

**EAST LYME BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
Thursday, DECEMBER 9th, 2010
NETT HALL - CAMP NIAN TIC
Smith Street, Niantic, CT
6:30 PM**

PRESENT: **Water & Sewer Commission:** Paul Formica, Steve DiGiovanna, Dave Murphy, Carol Russell
 Board of Selectmen: Paul Formica, Mark Nickerson, Jack Hogan
 Board of Finance: Robert Kleinhans, Steve Harney, Steve Kelley, Lisa Picarazzi

ALSO PRESENT: Ed Jutila, State Representative
 Barry Weiner, Chairman, New London Water Authority
 Chris Clark, Thames River Project
 Don Iannicelli, Geo-Insight
 Brad Kargl, Municipal Utility Engineer
 Michael Giannattasio, Director of Public Works

1. Call to Order

Chairman Paul Formica welcomed everyone and called this Special Meeting and Public Information Session on the Regional Water Interconnection Project to order at 6:40 PM.

2. Open Public Informational Session Regarding Regional Water Interconnection Project

Mr. Formica noted that it had been called as a joint public meeting of the three Boards as all of them would be involved with this project. He recognized State Representative Ed Jutila.

State Representative Ed Jutila said that he is a supported of this regional interconnection and that it is an excellent project for the Towns to come together on to provide a service that makes sense as there are Towns that have more water and some who have less and this is an opportunity to come together and help each other. The funding is available and this is an opportunity to help many Towns over time and to do something great for the area.

Mr. Formica said that Denise Ruzicka of the DEP and Laurie Matthews of the DPH had sent their regrets at not being able to attend this evening. They had also sent their support and endorsement for this great project. He said that this is a project that has broad support across many Towns and from the State. He said that they make no mistake that this is 'our' problem and that the 'conserve water' sign that everyone perhaps now takes for granted was mandated by the State because we do have a water problem. He explained that he was not aware of the severity of the water problem that we have when he took office and that he researched it and found a 23 year old ordinance regulating water – so the problem was at least 23 years old. East Lyme has 7 wells. Those in proximity to a stream - during the summer months the stream levels drop so the DEP mandates that they turn the wells off when the stream flow drops. This project will provide a 12-month water supply for the Town of East Lyme. He noted that this years' mandatory water conservation was extended into September even though there was severe flooding in March.

Why is this needed? Mr. Formica said that it is a health and safety issue – the water pressure goes down and that causes problems for fire protection; economic development – they need to be able to hook up people to the water system, but they must have a 12 month supply. Economic development

enables us to grow and prosper as a Town. He explained that by making our infrastructure more efficient that we have picked up more water – but have reached the end of what can be done as they have upgraded the efficiency of the system, done leak testing of the system and are working on a meter replacement conservation program.

Mr. Formica explained that this is a 'water-banking' system and that we would send roughly 125,000 gallons per day to Lake Konomoc so that during the summer months we can get that water back. He said that this appears to be something that can work but needs to be a 'net neutral' system. This was a concept and now it is a project. The difference is the funding. Congressman Courtney was able to get us \$300,000 (-10% for the administration costs). Also \$10.192M is available from the DWSRF (DPH) with 80% being in the form of a loan and 20% in the form of a subsidy. The Towns' cost then is \$8M – so how can they afford it? The cost of borrowing money is at its lowest in years. He explained a PowerPoint graph on the existing and proposed debt service and that they would like to keep the debt steady and well managed as you would want to stay away from raising taxes. He said that they have also anticipated the fact that the State has a revenue problem. He thinks that they can move forward and solve this problem and that they are able to work well with New London. He said that Mr. Kargl would now speak to the specifics of the operation and what was looked at in arriving at this result.

Brad Kargl, EL Water & Sewer Department Municipal Utility Engineer said that the project involves a booster station north of Flanders four corners. Water would be pumped to an elevated site, north to almost Montville through a new 12" main north on 85 to Lake Konomoc and then to the New London treatment plant. Flow monitoring meters would be put in place. The existing conditions are that we have 6000 water customers, 7 active water supply wells, 4 greensand filtration plants, 2 water storage tanks (2.8M gallons of storage), 10 water booster stations and approximately 102 miles of water main. We have 4 wells located in the Pattagansett River Basin and 3 wells in Bride Brook. There are none in Four Mile River, Latimer Brook or the Niantic River. Well type is gravel packed with a depth of from 60 to 116 feet and pumping rates of 200-800 gallons per minute. Operationally there are stream gauges on the Pattagansett River where they typically have to come off-line when the stream flow drops. The summertime demand produces a 100,000 to 300,000 gallon shortage of water per day and leaves no margin of safety (he noted that this happened to them in 2008 – just two years ago). Mandatory water conservation on the weekends is what has been put in place to manage this and has been fairly effective so far. He said that they are mandated to look for new water supply methods and explained the criteria for evaluating the water supply alternatives. They reviewed the alternatives of a Waterford interconnection, the East Lyme-New London interconnection, additional improvements to existing wells (this 'low hanging fruit' has been exhausted) and conservation. Alternatives looked at for the 10-20 year need – New well field development – Four Mile River, Miller's Pond, Desalination (this is done in Florida) and Conservation. Alternatives looked at for the 20-50 year need: Powers Lake – surface water treatment plant – which would be costly in all aspects; surface water supply – Quarry pond and conservation. It was found that the East Lyme/New London interconnection benefits the water supply emergency issues - catastrophic infrastructure failure, helps to meet peak demands during critical times, allows for greater operational flexibility, promotes management of local and regional water resources and can be implemented quickly. Mr. Kargl presented some pictures of water department improvements that have been made to help with conservation and in trying to obtain more water.

Mr. Formica thanked Mr. Kargl for the presentation and also mentioned the stream augmentation project/concept that they were trying for Wells 5 and 6 as they are the wells that get shut off during the summer months. They have been trying out pumping well 5 into the stream to try to keep the level up so that they can keep pumping Well 6. They have been trying whatever they can to get this water problem solved. The East Lyme/New London interconnection has gone from a project to a viable concept. He asked if there were any questions from the audience.

Steve Kelley asked if there is a direct correlation on the level of the streams to well pumping. Mr. Kargl said that statistics do show that when you pump the well that is has an effect on the neighboring stream. They have been working on trying to show that it is not as drastic as is thought.

Lisa Picarazzi asked about Lake Konomoc and if there is any risk that it would run out of water during heavy demand.

Barry Weiner, Chairman, New London Water Authority said that the beauty of the project being net neutral is that it would not affect New London's safe yield at all.

Mr. Kargl added that is a good point and noted that it also shows that there is an opportunity to be able to get water from Groton in extreme situations.

Ms. Picarazzi asked how many feet of pipe this project would entail.

Mr. Formica said 3.5 miles.

Mr. Kelley asked about the construction of the elevated tank and how it would be paid for.

Mr. Formica said that it is included in the project cost. He then explained that timeline – he hopes to bring this before the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on 12/20/2010. It will also go before the respective water authorities and if passed by the Board of Finance in January of 2011, it would go back to the Board of Selectmen to be scheduled for referendum. If passed at referendum, it would go out through the bid process with the expectation of having signed construction documents by 6/30/2011 as this is the timeline that works for the DWSRF monies.

3. Adjournment

Mr. Formica thanked everyone for coming and adjourned this Special Meeting at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary