

**COMMITTEE ON REVENUES
SPECIAL MEETING
THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT**

555 Main Street, Hartford
Monday, October 19, 2020

Present: Commissioners Andrew Adil, Allen Hoffman, Raymond Sweezy, Alvin Taylor, Richard W. Vicino and District Chairman William A. DiBella (6)

Absent: Commissioners Avery Buell and Dominic Pane (2)

Also

Present: Scott W. Jellison, Chief Executive Officer
Christopher Stone, District Counsel
John S. Mirtle, District Clerk
Kelly Shane, Chief Administrative Officer
Christopher Martin, Chief Financial Officer
Christopher Levesque, Chief Operating Officer
Sue Negrelli, Director of Engineering
Tom Tyler, Director of Facilities
Jim Randazzo, Manager of Water Treatment
Carrie Blardo, Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer
David Silverstone, Independent Consumer Advocate

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Andrew Adil called the meeting to order at 11:00 PM

PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS

No one from the public appeared to be heard.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

On motion made by District Chairman DiBella and duly seconded, the meeting minutes of January 8, 2020 were approved.

FLOATING SOLAR PANELS

Jim Randazzo, Manager of Water Treatment, provided a presentation on floating solar panels.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Judy Allen of West Hartford submitted the following written comments:

“Last year, in the hopes of selling more water and keeping water rates down you voted to establish discounts. You reasoned that it was the only way to raise revenue quickly in the face of a financial crisis and you gambled that Niagara would purchase more if given discounts.

A year later we know discounts failed to have the desired results. All the reasoning against discounts that you heard from the public during last year’s budget process, have come true.

By looking at Niagara consumption statistics, it is now clear that the pattern of water purchases by Niagara follows market conditions. They buy more when they *need* more, they buy less when they need less. You gave Niagara the gift of discounted water they would have bought anyway. As a result, MDC lost potential revenue.

The discounts didn’t create a huge demand for more water by any of your other customers either. As predicted, none of them have the ability to use anywhere near that much.

At the last Water Bureau meeting, Mr. Jellison said there has been no increased interest by industry to locate here based on discounts. In fact the MDC gets calls everyday but it’s not discounts they are interested in, it’s MDC’s excellent water quality and quantity, “We don’t need to go find them, they find us.”

So: There was no increase in Niagara’s purchase of water based on discounts. There are no current customers able to make use of discounts. Discounts are not going to incentivize new industry to locate here.

You need to rescind the discounts to avoiding losing even more revenue through gifts to Niagara.

A tremendous amount of time and expense went into creation of an integrated plan to even out costs related to sewers, a forward looking plan, extending out 40 years. Where’s a plan like that for water rates?

I said to some commissioners last year that I do not have a solution for a quick fix, but there are resources available to help you design a long term solution.

One resource: Resource: AWWA “2019 State of the Industry Report””

David Silverstone, Independent Consumer Advocate commended staff for looking at revenue opportunities. He made the following suggestions for rate revenue: Rate administration consistency – To review larger customers to make sure they are paying what they should be paying, as well as eliminating the discounted rate because rationale for implementing the rate has not been met.

COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Sweezy suggested the District monitor the industrial rate for more than one year and also inquired whether the District has an economic development staff member.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 PM

ATTEST:

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

Date Approved