



## **Customer Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting**

Minutes of the June 21, 2022 Virtual Meeting

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lois Timms-Ferrara – Ellington  
Russ Arnold - Farmington  
Betsi Hellman – Oxford

### Connecticut Water Staff in Attendance:

Amanda Deming, Rich Hanratty, Paul Lowry, Gerald McDermott, Dan Meaney, Craig Patla, and Michelle Williams

### Welcome and Introduction:

Mr. Meaney opened the meeting at 6 p.m.

### Minutes of the March 29, 2022 meeting:

The minutes were approved as drafted.

### Purpose of the Customer Advisory Council:

Mr. Patla explained that 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 us 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:

Mr. Patla gave a brief overview of the company's service area and water systems -- serving about 106,000 customers in 60 Connecticut communities through more than 60 non-interconnected water systems.

### Customer Service Update:

Ms. Deming updated the CAC on customer service related matters, including:

- The status of PURA payment plans
- The Low-Income Household Assistance Program
- The Operation Fuel Partnership
- Connecticut Water assistance options that are available to customers experiencing one-time or ongoing hardships.

Ms. Deming also highlighted the company's efforts to promote ebilling and paperless statements, which are good for the environment, convenient, and lower billing costs that are eventually passed onto customers.

### Service Delivery Alignment:

Mr. Patla gave an overview of an organizational change that created two new positions to enhance service to customers and communities. The positions, Manager of Service Delivery Northeast Region and Manager of Service Delivery for Southwest Region, were filled with experienced employees who will lead day-to-day operations and be a key contact for town officials. Messrs. Lowry and McDermott introduced themselves and gave an overview of their backgrounds.

#### Water Supply and Conservation:

Mr. Patla reported that dry conditions were developing in the Eastern half of Connecticut. Company water supplies are at normal levels, but the company is encouraging wise water use and will request conservation, if necessary. He also mentioned the company's water conservation rate that charges customers who use more than 200 gallons on average a slightly higher water rate for the additional usage above 200 gallons.

#### Infrastructure Investment:

Mr. Patla updated the committee on the company's infrastructure investment plans for 2022, including the Water Infrastructure and Conservation Adjustment (WICA) program. He noted that supply chain issues were being addressed and the company was committed to delivering projects.

- \$61.4 million budgeted in 2022 for infrastructure investment.
- More than half is for water main replacements through WICA and he highlighted some of the key WICA and non-WICA projects.
- He stated that supply chain issues are causing delays in receiving pipe and other materials, which require longer lead times for projects, but that the company is working through the issues and expects to complete the projects planned for 2022.

Mr. Patla added that Connecticut Water is working with local communities that have applied for federal funding infrastructure funding available through the state Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. He noted there is much more need than there are funds allocated.

He also stated that Connecticut Water works collaboratively with local communities on the scheduling of WICA projects, and coordinates projects with town road and sewer projects to the greatest extent possible.

#### Regulatory Update:

Mr. Hanratty updated the CAC on the Water Infrastructure Conservation Adjustment surcharge effective on July 1, 2022 and the PURA approval of the acquisition of the assets of the Miami Beach Water Company in Old Lyme.

Mr. Patla reported that the Connecticut Department of Public Health had set 'Action Levels' for four PFAs compounds. All CT Water systems are below the new action levels with the exception of Avon Well No. 3 that serves customers of the former Avon Water Company where PFOS was detected just over the new action level. Customers are in the process of being notified. He noted that the company will continue to closely follow-up regulatory development on PFAS and will take any measures necessary to remain in compliance with drinking water standards for PFAS.

#### 2022 Legislative Session:

Mr. Hanratty provide an overview of the bills passed in the legislative session that pertained to drinking water and/or water utilities.

Support for the Environment and Community Outreach:

Ms. Williams updated the CAC on a few of Connecticut Water's environmental initiatives, including:

- Agreements to protect 82 acres of land as 'open space'
- Reopening of the company's Killingworth hiking trail
- Connecticut Water's participation on CT Trails Day hikes at the Lake Shenipsit and Killingworth Reservoirs.

Ms. Williams noted that the company has launched its 2022 rain barrel sales program. She also highlighted the Water Drop Watcher classroom education program for third-graders, the grants issued to local firefighters for training and equipment, grants to local schools for touchless water bottle fill stations, and an update on the company's \$120,000 shareholder-funded charitable giving program.

Other Business:

None.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2022.

Adjournment:

The meeting ended at 6:40 p.m.