

REGULAR MEETING

**WATERTOWN FIRE DISTRICT
DISTRICT COMMISSION**

DATE: December 8, 2025
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: District Office
24 DeForest Street
Watertown, CT 06795

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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| Steve Ouellette, Chairman | Present |
| James Lehner | Present |
| Robert Yerger | Present |
| Anthony Martone | Absent |
| Pedro Soares | Present |
| Carl Minicucci, Alternate | Absent |
| Mark Crane, Alternate | Absent |
| Nicolas Perugini, Alternate | Absent |

1. Call meeting to order

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present were commissioners Ouellette, Lehner, Yerger, and Soares. Commissioner Martone and Alternate Commissioners Minicucci, Crane, and Perugini were absent.

ALSO PRESENT:

Watertown Fire District Superintendent Michael Tanuis, and Watertown Fire District Employees Vincent Tanuis, Heather Edwards, and Leah Perugini, Watertown Fire District Treasurer Barbara Zulkeski, Watertown Fire District Auditor David Cappelletti, Watertown Fire District Attorney Erick Sandler, and 10 members of the public.

3. Public Commentary

Frankie Popilowski of 35 Chestnut Avenue, Oakville, addressed some questions to the Board although she does not live in the Fire District. She said it was asked at a WSA meeting who would represent the Fire District during the Water and Sewer Bipartisan Committee's analysis of the handling of the Waterbury lawsuit and negotiations. Watertown Fire District Attorney Erick Sandler of Day Pitney LLP will be the contact. Ms. Popilowski also stated the Committee will begin interviewing candidates.

Anthony Muscedere of 55 Lockwood Drive addressed the Board to request an adjustment to his sewer fee because he had a toilet leak during the winter quarter. Watertown Fire District will review the water consumption for this account and the request for a sewer fee adjustment will be revisited at the next Board meeting. Mr. Muscedere does not have to attend the January meeting.

Rich Rozanski of 35 Reynolds Street asked if Agenda Item 6 – Discussion of Sewer Rates would include information about the rate increase and how the Fire District's sewer consumption is measured. That information will be addressed and further questions will be allowed at that time.

MOTION: By Mr. James Lehner and seconded by Mr. Pedro Soares to close public commentary.

Motion passes unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: By Mr. Pedro Soares and seconded by Mr. James Lehner to approve the minutes from the Monday, November 10, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Motion passes unanimously.

5. Approval of Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2026

The Board reviewed and approved the Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2026.

MOTION: By Mr. James Lehner and seconded by Mr. Robert Yerger to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2026.

Motion passes unanimously.

6. Discussion of Sewer Rates

Assistant Superintendent Vincent Tanuis introduced Attorney Erick Sandler from Day Pitney LLP to speak on the status of the discussions between Watertown Fire District and the Town of Watertown regarding the sewer rates and calculation of sewer bills.

Attorney Sandler stated that Watertown Fire District will not make a contribution toward the settlement of the lawsuit between Waterbury and Watertown. The Fire District has paid the bills received from Watertown WSA and there is no basis for Watertown WSA to seek further payment.

Watertown Fire District disputes Watertown WSA's calculations for the computation of sewer consumption. The court has ruled that Waterbury's rate is equitable, however, there is a disparity between how Watertown Fire District and the Town of Watertown are being billed for sewer compared to how Waterbury bills their customers. Watertown WSA charges Watertown Fire District the sewer rate charged by Waterbury and uses the reading from the sewer meter to calculate the bill. Waterbury bills their customers for sewer consumption based on their customer's water meter readings. Consumption at the water meter is lower than at the sewer meter, the reading from the sewer meter includes I/I (infiltration and inflow). The sewer rate Waterbury charges is based on readings from their customers water meters. Watertown Fire District submitted sewer bills with calculations based on Watertown Fire District customer's water meter readings to the Town of Watertown and demanded that Watertown WSA calculate the sewer bills in this manner and also demanded that the Town of Watertown bring up this disparity in how the sewer consumption is calculated with the City of Waterbury. Watertown Fire District will continue paying the bills received from Watertown WSA; however, these payments are being made under protest. Watertown Fire District is waiting for a response from the Town of Watertown.

A resident asked if Watertown Fire District can send sewage directly to Waterbury without Watertown WSA being involved. The Fire District uses a portion of Watertown WSA's sewer system. There is no way to get sewage to Waterbury without utilizing the Town of Watertown's sewer system.

A question was asked if there was anything preventing Watertown WSA from adding additional charges to the Fire District sewer bill each month. The contract between the Fire District and the Town of Watertown states that Watertown WSA may add maintenance charges to the bill.

Another resident asked if the Town of Watertown was going to sue Watertown Fire District. Attorney Sandler responded that he is unable to speak on behalf of the town.

Attorney Sandler commented that the Town of Watertown should be on the same page as Watertown Fire District because calculating sewer billing based on the customer's water meters is better for Watertown WSA customers as well as Watertown Fire District customers.

7. Auditor's Report

David Cappelletti of Clermont & Associates LLC presented a draft of the Auditor's Report for fiscal year 2025. Watertown Fire District accounting and billing procedures are proper. The Fire District is operating with no debt. Mr. Cappelletti is finalizing the Auditor's Report and will have it submitted to the state by the 12/31/25 due date.

8. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Tanuis had nothing to report.

9. Chairman's Report

The Chairman had nothing to report.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: By Mr. Pedro Soares and seconded by Mr. James Lehner to adjourn the Regular Meeting of Monday, December 8, 2025 at 7:36 p.m.

Motion passes unanimously.

Steve Ouellette, Chairman