattabassett District for July 1, 2023.

Letter to Governor etc. discussion

Mr. Jarema reported that an anonymous letter was mailed to the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), Governor, Secretary of State, and Commissioner of Public Health. Vice-Chair, Jack Betkowski (PURA) is checking with his legal office to determine if they have the capacity to financially review all three systems in Berlin (not just BWCC).

Diversion Permit- DEEP

Mr. Jarema reported that he received correspondence from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) regarding the lack of a diversion permit with New Britain. It may have been 'grandfathered in', but a permit was not 'registered', nor was it recorded with DEEP, therefore it was made official by registering.

Additional Items:

1) Commissioner Lasker made a motion to add a topic on Rain Barrels, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Jarema reported that someone from the High School asked if the Water Control Commission supported giving a credit on water bills for the use of rain barrels. Mr. Jarema told the Commissioners that

Connecticut Water is offering a \$10 credit to the first 250 customers who email their purchase confirmation to them. The question of demand, or interest, has been lacking.

Commissioner Lasker moved to table any action on rain barrels at this time, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

2) Commissioner Fairwood made a motion to add an item regarding a cross-connection violation, seconded by Commissioner Lasker. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Jarema reported that the Department of Public Health (DPH) notified him of a cross-connection violation. Mr. Jarema told the Commissioners that several businesses closed and some did not utilize their irrigation systems. He is discussing the matter with the DPH. This issue has occurred in the past. Closed businesses don't have active systems, therefore an inspection was not possible.

3) Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to add an item regarding pool filling, seconded by Commissioner Garcia. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Jarema reported that a resident had to drain her pool to install a new liner, and requested a credit for the sewer portion of her bill. Mr. Jarema asked the Commissioners if they wanted to establish a policy that reimburses people for filling their pool. Connecticut Water offers a \$50 flat rate.

Commissioner Lasker made a motion to offer pool owners a \$50 pool-filling credit, no sooner than 10 years apart, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion passed 4 to 1.

4) Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to add an item regarding PFAS, seconded by Commissioner Lasker. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Jarema gave an update on monitoring Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Weston & Sampson released a report (available on the DEEP website) that indicates PFAS are being found in: Influent, Effluent, sewage sludge, incinerators that process sewage sludge and scrubber water, fish tissue, as well as surface water both upstream and downstream of those outfalls. DEEP's Municipal Wastewater program is planning to implement PFAS monitoring requirements in all municipal NPDES permits once an analytical method is set in place. There are several lawsuits in place against companies that must make restitution for polluting water sources with PFAS. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is still looking for a standard at 4 parts per trillion for several PFAS components.

5) Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to add an item regarding State of the Water Industry, seconded by Commissioner Lasker. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Jarema reported that the Association of Water Works released an article on Sustainability of our Water Resources, and of the top 20 water sector challenges in 2023, Rehabilitation and replacement (R&R) of aging infrastructure was the number one issue.

6) Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to add an item regarding hydrants in Berlin, seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Mitchell wanted assurance that the Berlin fire hydrants are exercised and working properly and not found 'dry' if there is a fire call. Mr. Jarema reported that the Berlin Water Control has an inventory of the hydrants, has tried to convert to all Mueller hydrants to keep the parts consistent. They advertise in the paper that they will be flushing (provided there are no drought conditions). Inoperable hydrants are replaced when found.

OLD BUSINESS:

Deming Road Pump Station

Mr. Jarema reported that C.H. Nickerson is the Contractor and DPC Engineering, LLC is the Engineer for the pump station project. Permitting is mostly proceeding right now and materials are ordered.

16" Water Main Replacement- Status

Mr. Jarema stated that the Turnpike project is substantially complete and the retainage is set to be billed. The anticipated development (the D'Addeo project) has just received their DOT permitting and should be moving forward.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Lasker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Fairwood. The motion was unanimously approved.

Lecia Paonessa
Recording Secretary

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BERLIN TOWN CLERK

2023 JUN 30 AM 11:33

Katrina Wall

BERLIN, CT