

East Haddam Water Pollution Control Authority  
Municipal Office Complex  
Monday, June 17, 2019  
Regular Meeting Minutes

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman, Andrew Lord, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

**2. ATTENDANCE**

**Members Present:** Andrew Lord, Chairman, Edward Blaschik, Robert Casner, and Richard Pettinelli

**Members Absent:** Richard Fiala, Arthur Merrow, and John Russell

**Others Present:** James Ventres – Land Use Administrator

**3. MINUTES**

A motion was made by Mr. Blaschik, seconded by Mr. Casner, and unanimously passed to approve the May 20, 2019 minutes as presented.

**4. PUBLIC HEARING**

**Item 1) – Proposed increase in the East Haddam Village District sewer usage fees: \$1025 / EDU to \$1050 / EDU**

**Item 2) – Discussion of EDU assessment on individual properties: Main Street #19, #32, #40, #44. Norwich Road #3, #4, #7, #8.**

Mr. Lord opened the public hearing.

Mr. Gary Bogan of 19 Main Street stated his concern of affordability for both property owners and business owners in both the town of East Haddam and the state of Connecticut. He believes the rate increase will discourage business from operating in the town. Mr. Bogan also suggested installing water meters as a way to determine usage.

Mr. Bogan told the Board he does not rent or use the second floor apartment on his property so he does not believe the EDU evaluation of 2 EDU is a fair assessment.

Mr. Bogan asked if other cost saving measures had been considered, such as a new operator for the plant.

Mr. Lord stated they have previously explored the possibility of finding a new operator, but they currently have the most cost effective operator. He stated other operator's bids were much higher. Mr. Ventres stated the Board of Finance contributes \$25,000 per year. He also explained CIRMA provided \$8,027 this year as reimbursement. Mr. Ventres also explained they have gotten a grant which was used to restore the plant. Mr. Lord stated grants are being awarded when possible. However, East Haddam is a small influencer to the pollution load so there are not many grants available. Grants have previously gone to areas with more financial need. Mr. Lord stated the Board is running at a bare minimum for reserves.

Mr. Lord then addressed Mr. Bogan's comment regarding the use of water meters. He said the Board has previously discussed installing water meters however the installation and administrative costs to maintain the meters would be disadvantageous. He also explained the EDU estimates are made based on DEEP calculations from the health code. This is to ensure everyone pays the same relative amount.

Mr. Bogan asked the Board about the loan the Board is still repaying. Mr. Ventres stated the first loan he believed Mr. Bogan referenced, was paid in full 18 years ago. This is a new loan, which the Board is paying back, with no interest.

Mr. Ventres stated the EDU assessment is based on the assessor's card. Mr. Bogan stated he believes this is why water meters should be used. Mr. Pettinelli stated metered pumps would not necessarily decrease the rates. Mr. Ventres stated the evaluation is based on terms of use, even if the property is not being used as the terms state. Mr. Bogan stated again he does not think the increase is in the best interest for the Village of East Haddam.

Mr. Lord asked Mr. Bogan if he would maintain the 2 unit stats. Mr. Pettinelli stated if Mr. Bogan did not want his EDUs to increase he could decrease the unit status on his property to only one unit.

Ms. Ginger Rutledge, of 9 Lumberyard Road and 11 Lumberyard Road, asked if the rates would ever stop increasing. Mr. Lord stated they are trying to control the costs to the users. Mr. Lord stated they would not increase the rates unless they thought it was necessary. Ms. Rutledge stated she was promised the individual rates would go down if the total usage increased. She also stated she would like the Town of East Haddam to contribute financially. Mr. Blaschik stated they town has given them \$25,000.

Ms. Rutledge asked what would happen if she did not pay her bill. Mr. Ventres stated she would accrue interest and then a lien would be placed on the property.

Ms. Jacquelyn Hall of 7 Lumberyard Road stated the entire town initially voted for the sewer system so she believes the town should have to provide the board with more money.

Mr. Lord stated the people benefitting from the sewer system are the ones to pay because the sewer system increases their property value.

Mr. Lord stated, in response to comments from the public, the WPCA is not making money off the ratepayers. He said they are looking out to the future to plan and budget.

Ms. Rutledge stated she does appreciate the sewage system but believes the cost is too high for the ratepayers.

Mr. Casner stated the only way to control the cost is to have more users. If the number of EDUs stays the same there will inevitably be rate increases.

Ms. Rutledge stated she is also worried about commercial business leaving.

Mr. Ventres presented a written comment from the Boardman House Inn of 8 Norwich Road, which Mr. Lord read.

**Motioned by Mr. Casner, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, and unanimously passed to close the public part of the hearing.**

## 5. DISCUSSION

### A) Clean Water Ops Report

Mr. Ventres stated the Dock Road station pumps have been replaced. The project cost about \$17440.21. He also stated there were no grinder pump issues. The board discussed the decrease to the pumping station electric bill. There was a 61% increase.

Mr. Pettinelli asked how much money they should keep as a reserve. Mr. Ventres suggested the board used to keep approximately \$125,000. Mr. Blaschik said he thinks a reserve of about \$125,000 is a good number. Mr. Lord stated the board needs to show the town they are doing their part to operate responsibly.

Motioned by Mr. Casner, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, and unanimously passed to raise the East Haddam Village District sewer usage fees from \$1025 / EDU to \$1050 / EDU and adjust the EDUs for Main Street #19, #32, #40, #44 and Norwich Road #3, #4, #7, #8.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Mr. Casner, seconded by Mr. Blaschik, and unanimously passed to adjourn at 8:28 pm.