

**THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING**

555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Thursday, November 2, 2023

Present: District Chairman William DiBella and Commissioner Allen Hoffman;
Citizen Member Linda Russo

Remote

Attendance: Citizen Member Awet Tsegai

Also

Present: John S. Mirtle, District Clerk
Kelly Shane, Chief Administrative Officer (Remote Attendance)
Robert Schwarm, Director of Information Technology (Remote Attendance)
Carrie Blardo, Executive Assistant to the CEO (Remote Attendance)
Joseph Szerejko, Independent Consumer Advocate (Remote Attendance)

The public hearing was called to order by District Chairman DiBella at 5:30 PM

Chairman DiBella read the following statement:

“This is a public hearing of The Metropolitan District. The District Board will receive public input on the proposed 2024 budget for The Metropolitan District, Water & Sewer Rates, and Revisions to Ordinances.”

“On October 20, 2023, the 2024 proposed budget was made publicly available and posted on www.themdc.org. At its October 2ND 2023 meeting, the District Board referred the proposed budget to the Board of Finance. A final decision on the 2024 proposed budget, rates and ordinances has yet to be made. The District Board will consider and approve a final budget at its December 4, 2023 public meeting, and will take into account what is said at this hearing.”

John Mirtle, District Clerk, read the following into the record:

The following hearing notice was published in the Hartford Courant on October 20, 2023 and again on October 27, 2023; and the notice was filed, for public inspection, in the office of the town clerk in each municipality that is a member town of The Metropolitan District.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET, WATER & SEWER RATES AND
REVISIONS TO ORDINANCES**

**The Metropolitan District Board Room
555 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut**

Pursuant to Special Act 01-3, as adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut, and Section 2-14 of the Compiled Charter of The Metropolitan District (“District”), the District will hold a public hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2024 budget, water and sewer rates, and revisions to the District’s ordinances. The hearing will be held at The Metropolitan District Board Room, 555 Main Street, Hartford, Connecticut, on **Thursday, November 2, 2023 at 5:30 PM.**

Members of the public that would like to participate remotely may call into the public hearing at **(415) 655-0001 Access Code: 2305 974 9238#** or via [Meeting Video Link](#). It is encouraged that anyone from the public wishing to submit public comment on the budget, rates or ordinances do so by submitting written comments to DistrictClerk@themdc.com prior to the hearing. Comments received in advance of the public hearing will be available to District Commissioners during the public hearing and incorporated into the record. Submitting written comments does not prevent any member of the public from also speaking during the hearing.

The proposed fiscal year 2024 budget, rates and ordinance revisions are available for public inspection at www.themdc.org/budget or by request to DistrictClerk@themdc.com. Proposed changes to the following sections of the ordinances will be considered:

WATER SUPPLY ORDINANCES:

§ W1f “SURCHARGE OUTSIDE THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS”

All interested parties from The Metropolitan District’s member municipalities may appear to be heard.

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

John Mirtle, District Clerk, read the public hearing guidelines.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Judy Allen, of West Hartford, read from the following written comments:

Good evening commissioners and thank you for receiving these comments.

Many of you may remember when the Raftelis report was first made public. It was a study pushed for by some towns meant to explore several options for collecting revenue for sewers.

The results were made public November 2, 2021. In it they report that an important component of an appropriate Customer Sewer Charge (CSC) is determining how charges will be collected. The district recovers the CSC on a per bill basis, which does not differentiate by any means based on customer type.

Discussions were had with District staff. It was determined that some differential based on customer type was appropriate, and basing the CSC on the size of a customer's sewer lateral and number of connections would work best for the District.

However at that time, reliable data was not available. District staff estimated the data would be available and reliable within the next 3 to 5 years.

The study then recommended that in the meantime, MDC could start a process of phasing in a new rate structure using customer meter size.

Quote: "Throughout the industry, the most common basis for differentiation of sewer fixed charges is on the size of customer's water meter."

Of concern to me is that I haven't heard any discussion about this since the report was made public although I brought this up last year.

If MDC is serious about making changes, the report says the District should be raising revenue using new calculations based on meter size by 22% each year. It's a large amount, especially for the District's largest customers, but begins the process of addressing the unfairness of the current method.

The report took years to complete involving MDC staff and at great cost to the MDC. I can only conclude that MDC agreed to the study to ameliorate the towns who were asking for change and are hoping it would eventually be forgotten.

The present continuation of the flat rate of \$9.00 for everyone regardless of type or size shows no progress. Smaller residential customers will continue to

disproportionally pay more for their Customer Sewer Charge and therefore their costs of sewers are greater.

Please report on the status of instituting a differential based on customer type as agreed to in this report.

*Thank you,
Judy Allen
West Hartford*

ADJOURNMENT

The public hearing was adjourned at 5:37 P.M.

ATTEST:

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

Date of Approval