

Minutes of East Lyme Water and Sewer Commission Regular Meeting - 11/18/25

Date and time: 11/18/25 6:36 PM to: 11/18/25 7:06 PM

Present: Brooke Stevens, Recording Secretary, Commission Members:, Carol Russell, Dan Cunningham, Chairman, David J. Murphy, David R. Zoller, Michelle Royce Williams, Lindsay Bollenbach, Absent:, Ken Roberts, David B. Bond, Roger L. Spencer

CC: Ben North, Chief Operating Officer, Ann Cicchiello, Deputy First Selectman, Tracy Collins, Town Attorney, Joe Bragaw, Director of Public Works

Location: East Lyme Town Hall, Upper Conf. Room, 108 Pennsylvania Ave., Niantic, CT, 06357

Topics

1. Call to Order

Note Chairman Cunningham called the November 18th, 2025, Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Water & Sewer Commission to order at 6:36 p.m., following the conclusion of the Public Hearing.

Note It was noted that the Pledge of Allegiance was observed prior to the onset of the Public Hearing.

2. Additions to the Agenda

Note Mr. Cunningham noted there are two items to add to the agenda regarding 19 Grouse Circle.

Note Ms. Collins noted the importance of the Recording Secretary ensuring filing the meeting motions within 48 hours.

Decision MOTION (1)

Mr. Zoller moved to add the discussion and possible action on a request for a special appropriation regarding 19 Grouse Circle.

Ms. Royce Williams seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

Decision MOTION (2)

Mr. Zoller moved to add the discussion and possible action on the repair of the Water Service at 19 Grouse Circle.

Ms. Royce Williams seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

3. Approval of Minutes

3-1. Public Hearing Minutes - October 28th, 2025

Note see attached minutes.

 [Minutes of East Lyme Water and Sewer Commission Public Hearing 10 28 25.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (3)

Mr. Zoller moved to approve the Public Hearing Minutes of October 28th, 2025, as submitted.

Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

3-2. Regular Meeting Minutes - October 28th, 2025

Note see attached minutes.

 [Minutes of East Lyme Water and Sewer Commission Regular Meeting 10 28 25.pdf](#)

Decision MOTION (4)

Mr. Zoller moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 28th, 2025, as submitted.

Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

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EAST LYME, CT
2025 NOV 20 A 8:21
Cunningham
TOWN CLERK

4. Delegations

Note There were none.

5. Discussion and possible action on a request for a special appropriation regarding 19 Grouse Circle

Note Mr. North noted a significant leak in the water service line at 19 Grouse Circle and the customer has claimed hardship and inability to pay for the required repair.

 [Summary of agenda item.jpg](#)

Note Mr. Cunningham observed that if the water were turned back on, it would not reach the house due to the perforations and leaks in the old line.

Note Staff is recommending that the Commission step in to fund and perform the repair, which would involve replacing the entire service line and installing a meter pit. This decision requires the Commission's consent as it will incur costs.

Note Mr. North explained that the current line is copper and has had numerous past repairs due to corrosion. The proposed replacement material is polyethylene (PE) 4710. The Commission would perform the repair and then place a lien on the property to recover the costs. The homeowner, who is the sole owner and over 65, has been spoken to staff and is appreciative of this arrangement.

Note Ms. Collins confirmed that because this is a municipal lien, it would have priority on the property. A title rundown also confirmed the customer is the sole owner.

 [Lynn M. Clarke deed and info 19 Grouse Circle for Water and Sewer Commission Lien \(00810456xD3DC6\).pdf](#)

Note Mr. North stated that they will set up a payment plan with the homeowner to recoup the money sooner than a potential foreclosure scenario, and Mr. Bragaw added that interest will be charged as well.

Note Ms. Collins, Mr. North, and Mr. Bragaw discussed how the current delinquent interest rate based on the ordinance is 12% (Ordinance 252-21, subsection D), although the Commission's regulations state 18%. This discrepancy was noted as something that needs to be rectified by potentially amending the ordinance in the future.

Decision MOTION (5)

Ms. Royce Williams moved to approve a special appropriation of up to \$20,000 from funds available in the Water Department fund balance to be transferred to the Water Operating Account, "Maintenance of Transmission and Distribution," 2851000-54312, to cover costs related to the replacement of a water service in conformance with East Lyme Water rules and regulations, at 19 Grouse Circle in East Lyme.

Ms. Russell seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

Decision MOTION (6)

Ms. Royce Williams moved that pursuant to Section 52.21 of the Ordinances of the Town of East Lyme, and Conn. Gen. Stat., Section 49-73b, the Commission find that:

Note (1) Lynn M. Clarke, owner of the property located at 19 Grouse Circle, East Lyme, has requested that the Town perform such repair work as is necessary to restore water service to her residence;

Note (2) That such work is her obligation to perform as the property owner;

Note (3) That she is presently unable to make such repairs herself;

Note (4) That as a result of her inability to make such repairs she has been living without water services for several weeks and that this impairs the safety and sanitation of the property; and,

Note (5) The Commission can cause the property to be restored to a safe and sanitary condition by performing the necessary repair work and seeking reimbursement from the property owner as provided by law.

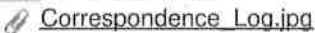
Note: And Further, that pursuant to said Ordinance the Commission authorizes Ben North, Chief Operating Officer for the East Lyme Water and Sewer Department, to undertake to arrange such repair work and incur such costs as may be necessary to restore water service to said private residence and to thereafter seek reimbursement of the cost of such repairs from the property owner and to secure the Town's interest in repayment by recording a lien upon the property. According to said Ordinance Section 52.21 (D), the lien shall bear interest at the rate of 12% per annum until paid, unless paid within 30 days from the date it becomes due and payable.

Decision: Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.
Motion carried, 6-0-0.

6. Presentation on the Determination of Capacity for Dan Trakas ETAL Concerning a Development on 202 Pennsylvania Ave

Note: This item has been continued to the December 16th, 2025, meeting.

7. Correspondence Log

Note: see attachment.


Note: Mr. Cunningham noted the Minutes received from the New London WPCA (11/20/25) and Waterford Utility Commission (11/12/25).

8. Billing Adjustments/Disputes

Note: There were none.

9. Approval of Bills

Note: There were none.

10. Finance Director Report

Note: Mr. Gervais is out of town, so the Commission opted to hear his report at the next meeting.

11. Project Updates

Note: Mr. North said he had nothing new to report at this time.

12. Discussion and Possible Action on Reallocation of Water Department Capital Funds

Note: Mr. North explained that this item was brought forward because the Commission is adding an account for preliminary work on one of the wells, and he received communication from Bond Counsel stating that adding this new capital account requires the standard financial process:

1. The matter must go before the Board of Selectmen for approval and then go before the Board of Finance for approval.
2. The matter then must be approved at a town meeting.

The matter is scheduled to be heard at the Board of Selectmen meeting on December 3rd, 2025, and no further action is required by the Water and Sewer Commission at this time.

13. Chairman's Report

Note: Mr. Cunningham reported on a meeting he held with Martha Marx and Nick Menapace to initiate a broader discussion on sewer capacity issues and strategic planning. He indicated that both individuals were receptive to expanding this discussion to include the State of Connecticut, with the goal of determining what steps can be taken to expand the Commission's core capacity. This expansion would specifically look into options short of actually expanding the physical plant and securing funding. Mr. Cunningham stated he will continue these discussions and report back.

14. Staff Updates

14-1. Water Department Monthly Report

Note see attachment.

 [Adobe Scan Nov 20 2025.pdf](#)

Note Mr. North reported some of the following:

- *Stream flow and precipitation have returned, with a healthy 5.88 inches of rainfall in October.
- *Widespread flushing has mostly ceased for the year due to ongoing capacity concerns.
- *Staff has been focused on essential maintenance- going through and painting hydrants and exercising the valves to ensure they are ready and operable in the event of a water main break, which is now possible due to having the necessary equipment and staffing; this activity is being tracked in the work order system.

Note The Commission is utilizing capital funds from the \$2 million bond for several key upgrades-

1. Orchards Booster Station
 - *Staff installed Backflow Prevention Devices with a local contractor.
 - *A new control system and programming change was installed, which will allow for the decommissioning of the hydropneumatic tank.
2. Jean Drive Booster Pump Station
 - *The station was upgraded with all-new pumps and piping.
 - *All work was completed in-house by staff.
3. Sleepy Hollow Booster Pump Station (Upcoming)
 - *New pumps have been ordered.
 - *Staff will also be replacing the old, galvanized steel piping with Pro Press copper.
4. Pump Station (at Rocky Neck State Park)
 - *Staff completed the replacement of one of the Gorman-Rupp pumps.
 - *The job, which involved lowering a massive pump (about 8 feet wide) through a small cylinder opening, was done internally using the commission's equipment, including the crane truck and the Vactor truck (used to clean out the wet well).

Note Mr. North is still working to meet with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to acquire more easement property to potentially redesign the pump station.

14-2. Sewer Department Monthly Report

Note see attachment.

 [Adobe Scan Nov 20 2025 \(1\).pdf](#)

Note Mr. Bragaw reported that a sewer capacity subcommittee meeting was held and that the Minutes are available for review on the town website and will be up for approval at the January meeting. Their goal is to determine where the Commission needs to be strategically before reporting back to the Board of Selectmen.

Note Mr. North added that he is working with the chosen engineer for the PFAS remediation projects. The engineer is revising their proposal after the Commission decided to pull the zoning regulations piece out of the scope. He and Alex Klose are collaborating to prepare a zoning package.

15. Future Agenda Items

15-1. Sewer Capacity Subcommittee

Note The Sewer Capacity Subcommittee will be meeting again in January.

15-2. Capital Projects Subcommittee

Note Once the updated information is ready, the Capital Subcommittee will review and weigh in on the project's progress.

15-3. Linebacker Service Line Repair Program

Note Mr. North detailed how they're exploring the Linebacker program, which is not an insurance policy but a program that allows homeowners to pay a monthly fee to cover the cost of certain unforeseen repairs to their service line. The service is being offered by Connecticut Water.

Note Mr. Cunningham noted that the program shifts the risk of large, unexpected repair bills away from the homeowner. It was briefly discussed how the homeowner at 19 Grouse Circle would benefit greatly from such a program.

16. Adjournment

Decision MOTION (7)

Mr. Zoller moved to adjourn the November 18th, 2025, Regular Meeting of the Water & Sewer Commission at 7:06 p.m.

Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion carried, 6-0-0.

Note Respectfully Submitted,
Brooke Stevens,
Recording Secretary