

**COMMITTEE ON MDC GOVERNMENT
SPECIAL MEETING**

555 Main Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06103
Wednesday, July 10, 2024

Present: Commissioners John Avedisian, John Bazzano, Peter Gardow, Jean Holloway, and District Chairman Donald Currey (5)

Remote

Attendance: Commissioners James Healy, Maureen Magnan and Calixto Torres (3)

Absent: Commissioners Kyle Anderson, Clifford Avery Buell, Esther Clarke and James Woulfe (4)

Also

Present: Commissioner Bhupen Patel
Commissioner Joan Gentile (Remote Attendance)
Christopher Stone, District Counsel
John S. Mirtle, District Clerk
Kelly Shane, Chief Administrative Officer
Christopher Levesque, Chief Operating Officer
Robert Barron, Chief Financial Officer
David Rutty, Director of Operations
Carrie Blardo, Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer
Jacob Aviles, IT Consultant (Remote Attendance)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bazzano called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM

PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS

Elizabeth Bryden, of West Hartford, submitted the following written comments:

**Comments for the Committee on MDC Government re: Agenda Item 6 DISCUSSION RE: POTENTIAL
ORDINANCE FOR RETROACTIVE REIMBURSEMENT OF CUSTOMER SEWER**

July 10, 2024

Good afternoon,

My name is Elizabeth Bryden and I am an MDC customer and home owner in West Hartford.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment on agenda item #6 regarding retroactive reimbursement for customer sewer repairs.

As some of you are aware, I have attended many different MDC committee meetings for over a year now and I continue to share my comments in an attempt to get reimbursed for an issue I had that began in January 2023. I had a sewage back-up into my home that resulted in a bill for over \$12,000 that I paid to replace a sewer pipe in the woods on someone else's property to which I had no access. In my case, the sewer lateral comes out of the back of my house, down a hill, off my property behind my neighbor's house into the woods on someone else's property and that is where a portion needed to be replaced. The lateral on my property was completely clear when a camera checked it when the back-up occurred. This issue has been passed from committee to committee for a long time now and I am really hoping to get a positive resolution soon.

I believe you already have the details about this issue in the minutes from previous meetings so I won't repeat them all but I am advocating to allow retroactive reimbursement as part of the House Sewer Connection program. When the new sewer ordinances were approved in July 2023, they provided financial relief to homeowners who need to make repairs to the sewer laterals on their property but, up until now, they have not addressed the issue of retroactive reimbursement for repairs that have already been made out of necessity. In my case, had the sewage back up in our house happened just a few months later, it likely would have been covered. Given that the Sewer House Connection program now provides homeowners with financial support for repairs to their laterals, I believe retroactive reimbursements for repairs should also be allowed for a reasonable time period prior to the implementation of the new program. In addition, the Sewer House Connection program should allow for partial replacement of sewer laterals and not just full replacements of the lateral if a partial replacement solves the problem.

In support of this, I would also reference the new Hartford Sewerage System Repair and Improvement Fund which, as I understand it, allows homeowners who have been impacted by damage on or after January 1, 2021 to apply for reimbursement. This program allows for reimbursement for some MDC customers and, in fairness, I believe the Sewer House Connection program should, too.

To summarize, given that there is precedence for the MDC paying for repairs to homeowners' laterals as well as precedence for retroactive reimbursement for homeowners affected by sewer issues and repairs, I am again advocating that the ordinance be revised to allow for retroactive reimbursement for

repairs under the Sewer House Connection program and that partial lateral replacements be covered and eligible for retroactive reimbursement as well.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts again today and hope you take them into consideration.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Bryden

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion made by Commissioner Gardow and duly seconded, the meeting minutes of April 1, 2024 and Public Hearing of June 11, 2024 were approved.

WATER ORDINANCE REVISION

To: Committee on MDC Government for consideration July 10, 2024

District staff, through the Office of District Counsel, submits the following ordinance revision to the Ordinances of The Metropolitan District Relating to Water Supply for consideration by the Committee on MDC Government. A public hearing on the proposed ordinance revision was held on June 11, 2024.

Therefore, it is **RECOMMENDED** that it be

VOTED: That the Committee on MDC Government recommends to the District Board passage of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the following revisions to Ordinances of The Metropolitan District Relating to Water Supply be adopted as follows:

SEC. W5e METER SETTING

Plumbers shall install a meter setting, furnished by the Water Bureau, in a horizontal position within a District approved meter box or meter pit, after the service shut-off where the meter will be accessible for reading and repairing. For meters permitted to be installed inside a building, the property owner shall furnish and maintain an approved location in the house piping immediately after the main shut-off and as near to where the service pipe enters the building as practicable.

Respectfully submitted,



John S. Mirtle
District Clerk

On motion made by Commissioner Gardow and duly seconded, the report was received and resolution adopted by unanimous vote of those present.

NEW WATER ORDINANCE

To: Committee on MDC Government for consideration July 10, 2024

District staff, through the Office of District Counsel, submits the following addition to the Ordinances of The Metropolitan District Relating to Water Supply for consideration by the Committee on MDC Government. A public hearing on the proposed new ordinance was held on June 11, 2024.

Therefore, it is **RECOMMENDED** that it be

VOTED: That the Committee on MDC Government recommends to the District Board passage of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the following ordinance be adopted and added to the Ordinances of The Metropolitan District Relating to Water Supply as follows:

SEC. W5k LEAD & COPPER RULE SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT

The District, upon written permission of the property owner, shall replace, at the District's cost, any existing water service pipe discovered to contain lead, lead lining or galvanized piping installed downstream of lead pipes, including the private property portion of the service pipe, as prescribed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 1991 Lead and Copper Rule (LCR), 2021 Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) and the 2023 Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) or any subsequent amendments, revisions or improvements. The District's replacement of the private portion of the service pipe shall not include replacement of internal plumbing except it may include replacement through the foundation wall with reconnection to piping immediately inside the foundation wall and shall not extend beyond the meter setting or further than three feet from the foundation pipe penetration.

Respectfully submitted,



John S. Mirtle
District Clerk

On motion made by Commissioner Gardow and duly seconded, the report was received and resolution adopted by unanimous vote of those present.

POTENTIAL ORDINANCE FOR RETROACTIVE REIMBURSEMENT OF CUSTOMER SEWER REPAIRS

District Clerk John Mirtle and CFO Bob Barron spoke regarding the previous discussions on the potential retroactive reimbursement of customer sewer repairs that occurred at Bureau of Public Works and District Board meetings.

Chairman Bazzano moved to send the item to staff to develop an ordinance and bring it back to the Committee on MDC Government for further consideration and discussion. The motion was duly seconded and passed by unanimous vote of those present.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Judy Allen, of West Hartford, stated that on May 1, 2023 the District Board passed a resolution to pass on to the Committee on Government recommendations from the Internal Audit Committee, including annual Commissioner training. As a customer she is concerned that the Commissioners have the information they need to avoid future problems. She also stated, separately, that money from the legislature for the North End sewer projects was money that the residents had to apply for. She was wondering if that is possibly an idea that the MDC could look into, specifically the potential for creating a fund that customers could apply for relating to the retractive reimbursement.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 PM

ATTEST:

John S. Mirtle, Esq.
District Clerk

Date of Approval