

**THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION**

555 Main Street  
Hartford, Connecticut 06103  
Monday, February 4, 2019

**Present:** Commissioners John Avedisian, Clifford Avery Buell, Luis Caban, Daniel Camilliere, William A. DiBella, Peter Gardow, Denise Hall, Allen Hoffman, Jean Holloway, David Ionno, Gary LeBeau, Byron Lester, Alphonse Marotta, Whit Osgood, Domenic M. Pane, Pasquale J. Salemi, Raymond Sweezy, Alvin Taylor, Michael Torres and Richard W. Vicino (20)

**Absent:** Commissioners Matthew B. Galligan, James Healy, Maureen Magnan, Bhupen Patel, Michael Solomonides, and New Britain Special Representative Michael Carrier (6)

**Also**

**Present:** Scott W. Jellison, Chief Executive Officer  
R. Bartley Halloran, District Counsel  
Christopher Stone, Assistant District Counsel  
Brendan Fox, Assistant District Counsel  
John S. Mirtle, District Clerk  
Sue Negrelli, Director of Engineering  
Robert Schwarm, Director of Information Technology  
Kelly Shane, Director of Procurement  
Tom Tyler, Director of Facilities  
Robert Zaik, Director of Human Resources  
Michael Curley, Manager of Technical Services  
Craig Mason, Manager of Labor Relations  
Marcy Wright-Bolling, Manager of Human Resources  
Karyn Blaise, Controller  
Nick Salemi, Special Services Administrator  
Carrie Blardo, Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer  
Kerry E. Martin, Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer  
Victoria S. Escoriza, Executive Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman DiBella at 5:33 PM

**ROLL CALL AND QUORUM**

The District Clerk called the roll and informed Chairman DiBella that a quorum of the Commission was present, and the meeting was declared a legal meeting of the District Board of The Metropolitan District of Hartford County, Connecticut.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS RELATIVE TO AGENDA ITEMS**

Judy Allen of West Hartford spoke in favor of agenda item #9: “2019 Operating Budget Transfer – Independent Consumer Advocate Budget Increase”

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*On motion made by Commissioner Camilliere and duly seconded, the meeting minutes of January 23, 2019 were approved.*

**REPORT FROM DISTRICT CHAIR**

This report was passed.

**REPORT FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Scott Jellison delivered the Chief Executive Officer’s report.

*Commissioner Torres entered the meeting at 5:48 PM*

*Commissioner Osgood exited the meeting at 7:00 PM*

**REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNSEL**

Attorney R. Bartley Halloran presented the District Counsel Report.

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
2019 OPERATING BUDGET TRANSFER**

No action was taken on this agenda item.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE  
WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

No action was taken on this agenda item.

**AUDIT COMMITTEE**  
**AUTHORIZATION FOR SALE OF DISTRICT PERSONAL PROPERTY**

To: District Board

February 4, 2019

From: Audit Committee

Pursuant to prudent personal property management practices and generally acceptable accounting principles The Metropolitan District ("District") desires to sell or otherwise dispose of certain obsolete personal property and equipment having a value of fifty thousand and 00/100 dollars (\$50,000.00) or less.

At a meeting of the Audit Committee held on February 4, 2019, it was:

**Be It Resolved:** that pursuant to Section 2-12 of the District Charter, the above-referenced sales or dispositions of District personal property and equipment are hereby authorized for the purposes set forth above, upon the above terms and conditions, and such other terms and conditions as the District's Director of Procurement as well as the District Counsel deem appropriate and in the best interests of the District; and be it further

**Resolved,** that the District's Director of Procurement or his or her designee(s) (collectively, "MDC Staff") are hereby authorized to enter into and execute bills of sale and any and all manner of other documents and to take such other actions as MDC Staff and the District Counsel may deem appropriate and in the best interests of the District in order to effect the above sale; and be it further

**Resolved,** that no person or entity shall be entitled to rely on, or otherwise claim any benefit by reason of this resolution should any of the MDC Staff fail to execute the aforementioned bills of sale or other documents, or to take any of the other aforesaid actions; and be it further

**Resolved,** that all approvals and authorizations provided hereby are contingent upon, and shall only be effective on and by means of, the MDC Staff executing such bills of sale and other documents, and taking such actions, all of which shall be, in form and substance, acceptable to the MDC Staff and District Counsel; and be it further

**Resolved,** that at the end of each fiscal year, MDC staff shall prepare and submit a written report to District Board, or a designated committee, setting forth the sales and/or dispositions of District personal property that were executed pursuant to this resolution during such fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted,

John S. Mirtle, Esq.  
District Clerk

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

**WATER BUREAU  
WESTBROOK VILLAGE, HARTFORD  
ABANDONMENT OF WATER MAIN**

To: District Board

February 4, 2019

From: Water Bureau

On October 16, 2018, the District received a letter from Paul Rodrigues of Freeman Companies on behalf of the Hartford Housing Authority, Owner and Developer of Westbrook Village, requesting that the Metropolitan District abandon the existing water mains within Ogilby Drive and Dillion Road in Hartford, as shown on the accompanying map. The purpose of the request is to enable the construction of a new residential housing development. The Owner will in turn build new public water mains to service the development. The existing water mains were built in 1950 by the City of Hartford Housing Authority under a Developer's Permit-Agreement for Stillman P. Westbrook Village with the Metropolitan District.

The proposal submitted includes the abandonment of approximately 1,475 feet of 8-inch water main in Ogilby Drive and approximately 1,400 feet of 8-inch water main in Dillion Road, as shown on the aforementioned map. The existing water mains were originally constructed in a public roadway; therefore no easements exist.

From an engineering standpoint, the abandonment of the existing water mains will not have a negative impact on the District's water distribution system, and no hardship or detriment would be imposed on others. The proposed new water mains will be constructed within the subject parcel under a new Developer's Permit-Agreement.

At a meeting of the Water Bureau held on February 4, 2019, it was:

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the District Board be authorized to execute the abandonment of the existing water mains within Ogilby Drive and Dillion Road, Hartford, as shown on the accompanying map.

Respectfully submitted,

John S. Mirtle, Esq.  
District Clerk



LAND DEVELOPMENT  
ENGINEERING DESIGN  
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

October 16, 2018

Michael Curley, P.E.  
Manager of Technical Services  
The Metropolitan District  
555 Main Street, P.O. Box 800  
Hartford, CT 06142-0800

RE: Abandonment Request  
Westbrook Village, Hartford, CT

Dear Mr. Curley:

The Westbrook Village project has been approved by the City of Hartford's Planning and Zoning Commission for a new master plan. This project will be redeveloped in six (6) total residential phases and a separate demolition phase for the entire site which will be to demolish the existing buildings, services, and infrastructure.

As discussed at our October 3, 2018 meeting, below is a request for the abandonment of water, sanitary sewer, and storm drainage at the following locations;

Sanitary Sewer:

1. 20' MDC Sanitary Sewer Easement north of Albany Avenue – see attached Exhibit 1
2. 20' MDC Sanitary Sewer Easement north of Dillon Road – see attached Exhibit 1
3. All Sanitary Sewer services off of Plainfield Street, Ogilby Drive, Mark Twain Drive, Dillon Road, and Albany Avenue
4. All Sanitary Sewer mains on Ogilby Drive and Dillon Road – see attached Exhibit 1

Storm Drainage:

1. 20' MDC Storm Easement north of Albany Avenue – see attached Exhibit 1
2. 20' MDC Storm Easement north of Dillon Road – see attached Exhibit 1
3. All Storm services off of Plainfield Street, Ogilby Drive, Mark Twain Drive, Dillon Road, and Albany Avenue
4. All Storm mains on Ogilby Drive and Dillon Road – see attached Exhibit 1

Water:

1. All Water services off of Plainfield Street, Ogilby Drive, Mark Twain Drive, Dillon Road, and Albany Avenue
2. All Water mains on Ogilby Drive and Dillon Road – see attached Exhibit 1

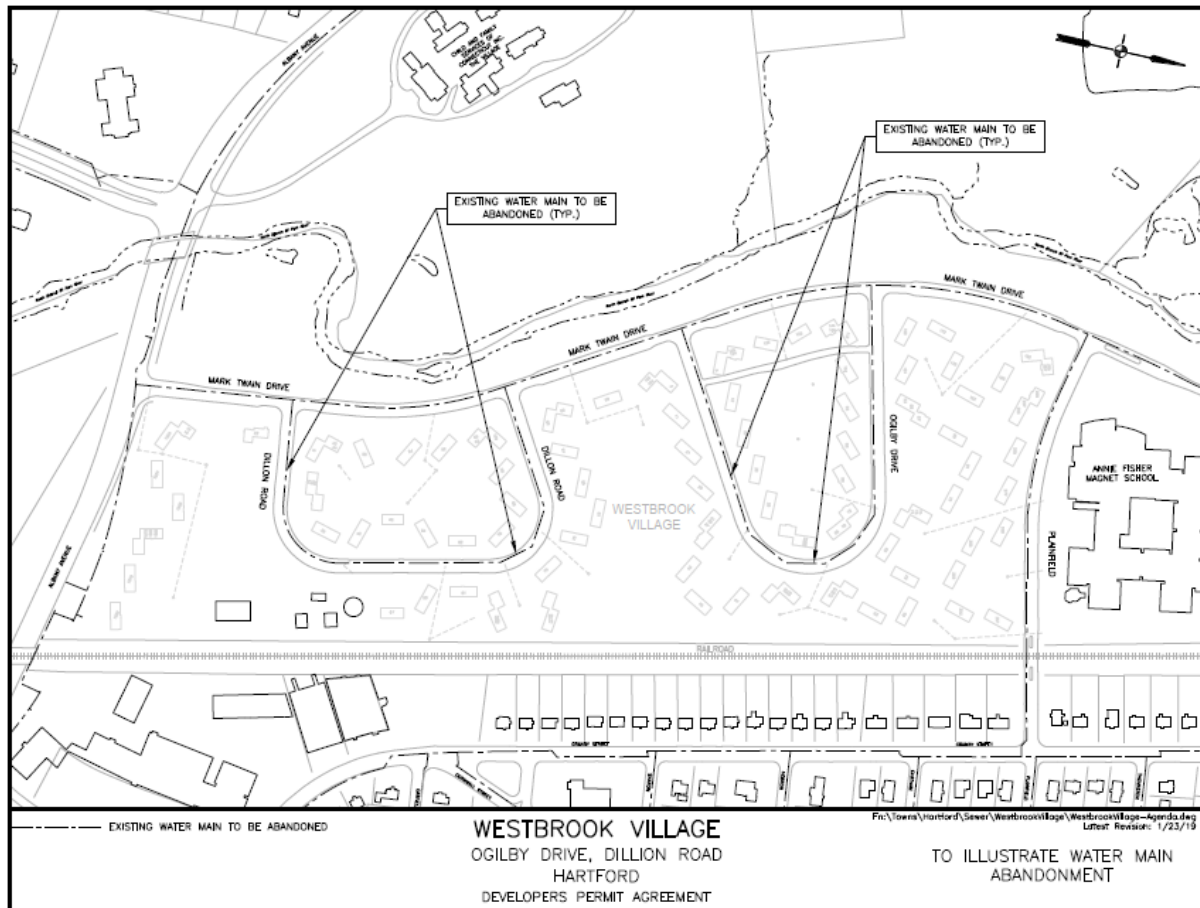
Please contact me if you require additional information to place this request on the appropriate MDC board agendas. Also, feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul A. Rodrigues".

Paul A. Rodrigues, PE  
Manager of Civil Engineering

Attachment: Utility Abandonment Plan – Exhibit 1



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

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mike Zaleski, President and CEO of Riverfront Recapture, thanked the District Board for their support.

Judy Allen of West Hartford submitted the following written comments:

Comments for the District Board Meeting

Feb. 4, 2019

I received my responses to written comments I submitted about the Long Term Control Plan - Integrated Plan (LTCP-IP). I'm not going to argue details because I will never be right, but I do want to raise some concerns, things I have talked about at other meetings.

I believe that the 1929 ad valorem system for funding sewers is too ancient to serve the MDC and its customers well anymore. It has been abandoned by all but a few utilities around the country and for good reason. New models have evolved, reflecting best practices for a utility of the 21st century.

My MDC bill is consistently around \$30 per month. I live alone and conserve water so my situation is not representative of all customers, but I think the same principle applies.

The largest part of my payment for water and sewer service as well as the Clean Water Project (CWP) charges are my property taxes.

Why should I, because I live in West Hartford, pay more for sewer service than a customer in East Hartford who uses the same amount of water?

Why should my property taxes escalate at a greater rate than property owners in other towns?

I live in the house I grew up in. It was built in the 1950's so the value of it is certainly greater than it was then and my property taxes reflect that. I live on a limited income and property taxes eat up a good chunk of that. Not all West Hartford residents are uniformly wealthy, nor Hartford residents uniformly poor.

In 1929 it may have made sense, but today the ad valorem method is unfair.

In 1929 the Charter also laid out how the water side of the MDC would be financed. Again, that probably made perfect sense and worked well back then. We are in a very different time, with challenges and advantages not anticipated or even imagined back

then. There are now models for running a water utility that do a better job of holding water rates in check. An industrial rate may help some, but it doesn't solve the problem.

The role of commissioners has changed over time as well. Commissioners were once much more involved in the day to day operations of the MDC. Changes needed to adopt a new financial model would be great and difficult. You have an excellent staff who advises you but it is natural to resist that kind of change. There is no reason why you as commissioners can't be the catalyst for that kind of change. It is your responsibility to oversee this utility, ensure its ability to continue supplying excellent service for customers, and to critically assess whether the way things have always been done is still appropriate for today and for the health of the MDC going forward.

I also want to comment about the responses given to all of the public comments submitted for the LTCP-IP. I'd encourage you to read at least a sampling of them. They are on the MDC website.

I think you will see that most if not all comments say that 40 years is too long. And I think you will see that much of them supported the concept of an integrated plan. I want to stress that point. *I know of no one who thinks an integrated plan is bad or that it's not needed. It's the 40 years that's the problem.*

The purpose of public comment is to consider the input and make changes to the plan accordingly. This is an example of a consistent problem the MDC has with responding to the public. Doing all that is legally required doesn't result in the public believing you listen or take them seriously.

Why solicit public comment that people take time to thoughtfully make, if it will make no difference. It sends a message that either you don't care, or don't think any of them have merit.

Another comment that was almost universal was that the period for comment was too short and the plan lacked adequate stakeholder participation during its creation.



A document was added to the final submission that I think was meant to address this. It included copies of agendas and power point presentations made to civic groups and towns over the past 2 years.

Stakeholders include the organizations that protect and monitor the waters downstream of the CT River including Long Island Sound and the people who use them. Stakeholders include all the residents of CT who's money has paid half of the CWP so far through the state's Clean Water Fund. Stakeholders include more than just the towns who pay the ad valorem and customers that pay the CWP charge.

Participation in development of the plan is not just a few weeks before the final plan is submitted. Why weren't environmental groups invited to be part of the many planning meetings when details were being decided? Despite your distrust of environmental groups, the CWP is fundamentally an environmental project, its goals are environmental, and involving environmental groups is appropriate. It probably would have made approval by DEEP easier as well.

I remember the presentation made to West Hartford at the time of the last referendum. It detailed how the project was to be funded and what customers could expect to see on their bills. CWP charges would rise rapidly, reach a peak and then begin to drop until it reached zero when the projected was finished. Now those charges would be extended out at least 40 years and never return to zero. Most of us won't be around in 40 years. Your responsibility is also to the MDC customers who will.

Things change. Promises made about the CWP have to be revised. Things change. What made sense in 1929 doesn't make sense now.

To put this all together - Rather than an Integrated Plan that doesn't meet all the goals of the CWP for at least 40 years, let's explore new models for funding this utility using best practices for the 21st century. Let's make it possible to develop an integrated plan that can meet the CWP goals sooner and keep costs for customers in check.

Judy Allen  
West Hartford

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 PM

ATTEST:

John S. Mirtle, Esq.  
District Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval