

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Town of Trumbull

CONNECTICUT

TOWN HALL
(203) 452-5048



5866 MAIN STREET
TRUMBULL, CT 06611

**Water Pollution Control Authority
Special Meeting
June 16, 2009**

In attendance:

George Biagioni, Chairman
Jack Goncalves, Vice Chairman
Karen Egri, Alternate
Paul Kallmeyer
Janine Salvey

Also In Attendance:

Joseph Solemene, WPCA Administrator
Stephen M. Savarese PE/LS, Town Engineer
John W. Braccio PE, Wright-Pierce
Christopher N. Pierce PE, Wright-Pierce
W. Doug Hankins PE, Wright-Pierce
Christopher B. Wester PE, Weston & Sampson
Daniel R. Lawrence PE, Weston & Sampson
Carl W. Stone PE, Weston & Sampson
Raymond G. Baldwin, Jr., First Selectman

Chairman Biagioni called the special meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

The purpose of the special meeting is to interview representatives of Wright Pierce and Weston & Sampson for the purpose of awarding RFQ/P #5795, Engineering and Consulting Services for WPCA Facilities Planning Study.

Wright-Pierce

WPCA Facilities Planning Study presented by representatives of Wright-Pierce. A copy of the presentation is on file for public inspection in the office of the WPCA, Town Hall, Trumbull, Connecticut.

Following the presentation Chairman Biagioni invited questions:

- Mr. Solemene asked if at the end of the study would we know if we would achieve DEP approval and funding? Mr. Braccio responded that we wouldn't know 100% but there would be a level of assurance one way or the other. In regard to funding it all comes down to a priority list. Even if you qualify for the funding you're assigned priority points based on a number of factors. It is a two-year priority list.
- Mr. Kallmeyer asked if your chances improve if we miss the first cut-off and decide to put our own money into it, do we get a higher priority? Mr. Pierce responded there are no points for that. The DEP says you cannot bid your project until the funding is available if you want their money. Towns have applied for and received a waiver from that requirement because they put up their own money. By the time the project was bid and awarded, within a few months, the funding was available and they were eligible. The DEP let them proceed without any guarantee that they would get the funding, but by being ready to go the money was available and the towns ahead of them weren't ready and they were put at the top of the list.
- Mr. Kallmeyer: Trumbull is considered a "wealthy" town - what are our chances? Mr. Braccio: The DEP Clean Water Fund does not look at it in terms of revenue. No points are assigned based on median household income. It is based on the population you serve and whether you are removing nutrients, whether you're addressing failing septic systems or other water quality issues.

- Chairman Biagioni: You have had many dealings with the DEP, we're looking for some assurance that after your discussions you're 80% sure they will go along or not. Mr. Braccio: We talk to people at the DEP on a weekly basis on one project or another. We have a lot of credibility with them.
- Mr. Baldwin: At what point in this process will we have an idea if this is a stretch? Mr. Braccio: We can sit down with them and show them some of these ideas and try to sell them on the advantages to doing this to the environment, and maybe getting a read before we spend a lot of time getting into the details of it. If they say the river is so impaired you can have zero discharge into that river at any treatment level, now we're talking about going to Long Island Sound which would be immensely more costly and difficult, we can say it's probably not in your future. That can be done sooner rather than later. There is a disruption at the DEP right now. The Commissioner has left and there is an acting DEP Commissioner. Three senior members of the Municipal Wastewater Group have taken early retirement. There will be a change there and not sure who will be taking over.
- Ms. Salvey addressed the idea of regionalization. We have been hearing the State doesn't want to deal with individual entities. She noticed most of the presentation dealt with towns like ours. Do you have any reaction to that? Response: They do like larger regional facilities. We're talking about 3.5 mgd plant which is a typical size. This is a sizeable facility. If you do get into a regional arrangement there are other financial benefits. If you are considered a regional agency, there is a 25% grant instead of 20%. It depends how you would set up with other towns. Do you have an inter-municipal user agreement with other towns where you own the plant and the collection system and they own theirs and they pay you to discharge to yours? Or are you a regional organization where everybody owns everything. Their philosophy is more big plants mean less plants they need to manage and less discharge permits they need to review, issue, reissue.
- Chairman Biagioni: We would like to have Monroe as a partner in this but we're going to have to know the flow they require and they will have to pay for it ahead of time as they share the cost of this project.
- Mr. Baldwin: That's difficult now because Mr. Scinto has decided to go forward with his project with a septic system. The best case scenario you are looking at 500,000 gallons.
- Chairman Biagioni: They have to realize this is a one-shot deal. We can't add on later, it would cost too much money. Response: You can add on later and they buy the capacity. There is an economy of scale if you do it upfront. It is easier to make the tank larger than it is to build a whole other infrastructure. Any design would account for the ability to expand in the future.
- Mr. Kallmeyer: While no new discharges have been permitted, have there been any significant additional discharge permits you've gotten from the DEP, where you've taken a plant and increased the discharge 30-40%? Response: We've done a lot of renewals. Not that much. We're doing one with Farmington looking to increase from 5.5 mgd to 6.2 mgd. The DEP is not overly concerned with that number. Also doing the design of the Mattabasset plant going from 20 mgd to 35 mgd.
- Mr. Solemene: Is it unusual to have a combined system and a separated system merge, as in what they are proposing for Trumbull and Bridgeport? Reply: Hartford is a combined system but a lot of the outlying towns like Farmington, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Cromwell are not combined systems but coming into Hartford. Because of the capacity of Hartford they get sanitary sewer overflows in those communities because they don't have the capacity.
- Mr. Solemene: Looking at the projected cost of the project of \$50 million versus the projected cost of \$4 million per year to treat our sewage, in the long run does it add up for Trumbull? Reply: It depends on how far out you are looking. If looking out 20 years, what you are currently paying in user fees would go to debt service. On top of that you would have user fees of about \$1.5 million. It comes down to how much treatment plant you need to see if it's cost effective.
- Mr. Baldwin: What is the useful life of the plant? Response: The tanks and structures could be 50-75 years. The mechanical equipment is more in the 20-30 year range. At that point you are looking at a fairly significant upgrade. When the plants were all upgraded to secondary treatment in the 1970's and the construction grant program funded them, the idea was that they would retire their debt in 20 years on their original facility, they would put a certain amount of money away in a reserve fund, the EPA recommended at least 5%, and the idea was to roll that debt retirement over in 20 years for your equipment replacement.

- Mr. Kallmeyer: You talked about inflow and how it affects the plant. Please briefly discuss if we got the extra flow out would it make the plant smaller and is it a cost-effective thing? It seems that the low flow is around 1.75-1.8 mgd, average flow around 3.2-3.5 mgd, and then spiking up to almost 6 mgd. There is a significant range, almost three times the low flow. Mr. Solemene asked how successful have you been eliminating inflow and infiltration? Response: If we had your flow records from the main pump station we more or less could tell you what your inflow is and what your infiltration is. What we've found is you'll get 25-30%. We try to break the system up into drainage areas and then prioritize those on gallons per inch diameter mile, the threshold is around 4,000 gallons per day, what the DEP would consider for additional studies. The idea is if you have that much leakage and you add up all the miles of pipe in the drainage area and if that leakage adds up to greater than this threshold of 4,000 then it is cost effective to go look for it and try to get it out. You won't get it all out. The most difficult is the private I & I, individual service laterals and sump pumps.
- Mr. Savarese: Town Engineer, originated the RFQ/P. Asked to go back to slide with timeframe. Mr. Savarese and Mr. Solemene spoke with the DEP and what we had in mind we tried to put into the RFP. This is a lot more than what we were thinking. We were looking for a kick-off spot to get us going in the right direction for this Commission to decide if it is worth pursuing this large expense. Is it in our best interest to have a member of this Commission, elected official or staff attend the meetings with the DEP or would that be a burden? Response: Generally we have had someone from the staff attend. The other option is DEP has been very willing to come to the nighttime WPCA meetings if you want to hear directly from them. Mr. Savarese added that the DEP indicated the best you're going to get is a letter of intent which is not a binding contract, but it is a sizeable investment to get the plant designed, next step before construction. That's all we were really after.
- Chairman Biagioni: We don't have the time to do this slowly.
- Mr. Kallmeyer: We have been put on notice by the City of Bridgeport that they will terminate our contract. We have three years to negotiate a new agreement with them. Reponse: One approach would be make the meeting with the DEP an initial step based on what we've already done, and then decide if you continue to proceed from that point on.
- Mr. Kallmeyer: The west side discharge, because it is sizeable and that cost would be significant to bring it over to the treatment plant. Response: Is there one location where it enters Bridgeport? Mr. Kallmeyer: There are two. Mr. Solemene: Old Town Road pump station goes into Beardsley. Sunnysdale has to be redirected. Mr. Kallmeyer: Must be solved before going to DEP. This is one-third of the flow.
- Chairman Biagioni: Is there a way to get DEP to fund I&I study? Response: There is a grant to fund a study, but you must look at overall flows to demonstrate there is significant I&I within the system. It is done in a two-phase approach; look at existing flows and break down system into sub-drainage areas, no more than 25,000 feet of pipe in each area, put a flow meter in for six weeks to capture some rain events, then identify smaller areas of the system where the I&I may be coming from. The second phase you go out and do TV work and smoke testing.

The Commission concluded their interview of Wright-Pierce at 4:20 p.m. and took a short recess.

Weston Sampson

WPCA Facilities Planning Study presented by representatives of Weston Sampson. A copy of the presentation is on file for public inspection in the office of the WPCA, Town Hall, Trumbull, Connecticut.

Following the presentation, Chairman Biagioni invited questions:

- Mr. Kallmeyer: What is the difficulty in putting pipe in the street in Bridgeport? Do we become a utility in their community? Mr. Wester: You are not a utility that is serving that community. Mr. Lawrence: that is how he would approach it; we are no different than Aquarion or Northeast Utilities. That will be one of the big hurdles because you are not servicing anyone in their community at the same time. That is the challenge and we don't know the legal basis for it.

- Mr. Kallmeyer: When you say “expend only what is needed” are you suggesting this proposal is an hourly fee project with an upset limit? Mr. Wester: That is what we’re proposing to you. If we get to a point that something doesn’t work let’s just stop the process and agree that’s the end of it.
- Ms. Salvey: Will there be money available from the stimulus package? Mr. Wester: There is always the possibility of that. It is still up in the air. A lot of municipalities have shovel-ready projects.
- Mr. Kallmeyer: While there has been no new discharges permitted in Connecticut in a long time, please discuss any additional discharge permits you’ve gotten from the DEP, where you’ve added 30% to a plant. Mr. Wester: only reallocations in Connecticut, no expansions.
- Mr. Kallmeyer: Please explain how inflow and infiltration affect this study. Should it be included in the study? Is it so small we shouldn’t worry about it? Our low flow number is around 1.8 mgd, steady flows are 3.2-3.5 mgd, we’ve spiked as high as 6 mgd. Response: Those numbers are pretty typical of most communities. It becomes an issue related to money. Right now you are being billed on water consumption from the water company, but that may change on renegotiation. If you’re being metered and billed that way it is a simple math exercise to figure out how much money you could recover. If you have those kinds of differentials, and you have that much inflow, smoke testing might be the ideal thing to do to find those large sources. That probably could be funded through DEP. The benefit is if you are going to build these facilities you want to get those numbers down. Mr. Kallmeyer: Let me summarize your answer; if we come to the point that we think we ought to build a sewage treatment plant you also think we should do I&I removal. Mr. Wester: That’s a fair way to put it, if you look at the cost of this facility, doing an I&I study is a small portion of it and it will save you money over the long term and the payback will be very good.
- Mr. Kallmeyer: Our current user fee versus Connecticut and versus New England, are we in the ballpark? Response: You are right in the middle, some lower and some higher. One way to insure the number is appropriate and fair is a proper inter municipal agreement.
- As part of your study, will you look at a comparison between building a treatment facility in Trumbull and what Bridgeport will be charging us over the next 20 years? Response: It is tough to project what the potential costs could be. We can make projections but it is risky. It depends on how far we get into this. What we typically try to do is make some reasonable presumptions based on history, based on what we see in the industry from other facilities.

The Commission concluded their interview of Weston Sampson and took a short recess.

The Commission reconvened and discussed the pros and cons of both companies.

Ms. Egri gave her analysis of both companies encompassing full service capability, assessing the feasibility, ability to work with the DEP, experience building new plants, experience and expertise in general, and said she feels more comfortable with Wright Pierce. Mr. Kallmeyer pointed out that Wright Pierce’s bid is more than twice that of Weston Sampson. Ms. Egri asked if we need the full proposal. Mr. Kallmeyer responded no, and we could take the offer made by both companies, for an hourly rate with an upset limit.

Mr. Kallmeyer offered his analysis of both companies. He stated he prefers Wright Pierce but not as much as he did when he first suggested them. He feels Weston Sampson are stronger and gave a much better presentation than Wright Pierce. He looked at the number of jobs that Wright Pierce accomplished, and the few that Weston Sampson accomplished, they do not weigh out. He prefers Wright Pierce but we should look at price.

Mr. Goncalves prefers Weston Sampson because of cost and their willingness to give us an ala carte deal, and agreed to structure the deal up to points that would help us make a decision.

Based on their presentation and lower bid price,

- **Motion (KALLMEYER) seconded (GONCALVES) to accept Weston Sampson’s bid.**

Discussion: Mr. Kallmeyer cited Weston Sampson's litigation experience and we may ask for a proposal from Weston Sampson to go beyond what is in their schedule to give us more of the things that Wright Pierce was going to give us and we may end up at the same price. Ms. Egri stated she would prefer to read both proposals before making a decision.

Motion withdrawn.

There being no other business before the Authority,

- **Motion (EGRI) seconded (GONCALVES) to adjourn. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Francese
Clerk of the Commission