

## **Quarterly Report of Consumer Advocate for Q3 2024 (July–September 2024)**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Report of the 2024 Interim Independent Consumer Advocate (“ICA” or “Consumer Advocate”) for the Metropolitan District of Hartford County (MDC)**

**(Q3 2024: July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024)**

#### **Introduction**

This is the third quarterly report submitted by the Consumer Advocate, in which he summarizes the limited work that he performed during the months of July, August, and September of 2024.

#### **Transition to Successor Consumer Advocate**

The Consumer Advocate continued to help the OCC and the MDC in their joint effort to find a successor for the position for the remainder of the 2024-2025 two-year term. In this vein, the ICA researched potential applicants, relevant regulations, Charter provisions, and Ordinances, and he developed strategies to help the OCC in promoting the position opening in order to incentivize attorneys to apply for the ICA position. In this context, the ICA also advised the OCC on how he felt the needs of MDC’s customers could be addressed immediately during 2024.

#### **ICA Annual Public Consumer Forum**

Given that the ICA’s other litigation matters outside of his MDC-related responsibilities took up nearly all of his work schedule during these months—primarily due to a court trial that took place over the course of several weeks in June, July, and August of 2024—the ICA was unable to prepare for or attend any District Board of other Commissioner Committee meetings held during this quarter. The ICA, however, did begin preparing for his Annual Consumer Public Forum during this quarter. Of course, the ICA continued to prepare for the possibility that a new ICA would be appointed before the Forum, in which case he would plan to present at the Forum but would allow any level of input or participation that the successor might prefer. This became a moot point though because no one had been appointed for the ICA position as of the end of September 2024.

#### **Customer Complaints and Inquiries**

I only was able to address one East Hartford customer’s complaint during this quarter due to time constraints and other client litigation matters. The customer had been sued by the MDC in a receivership action for delinquent water bills. Although the Superior Court had rendered judgment granting the MDC’s motion for appointment of a receiver before the customer appeared in the action, she eventually sought to discharge the receivership and objected. The customer’s efforts were stymied by the court, however, and she was not paying the receiver’s fees but only paying the online water bills. I tried to explain how she might be able to seek payment relief or contest the receivership proceedings, but I was unable to see this matter through towards some type of resolution.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Szerejko', is positioned below the text 'Respectfully submitted,'.

Joseph D. Szerejko  
Independent Consumer Advocate (Interim) for 2024