



Customer Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting

Minutes of the March 19, 2024 Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Edward Alberino – Clinton
Barbara Ausiello – Avon
Robert Chatfield – Prospect
Anne Whitney Collins - Enfield

Connecticut Water Staff in Attendance:

Craig Patla, Rose Gavrilovic, Paul Lowry, Gerald McDermott, Troy Dixon, Rich Hanratty, Amanda Deming and Lindsay Bollenbach

Welcome and Introduction:

Ms. Bollenbach opened the meeting at 3:02 p.m. and welcome all to the first CAC meeting of 2024.

Purpose of the Customer Advisory Council:

The Customer Advisory Council (CAC) provides an opportunity for the company to update customer representatives about projects, policies and procedures that may affect water quality or service, and for CT Water to receive feedback from the council members. This will help improve communication, learn about the needs and priorities of customers and better serve the community.

Brief Overview of Connecticut Water:

Ms. Bollenbach gave a brief overview of the company's service area and water systems -- serving about 107,000 customers in 60 Connecticut communities through more than 60 non-interconnected water systems.

Customer Service Update:

Ms. Deming reported on what is coming up in the spring in Customer Service and Communications including a public Open House in the Shoreline (Clinton, CT) region on May 9th from 10am – 2pm. The Expo style event will take place in the Building 2 garage featuring stations from the various internal departments at CWC including Customer Service, Field Service, Engineering, Water Quality and more.

Infrastructure Investment:

Ms. Gavrilovic updated the committee on the company's planned infrastructure investment for 2024, including the Water Infrastructure and Conservation Adjustment (WICA) program. Of the more than \$93 million budgeted for infrastructure investment in 2024, approximately \$35 million is allocated to WICA projects.

The company is only able to request an adjustment in the WICA charge on bills after projects are completed and in-service for the benefit of customers. Timely recovery of costs helps fund additional WICA projects.

Also of note are large construction projects currently underway including the Heritage Village Water Treatment Plant and the Anvil Tank and Booster Station

Ms. Gavrilovic also mentioned the continued sustainability improvements happening including the Rockville Water Treatment Plan Solar array and the overall emphasis on improving the operations efficiency through these sustainability projects.

Emerging Contaminants:

Ms. Gavrilovic then provided updates on emerging contaminants in the industry beginning with PFAS. She noted the final EPA Regulations will be forthcoming and while we await that the team has been hard at work developing a master plan and working on future design work that would accommodate PFAS filtering.

Ms. Gavrilovic also provided an update on the Lead & Copper rule revision and the progress on completing the service line inventory for all customer and company side service lines by the deadline of October 16, 2024. Ms. Gavrilovic reported that they are on track to meet this deadline. She also made note of tracking any other new and emerging contaminants.

Rate Activity:

Mr. Dixon reported that the current filing of the Water Infrastructure and Conservation Adjustment seeks eligibility for new projects which will have no rate impact. The next filing for WICA will be July 2024 with an effective rate of October 2024. He also said that through March 30, 2025 customers will receive a 2.11% credit on their bills through the Water Revenue Adjustment (WRA). This is about \$2.3 million that will be returned to customers within 12 months. Mr. Dixon informed the CAC that the credit remains in place through March 30, 2024. The WRA reconciles actual revenue collected with authorized revenue.

Mr. Dixon discussed the company rate case pending before PURA. He noted the company is requesting \$21.4 million in annual revenues, or 18.1%. He explained the discovery phase of the process is now complete and a draft decision is expected on May 29th. Mr. Dixon pointed to the next slide for further detail \ on what is driving the revenue increase which is driven primarily by increased investment in utility plant.

Legislative Update

Mr. Hanratty provide an overview of the current legislative session at the Connecticut General Assembly. Pending bills include PFAS – state vs. federal regulation (SB 292 and SB 378), Electric Vehicles HB5485, Riparian Buffers HB 5218, Inland Wetlands HB5170, and Climate Change HB 5004 known as the “Green Monster”. He noted this bill looks to phase out the use of natural gas to mitigate climate change.

Community Support

Ms. Bollenbach updated the CAC on Connecticut Water’s charitable giving program and community support activities. She noted the company had donated \$120,000 in investor funds in 2023 to support community organizations, including fire departments and schools served by the company, food pantries, and in-kind services for local projects. She then noted the company is currently finalizing the donations for the Water Bottle Fill Stations in schools, and the Firefighter Support Grants. Neighborhood Assistance Acts grants were recently delivered to the Valley YMCA, Ivoryton Playhouse, Phelps-Hathaway House, and the CT Trolley Museum.

Ms. Bollenbach also reported that CWC volunteers are currently going to many elementary schools in CWC service areas conducting the Water Drop Watchers educational program.

Other Business:

None

Adjournment:

The meeting ended at 3:24 p.m.