

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
WATER BUREAU  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2019  
4:00 P.M.

Location

Board Room  
District Headquarters  
555 Main Street, Hartford

Commissioners

Buell  
Camilliere  
DiBella (Ex-Officio)  
Gardow  
Hall  
Holloway

Ionno  
LeBeau  
Pane (VC)  
Salemi  
Sweezy (C)  
Taylor  
Special Representative  
Carrier

Quorum: 6

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS
3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2019
4. CONSIDERATION AND POTENTIAL ACTION RE: DECOMMISSIONING COLEBROOK RIVER DAM HYDROELECTRIC FACILITY
5. OPPORTUNITY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS
6. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
7. ADJOURNMENT

## **DECOMMISSIONING COLEBROOK RIVER DAM HYDROELECTRIC FACILITY**

To: Water Bureau for consideration on March 4, 2019

By way of background, in 1949 the Connecticut General Assembly authorized the construction of the Goodwin Dam on the West Branch of the Farmington River. The dam was intended to store six and one-half (6.5) billion gallons of water to be used for water supply purposes, minimum flow requirements and satisfying the District's riparian obligations to downstream riparian owners. In 1960, the federal Flood Control Act authorized the construction of the Colebrook River Reservoir on the West Branch of the Farmington River for flood control and water supply purposes. The construction of the Colebrook River Dam, located approximately one mile upstream from the Goodwin Dam, resulted in the Goodwin reservoir's storage capacity being cut in half, reducing its capacity by three and one-half (3.5) billion gallons. As a result, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the District entered into a cost sharing agreement ("Agreement") for the construction, maintenance and operation of the Colebrook River Dam and the District received ten (10) billion gallons of water storage behind the Colebrook River Dam. The District made the final required annual payment to the United States for capital costs of the dam in January 2019. In addition to the annual capital cost payments, the District pays the United States thirty-five percent of operation and maintenance costs of the dam.

In the 1980s, the District added hydroelectric facilities to the Colebrook River and Goodwin Dams and continues to operate those facilities. As the hydroelectric equipment ages, costly upgrades and repairs are anticipated in order to continue operating the facilities.

Presently, District staff is examining the practicality of its involvement in the Colebrook River Dam generally. In recent years, the District's proportionate share of the operation and maintenance costs associated with the Colebrook River Dam have increased exponentially, and it is likely that these costs will continue to escalate as Colebrook River Dam ages and needs more significant structural repairs. In addition, as experienced during the 2016 drought, it is apparent that, in drought conditions when the emergency water reserves might be required, there is not a sufficient supply of water, nor infrastructure installed, to service any emergency needs of the District. Furthermore, given the value of the electricity generated at the hydroelectric facility, the costs of continued operation of such facility may outweigh the benefits.

While this examination is proceeding, the issue of whether to continue with or decommission our hydroelectric power generation at Colebrook is the more immediate issue. This facility is not generating sufficient revenue to cover operational costs and offset, to any measurable degree, our costs to maintain and operate the Colebrook River Dam. In addition, any decommissioning of the

facilities will take some time and require FERC approval, and in order to avoid additional costs going forward, action by the Water Bureau and District Board directing staff to pursue this limited course of action is timely, while continuing to explore removing the District from the operation, maintenance, repair and water release obligations associated with the Colebrook River Dam generally.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that it be:

VOTED: That the Water Bureau recommends to the District Board passage of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the hydroelectric facility located at the Colebrook Dam is approaching the end of its useful life and the upgrades required to extend the life of the facility are not economically prudent.

FURTHER RESOLVED: District staff is hereby authorized and directed to decommission the Colebrook hydroelectric facility, including removing all equipment and personal property from the Dam, and to continue discussions with the Army Corps of Engineers about the termination of the Agreement, by the terms of the Agreement or otherwise, to eliminate the District's annual operations and maintenance payments; provided, in doing so, the District does not relinquish or abandon its ownership of three and one-half (3.5) billion gallons of water that would have existed in Goodwin Reservoir but for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' construction of the Colebrook River Dam which reduced the Goodwin Reservoir's storage capacity from six and one-half (6.5) billion gallons to three (3) billion gallons.

Respectively submitted,

Scott W. Jellison  
Chief Executive Officer