

1 **DRAFT**

2 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

3 WALLINGFORD ELECTRIC DIVISION

4 100 JOHN STREET

5 WALLINGFORD, CT

6 Tuesday, August 6, 2019

7 6:30 p.m.

8 **MINUTES**

9 **PRESENT:** Chair Robert Beaumont; Commissioners Patrick Birney and Joel Rinebold; Director
10 Richard Hendershot; Electric Division General Manager Tony Buccheri; Office Manager Tom
11 Sullivan; Chief Engineer Ed Rizzo; Water and Sewer Divisions General Manager Neil Amwake;
12 Office Manager William Phelan; Recording Secretary Cynthia Kleist; **Public:** Steve Gale; Lauren
13 Takores, Meriden Record-Journal.

14 Chair Beaumont called the Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was
15 recited.

16 **1.** Pledge of Allegiance

17 **2.** Consent Agenda

18 a. Consider and approve Minutes of July 16, 2019

19 b. Consider and approve Budget Transfer – Electric – Account 598 – Misc. Distribution
20 - Environmental – FY 18/19

21 **Motion to approve Consent Agenda items:**

22 **Made by: Birney**

23 **Seconded by: Rinebold**

24 **Vote: 3 ayes**

25 **3.** Items Removed From Consent Agenda – None

26 **WATER/SEWER**

27 **4.** Discussion and Possible Action: Water Division – Budget Amendment – UPSEU Local
28 424 – Unit 17 – Arbitration Award.

1 Mr. Amwake explained that UPSEU Local 424 – Unit 17 is the management unit. He pointed out
 2 the Contract arbitration was settled after the FY 19/20 budget was accepted by the PUC and
 3 the Town Council. He said this is a budget amendment to utilize monies from Retained Earnings
 4 into the appropriate labor accounts. In his July 31, 2019 letter, Mr. Amwake noted the recent
 5 arbitration award for the Management Union provided for a 1.75%. 2.00% and 1.90% salary
 6 increases for Fiscal Years 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 respectively. Mr. Phelan said
 7 there was a prior budget amendment for the Water Division Managers for FY 18-19 which
 8 covered all the retroactive wages, so this is a cumulative increase in one fiscal year; specifically
 9 FY 19-20.

10 **Mr. Birney: Motion to approve a budget amendment for Fiscal Year 19-20 increasing**
 11 **accounts as indicated below, with a corresponding decrease of \$52,500 to the Water**
 12 **Division’s Retained Earnings (Cash):**

13	Acct. No.	Description	Amount of Increase
14	43100617	Maint. of Misc. Water Source Plant	\$400
15	43100624	Pumping Labor & Expense	\$850
16	43100633	Maint. of Pumping Equipment	\$850
17	43100642	Oper. Of Labor and Expense	\$5,000
18	43100652	Maint. of Water Treatment Equip.	\$2,000
19	43100664	Customer Installation Expenses	\$600
20	43100665	Miscellaneous Expense	\$3,000
21	43100673	Maint. of Transmission & Dist. Mains	\$1,300
22	43100903	Cust. Records & Collection Expense	\$1,300
23	43100920	Administrative & General Salaries	\$27,800
24	43100926	Employee Pensions & Benefits	\$9,400

25 **Mr. Rinebold: Second**

26 **Vote: 3 ayes**

27 5. Discussion and Possible Action: Sewer Division – Budget Amendment – UPSEU Local 424
 28 – Unit 17 Arbitration Award

29

1 Chair Beaumont said this was the same for the Sewer Division.

2 **Mr. Birney: Motion to approve a budget amendment for Fiscal Year 2019-2020**
3 **increasing accounts as indicated below, with a corresponding decrease of \$44,100**
4 **to the Sewer Division's Retained Earnings (Cash):**

5 Acct No.	Description	Amt. of Increase
6 46100665	Miscellaneous Expenses	\$3,800
7 46100673	Maint. of the Collection System	\$4,800
8 46100903	Customer Records & Coll. Exp.	\$1,000
9 46100920	Admin. & General Salaries	\$24,800
10 46100926	Employee Pensions & Benefits	\$9,700

11 **Mr. Rinebold: Second**

12 **Vote: 3 ayes**

13 Chair Beaumont added Item 5A to the Agenda regarding a bid waiver to AECOM for the
14 construction administration work. Mr. Hendershot said there was a memorandum from he and
15 Mr. Amwake sent to the PUC.

16 **Motion to Waive Article 1, Section 1, to add Bid Waiver to AECOM for the**
17 **Construction Administration Work.**

18 **Made by: Birney**

19 **Seconded by: Rinebold**

20 **Vote: 3 ayes**

21 **5A. AECOM Engineering Services during Construction (aka Construction Administration Work)**

22 Mr. Hendershot said this is a request for PUC endorsement of a bid waiver request for AECOM
23 to perform construction administration services for the duration of the Water Pollution Control
24 Facility upgrades project.

25 **Mr. Birney made a motion to approve the bid waiver request for AECOM to perform**
26 **construction administration services for the duration of the Water Pollution Control**
27 **Facility Upgrades Project. Mr. Rinebold seconded the motion.**

28 Chair Beaumont said this is necessary and needs to get done.

1 **Vote: 3 ayes**

2 Chair Beaumont took the agenda in the following order:

3 **ELECTRIC**

4 **7. IVR Demonstration**

5 Mr. Buccheri noted that in his July 31, 2019 memo, this demonstration is for a proposed
6 implementation of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Module for the WED's Outage
7 Management System (OMS). He said the current process will be discussed as well as the
8 customer experience when they call in, the changes, the IVR process and benefits. He said Staff
9 is seeking PUC endorsement.

10 Mr. Rizzo went over the slide presentation demonstration of the new IVR system and went
11 through an after-hours scenario and how the process works. He said the current process and
12 the proposed customer experience with the IVR system will be compared. Mr. Rizzo went over
13 the service territory and the street layout. He showed the major screen used by the System
14 Operators. He showed the location of the feeders. He said the focus is on how the energy is
15 currently flowing. Mr. Rizzo showed the call taking module screen which involves a quick
16 identification of the customer, the inputting of customer information regarding the outage, and
17 the posting of that information.

18 Mr. Rinebold asked if that screen was tied to the phone number and the customer address. Mr.
19 Rizzo said generally a service address is used. He said currently the customer is asked for the
20 service address, it doesn't come up automatically. He said remarks can also be posted. Mr.
21 Rizzo said generally speaking, there is one person, the System Operator, in the building, to
22 handle the trouble who also answers phone calls and dispatches crews. He said we rely on the
23 customer base to tell us of a problem unless SCADA tells us the problem is large. Mr. Rizzo said
24 the System Operator begins to do an interpretation of whether the problem belongs to WED.
25 He said there is a lineman who is on call and is tasked to respond as needed, and an on-call
26 Supervisor who is also tasked to respond when necessary.

27 Mr. Rizzo said as more resources are needed, a call-in process begins. He pointed out that
28 about 1/3 of the affected customers will call generally within 15 minutes. Mr. Birney asked
29 about the System Operator calling the person on duty and if that person was at the WED
30 facility. Mr. Hendershot said the on-call lineman is at home. Mr. Rizzo said the on-call lineman
31 has a take-home vehicle and is the first responder, and determines whether this is a WED
32 problem. Mr. Rinebold asked if there were a number of on-call linemen. Mr. Buccheri said the
33 normal process is one on-call lineman at a time. He said if there is bad weather on the horizon,
34 we make the decision to put more linemen on call.

1 Mr. Rizzo went over the changes with an IVR by stating that when an outage occurs, affected
2 customers will call in to 203-265-5055 and quickly occupy the four phone lines available. The
3 System Operator will begin to take calls and enter information into the OMS. Customers whose
4 call is placed on hold will hear the same message they currently hear. Then, after a one-minute
5 hold period, customers will be greeted by the IVR and given the choice to either stay on hold
6 and speak to the System Operator as soon as they are available or "opt out" and report the
7 outage via the IVR. Mr. Rizzo noted that outages reported via the IVR will populate OMS with
8 outage information and the System Operator can see this happening on the OMS screen. The
9 same process will take place when 203-265-5055 is placed on Do-Not Disturb setting by the
10 System Operator while they call in WED resources to troubleshoot the outage. Mr. Rizzo noted
11 that as customers finish reporting their outage to the IVR and then hang up, the in-coming lines
12 will open up for additional customers to report their outage via the IVR if they so wish. He said
13 this process will continue until the System Operator can return to the telephones. He noted
14 that as long as the lines remain full the IVR will offer customers the option of not waiting to
15 speak with the System Operator.

16 Mr. Rizzo went over the benefits of the IVR in this example (a lone System Operator
17 experiencing high call volume events during non-office hours), which include more outage
18 information which can be entered into the OMS in less time; the OMS will begin to analyze the
19 outage as customers provide information through the IVR; more customers can have their calls
20 actually answered rather than receive a busy signal or be placed on hold, and possibly abandon
21 the call; WED workers can be accurately directed to the affected area sooner. Mr. Hendershot
22 said this system is owned by the WED and needs only to be activated. Mr. Birney asked about
23 the one minute delay time, asking its purpose. He also asked when the IVR was purchased and
24 what developments or evolutions have occurred since its purchase to get us to this
25 presentation.

26 Mr. Hendershot said the IVR was purchased during the last Fiscal Year. Mr. Rizzo said it was
27 purchased in December and installed the end of January, early February. Mr. Hendershot noted
28 the IVR has never been utilized. He said WED has worked with the IVR and now knows how to
29 effectively utilize its capabilities. He said the system is still in test mode and is not yet live. Mr.
30 Hendershot said the one-minute wait is how the IVR is built. He said at the end of the minute,
31 the customer can stay where they are or opt into the IVR. He said this can't be reduced unless
32 the IVR is put in front of the live person. Mr. Rizzo said the wait time was previously two
33 minutes, but is now one minute.

34 Mr. Birney asked about the Do Not Disturb function. Mr. Buccheri said this enables the System
35 Operator to dial out while the calls are coming in. He said this procedure pauses the queue.
36 Mr. Birney asked with the IVR there will be no more Do Not Disturb. Mr. Buccheri said there will
37 still have to be a Do Not Disturb to make the on-going calls, but the IVR will classify the outage

1 and give the Dispatcher the information they need. Chair Beaumont said this is something he
2 believes in and this should have been implemented from day one. Mr. Rinebold said he didn't
3 see any inconsistencies with Mayor Dickinson's prioritization to have customers talk to an
4 Operator first which he said was important and is actually being enhanced, because the lines
5 are being freed up more readily. Mr. Rinebold also said this is good for operations and the
6 customer and still maintains that level of service of still having a customer being able to speak
7 to a person. Mr. Rinebold asked Staff to monitor or review the effectiveness of the system and
8 report back to the PUC or put matters into their own hands for system improvement. He said he
9 would like to have this system operated where there can be continued refinement. Mr.
10 Hendershot said it may take six months for this to happen. Mr. Birney asked if the IVR would be
11 used in a normal course (no storms). Mr. Rizzo said this system would be used in a normal
12 course because it is difficult to turn the system on and off.

13 The PUC unanimously endorsed the IVR process.

14 **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD – 7:45 p.m. – NO QUESTIONS. PUBLIC Q & A**
15 **CLOSED AT 7:45 p.m.**

16 **Discussion Only – No Action Taken**

17 6. Discussion and Action: Write-Offs Uncollectible Accounts – FY Ending 6/30/19.

18 Mr. Sullivan explained the total write-offs for FY 2018-2019 result in a combined amount of
19 \$168,080.15 which represents 0.002 or 2/10ths of 1% of the annual billing. This year's write-off
20 is a significant decrease from last year's amount of \$240,269 and the previous 5-year average
21 of \$232,377. Mr. Sullivan said the purpose of the write-offs is to recognize an amount that is
22 considered uncollectible for the fiscal year. He said efforts will continue to further collect on
23 these accounts. He noted that during Fiscal Year 2018-2019, \$63,649.64 was recovered through
24 collections on previous write-offs or transfers of previous write-offs to active accounts for
25 subsequent collection. Mr. Sullivan said this amount includes \$18,502 collected on a single
26 account which had been previously written-off under the medical claim category.

27 Bankruptcy - \$12,201.42; Skip Town - \$3,860.24; Deceased - \$7,430,00; Small Balance -
28 \$64.86; Town Attorney – (includes medical) - \$77,236.15 for a total of \$162,825.91.

29 **Mr. Birney: Motion to approve the Write-Offs for the Uncollectable Accounts for the**
30 **FY ending 6/30/19 for reasons stated on the record along with information provided**
31 **in Mr. Sullivan's July 31, 2019 memorandum. Mr. Rinebold seconded the motion.**

32 **Vote: 3 ayes**

33 **Committee Reports/Correspondence – None**

1 **10. Executive Session Pursuant to CGS Sections 1-225(f), 1-200(6)(B) to discuss**
2 **possible participation by the WED in pending litigation at the FERC.**

3 Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:50 p.m. to discuss pending litigation without further
4 motions until a motion to come out of Executive Session.

5 Made by: Birney

6 Seconded by: Rinebold

7 Vote: 3 ayes

8

9 **ADJOURNMENT**

10

11

12 Respectfully submitted,

Respectfully submitted,

13

14 Cynthia A. Kleist

Joel Rinebold

15 Recording Secretary

Secretary