

FINAL

**CITY OF NORWALK
THIRD TAXING DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 6, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: Timothy Plunkett, Chair; Paul Kokias, David Brown
STAFF: George Leary, General Manager; Ron Scofield, Assistant General
OTHERS: Joe Cristino, Darek Shapiro

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Plunkett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one present from the public who wished to comment at this time.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

March 2, 2009

The following change was noted:

Page 1, under Minutes of Meeting: please change February 2, 009 to February 2, 2009.

**** MR. KOKIAS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 2, 2009 AS CORRECTED.**

**** MR. BROWN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

March 4, 2009 Special Meeting

**** MR. BROWN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2009 AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MR. PLUNKETT SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

General Manager's Report

Mr. Leary announced that the architect for the office renovation would be arriving later.

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Assessment Changes

The discussion then moved to the recent Assessment Changes as listed in Mr. Leary's report. Mr. Plunkett asked about the depreciation capital, which Mr. Leary said that this would not be affected.

Norden Generators

Mr. Leary stated that the DPUC Committee would be announcing the date and time of the planned meeting sometime in the future. When Mr. Leary receives a firm date and time, he will contact everyone.

Mr. Leary then reviewed the details of the recent work on the generators, which had the units off lines for two days for the warranty repairs. Because the work was done under warranty, there was no out of pocket cost to the district but there was approximately \$5,400. in lost revenue.

Substation Transformer Failure

Mr. Leary then reviewed the details of the four substation transformers, which gives the District a total of 25 megawatts. Two transformers are located at East Avenue, and two on Rowan Street. He then explained that during the winter, the megawattage required often is below 10 megawatts, but during the summer, the draw on the system is above 10 megawatts. If the largest unit were out of order, customers would not have service.

Currently, one of the East Avenue transformers is out of commission. Because the capacity of lines at the East Avenue cannot handle 15 megawatts, Mr. Leary then suggested that 5 megawatt units was moved from Rowan Street to East Avenue to replace the burned out unit and a new or used 10 megawatt unit was installed at Rowan Street, the District would be covered. Installing a new transformer would take about six months. A used transformer could be purchased in two weeks.

Mr. Joe Cristino came forward and said that the transformer that burned out was from approximately 1965. When Rowan Street was built in 1980, it was constructed with an eye towards the future. Mr. Cristino proceeded to review the details of the substation. Mr. Cristino said that he had been down in Pennsylvania recently on another matter and had the opportunity to tour the Sunbelt Company, which refurbishes transformers. Discussion about the pros and cons of renting a 10 or 5 MVA transformer for \$200,000 for six months while a new generator was being manufactured or purchasing a used 10 MVA transformer for \$308,000.

Mr. Leary asked what track the Commission wished him to pursue. Mr. Plunkett said that he would prefer to have a new transformer.

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The discussion then moved to what would be done with the old transformer. Mr. Cristino explained that normally, the transformer would have been pulled, the top burned off and an analysis done on the interior coils.

Mr. Kokias said that he felt that the only practical solution was to buy a new unit. Mr. Leary said that he would start to gather specs on obtaining a new generator.

Office Renovations

Mr. Darek Shapiro came forward and displayed a set of structural plans for the office renovations. Mr. Kokias asked about the time line. Mr. Shapiro said that it would be eight weeks. Modular units would be placed so that the office would be located there during construction. There could be a problem if the office machinery is left in the building and the humidity becomes too high for the printers and the bill inserter machines. Mr. Shapiro said that after talking with a construction manager, the jobs that do not have temporary office space take longer. This reduces the cost.

Mr. Shapiro then reviewed the State of Connecticut bid process requirements for building construction with the Commissioners.

Mr. Shapiro said that Mr. Al Herring is in charge for the Contraction Bidding Division for the State at 860-763-5691. He then reviewed the job responsibilities of the general contractor and a construction manager and why the TTD Commissioners might want to consider having a construction manager handle the project.

Mr. Plunkett asked if the specs for the RFP were ready. Mr. Shapiro said that they were and that he had used moderate ranges. A discussion then followed about whether the TTD was required to follow the requirements for municipalities. Mr. Brown suggested that an attorney be contacted for an opinion regarding this.

Local Facilities

Negotiations continue with Northeast Utilities. Mr. Leary said that last year the costs were \$333,000. He then reviewed the recent upgrades that Northeast Utilities made at the Broad River Substation. Mr. Leary also reviewed the how the cost is apportioned and pointed out that the East Avenue Line 9S45 is over fifty years old and that if Northeast Utilities decided to reconductor the line, TTD would be paying the cost for the replacement line to be put in.

Automatic Meter Infrastructure (AMI)

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Mr. Leary then reviewed the projects that SNEW will be undertaking, regarding automatic meter reading. If TTD wanted to join in on this project, the TTD would pay pro-rata. The other option would be to expand the network that the TTD already has. Mr. Leary then reviewed the details of this.

Mr. Kokias had some questions and concerns regarding whether or not the District was moving in too many directions at one time with the replacement of the transformer, the construction of the office, and this new automatic metering option. Mr. Leary then pointed out that the District might be required to do this in the future by the DPUC. Mr. Leary then said that Mr. Shapiro had been investigating the possibility of having some stimulus funds directed toward the construction at the TTD office.

CMEEC

Mr. Leary then reviewed the current situation with the CMEEC bond agreement, which will end on June 1st.

Mr. Plunkett expressed concerns about the fact that TTD had funds at Wachovia and at Patriot Bank. Mr. Leary suggested that perhaps counsel could review the security agreement with Patriot.

Fuel System Compliance

The gas and diesel tanks at the office are not in compliance. Mr. Plunkett suggested that the District consider just using the local gas stations. Discussion then followed about the details of possibly removing the tanks. Four contractors have come in to look at the situation and bids should be in shortly.

Line Truck Replacement

Mr. Leary said that this truck was in budget last year, but the truck needs to be replaced. It will take six months to replace if the material handling totally dies. The issue is the aerial device because of the play in the joints. Mr. Leary said that the truck could be sent to the garage for serious maintenance, which would be less, he believes. Both trucks are used regularly. Mr. Leary said that the truck would need to be torn down before an estimate can be created. Mr. Leary said that he would get an estimate.

Mr. Brown asked how difficult it would be to prove the reason for the high fuel rates. Mr. Leary said that when the yearly report comes out, it would be obviously.

Solar PV

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Mr. Brown asked if Mr. Libre could write an article about his solar panel experience for the newsletter.

Mr. Leary said that there was a new request for a solar panel on Fort Pointe Street and he had asked CMEEC about a fair amount for a rebate. So far, CMEEC has not replied.

Pension Report

Mr. Leary then displayed a copy of the pension report and said that a copy would be available for any Commissioner who wants one. Mr. Plunkett said that he would like a copy. A discussion then followed about whether or not the TTD needed to maintain the pension fund at 100%. Mr. Leary says that the District has a “defined benefit plan”. Changing it would require negotiations with the union. Currently the plan is 92% funded.

Mr. Kokias asked why the report is done out of house. Mr. Leary said that it was about \$15,000 a year for this service. Mr. Plunkett suggested that the pension be sent out for bid. Mr. Plunkett explained that the employees are not actuaries. Mr. Leary then said that he did not think that an auditor would rely on the figures generated by the TTD. Mr. Plunkett then said that there are many rules and regulations that govern this field.

NEWSLETTER POLICY

Mr. Kokias said that he would like to propose that the policy be changed from the Commissioners having to write the newsletter to having the General Manager write the newsletter. He added that he would like to have the number of times it was published reduced from monthly to quarterly. Discussion then followed.

**** MR. KOKIAS MOVED TO DESIGNATE THE EDITOR OF THE NEWSLETTER AS THE GENERAL MANAGER AND HAVE THE NEWSLETTER ISSUED QUARTERLY WITH A PROVISION THAT THE COMMISSIONERS COULD INSERT SHORT POINT OF VIEW ARTICLES OR COMMENTS IF THEY WISH TO DO SO.**

Mr. Brown said that he tries very hard to let any political influence be in the newsletter. Mr. Kokias said that he just feels very strongly that it should be the general manager. Mr. Brown said that he took exception to the fact that Mr. Kokias believes the newsletter reflected only one commissioner’s point of view.

**** MR. PLUNKETT SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO IN FAVOR (PLUNKETT AND KOKIAS) AND ONE AGAINST (BROWN).**

CONTRACTOR’S REVIEW

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Mr. Plunkett requested that Mr. Leary generate a break down on the various contractors for the Commissioners.

**** MR. PLUNKETT MOVED TO TABLE THE CONTRACTOR'S REVIEW TO THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING THE CONTRACTOR'S REVIEW.**

**** MR. KOKIAS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

FIREHOUSE LEASE

Mr. Plunkett said that the contract has been distributed electronically and that he had requested an attorney to review it, but had not heard back from the attorney yet.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. PLUNKETT MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. KOKIAS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Sharon L. Soltes