



WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

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MINUTES OF THE WPCA SPECIAL MEETING

APRIL 24, 2014

The meeting opened at 7:02PM with the Pledge of Allegiance. The chairman asked for the roll to be called. There were five members present, therefore there was a quorum.

PRESENT

N. Parente

M. Dalessio

C. Durante

A. Geruntho

K. Plavnicky

C. Stowe (late)

ABSENT

A. Limauro

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Rita St. Jacques WPCA

Brian Capozzi WPCA

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss/establish the bill collection policy for the WPCA. A lengthy discussion was held and information was disseminated but the collection policy is still in the draft stage.



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The Secretary passed out another copy of the collection policy intending it to be used as a mock up for additional policy changes. The first part of the collection policy details the collection steps which are mandated by either the State Statutes or the Connecticut Tax Collectors Association and cover up through the lien being placed on the property. The next step would be to determine what happens on a going forward basis i.e., when the account gets referred out of the WPCA office for collection and steps to be taken after the account is referred out of the office.

Member C. Durante asked about the sequence of collections and Mrs. St. Jacques went through the collection steps.

Member C. Stowe asked several times if properties are liened when delinquent and Mrs. St Jacques explained that all delinquent properties are liened.

As a courtesy Chairman Parente allowed John Izzo of 12 Shortell Dr. to present a package he had put together concerning bill collections.

Mr. Izzo's handout included:

1. Mr. Izzo contacted an employee of the DEEP. The DEEP employee Mr. Izzo spoke to addressed Mr. Izzo's questions but unfortunately Mr. Izzo was given incorrect information. Mr. Izzo should also have spoken to the State Bonding Attorney and Connecticut Tax Collectors Association, since they ultimately govern the collections for the WPCA.

2. Mr. Izzo compared Ansonia's collection policy to seven other towns in Connecticut.

- a. None of the other cities/towns has a separate project bill in place. Ansonia has a separate bill because there is a stipulation in the closing per Bonding Attorney Joe Fasi that money collected from the project cannot be co-mingled with money from regular collections.
- b. None of the other cities/towns have a written collection policy.
- c. Mr. Izzo stated that Ansonia has the second highest usage rate of the 8 cities/towns compared:

- Ansonia - \$3.05 per 100/cf.
- Norwalk \$285 per unit. Not based on usage so people with little usage pay same as high users
- Derby \$.74 per average gallon for residential and \$3.66 for commercial plus a unit fee of \$250.00. To compare, if a customer uses 8,000/cf per year in Ansonia the bill would be \$240 and in Derby \$371.00.
- Shelton.....\$198.00 per unit. Not based on usage so people with little usage pay same as high users.
- Middlebury \$200.00 for residential. Not based on usage everyone pays the same.
- Seymour \$3.50 per 100/cf

Naugatuck has no sewer use fee but charges approximately 40 Beacon Falls customers who flow to Naugatuck a flat of \$265.

3. According to Mr. Izzo, liens are only placed on one bill. The other towns only have one bill. We were mandated in 2007 to comply with the Clean Water Act and after the project was completed it was a provision in the closing per Bonding Attorney Joe Fasi that money collected from the project not be co-mingled with money collected from regular collections.

4. Mr. Izzo presented his Alias Warrant bill to the Board and a mock-up of how he would like to see collections done. In his mock-up he only liened one year of the years owed and only one bill instead of the two due. Mr. Izzo said this is the "fair way to do it because nothing can happen with the property while the one lien is there". Mr. Izzo fails to realize is that if a ratepayer pays the oldest bill, under his scenario the lien would be released and the remaining bills would then not have liens on them. That is why all bills must be liened so that a lien stays on the property until all delinquent bills are paid.

5. Use of Marshal's. All of the Cities/towns use an outside collection point whether it be an attorney or marshal. Member K. Plavnicky asked about using elected city sheriffs for WPCA collections. The Chairman requested that the Secretary send a letter to the Ansonia Sheriffs asking if they would be interested in being collection points. He also asked that Marshal Davies, Marshal Krueger and Mrs. Tammy Blackwell, Tax Collector for the City of Ansonia, be invited to the next monthly meeting scheduled for May 7, 2014, as the members would like some information on how the Tax Collector does her collections and what Marshal Davies does to collect. Chairman Parente is interested in what "triggers" the next step.

During Mr. Izzo's presentation it was mentioned that there wouldn't be any vote taken because nothing was decided upon. Mr. Izzo stated that the Board could not vote because the meeting was not noticed. The Secretary confirmed that the meeting was indeed noticed as, by law, it was posted in the Town and City Clerks's office and in addition was posted online as an additional way to apprise the City residents of pending meetings.

6. Mr. Izzo was very impressed with the collection policy Norwalk has instituted. They have their sewer fees included in their mortgage payments. Most members agreed that it sounded like a good idea. The tax collector's office would then be responsible for WPCA collections.

7. Mrs. St. Jacques asked Mr. Izzo whether if there had been a written collection policy in place, he would have paid his bills on time?

8. Mr. Izzo agreed with Mrs. St. Jacques that sometimes there may be circumstances that need to be addressed on an individual case basis because sometimes people fall on hard times or have an emergency.

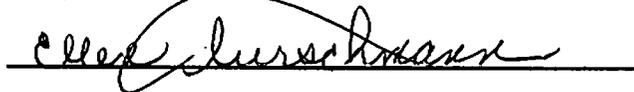
9. Mr. Izzo mentioned his F.O.I. request and made reference to the fact that he hadn't been given the data he requested. The Chairman stated that he had told Mrs. St. Jacques to hold the data until the next regular monthly meeting. Mr. Izzo was reminded that he did receive a phone call within 48 hrs. of his request as a courtesy that the information was prepared and at that time Mr. Izzo said "he did not want the information after all."

Chairman Parente questioned Mrs. St. Jacques about property at 126 Ford St and asked why the property had not been sent to the Marshal for collection? Mrs. St.

Jacques explained that she had been in contact with the property owner several times and the owner had promised payment. A partial payment was received. The property has changed hands and Mrs. St. Jacques has been in touch with the new owner multiple times and, again, payment has been promised. A check was supposed to have been processed last week but so far no check has been received. Rita is going to call the property owner one more time and if no payment is received with 2 weeks, the account will be referred to the Marshal. There were extenuating circumstances concerning this property with the previous administration and the WPCA was not able to effectively collect the bills owed. The property is liened and Rita has been aggressively trying to collect the money owed since the previous WPCA attorney advised the WPCA office that the property has gone into bankruptcy.

MOTION to adjourn made by C. Durante and seconded by M. Dalessio. All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ellen Turschmann", is written over a solid horizontal line.

Ellen Turschmann

WPCA Secretary