

Town of Middlefield, Connecticut



Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA)  
Regular Meeting / Public Hearing  
September 3, 2025  
Minutes

Call to Order by Greg Makuch, WPCA Chairman at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: Greg Makuch, Patricia Flynn, Robert Monthei and Peter Sibley, WPCA Treasurer. Members absent: Nate Kirschner and Ken Hogan. Also present: Rob Poturnicki, Ex-Officio (non voting) / WPCA stipend employee.

**Motion by Bob Monthei to approve the agenda, 2nd by Patricia Flynn. Motion carried.**

**Motion by Peter Sibley to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 4, 2025, 2nd by Bob Monthei. Motion carried.**

**Public Hearing to consider the Middlefield WPCA's proposed sewer use charges for the Lake Beseck Sewer area of \$800.00 per EDU (Equivalent Dwelling Unit) effective October 1, 2025, payable at \$400.00 semi-annually in October and April.**

There were 4 Lake Beseck residents in attendance at the public hearing.

The Chairman presented the July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 fiscal year's statement of Revenue and Expenditures for the Lake Beseck Sewer District. The WPCA finished the fiscal year with a deficit of approx \$83,000 (the 4th quarter sewer use charge from the City of Meriden was not available at the time of this public hearing - estimated to be \$25,000).

There are 332 EDU's within the Lake Beseck Sewer District. Assuming no delinquents, an annual increase of \$100.00 per EDU would generate \$33,200. If the expenses for the next fiscal year, 2025-2026, are similar to the recent 2024-2025 fiscal year, the WPCA will finish with a deficit of approx \$50,000.

The last sewer rate increase was 5 years ago (effective October 1, 2020).

The WPCA's largest expense is the Maintenance and Replacement of Grinder Pumps. The Lake Beseck Sewer District has 42 Duplex Grinder Pump Stations (2 pumps per station) and 92 Simplex Grinder Pump Stations (1 pump per station) for a total of 178 pumps, all pumps in

addition to miles of pipeline are maintained by the WPCA. A duplex grinder pump station can serve from 2 to 15 properties. The total properties serviced by duplex grinder pump stations is 233. Pump stations located at the lower elevations of the system (stations located along the lake) are working harder, causing more wear and tear, to pump wastewater up to the Mattabeseck Road Pump Station located at the high point of the collection system. (static head = 97 feet +/-). All grinder pump stations pump wastewater up to the wet well of the Mattabeseck Road Pump Station. From this pump station, the wastewater is pumped to Meriden.

The WPCA's vendor, Williamson Pump & Motor, maintains/replaces the grinder pumps. Labor costs have increased by 89% since the last rate increase 5 years ago. In 2020, labor was \$106 per hour and in 2025, labor is \$200 per hour. Please note that the maintenance/replacement of grinder pumps and their electrical control panels is a specialized trade with a very limited number of companies in this field. Also, the company should be located in close proximity or have employees residing in close proximity to Lake Beseck in order to respond to emergencies. Parts have also increased in price. An example is the ESPS-100 pressure sensor switch. This switch senses the water level in the grinder pump basin and controls the on/off functions of the pump. At the end of 2019 (Nov 18) this item cost \$485.00. As of May 30, 2025, the same item cost \$1,298.00, a 168% increase.

Residents have caused unnecessary expenses by discharging prohibited items such as cooking oil/grease, wipes and cigarette butts which have caused pump failures. The residents in attendance asked if more can be done to educate the residents of items not suitable to be discharged into the sewer. The Chairman responded: informational letters have been mailed to new residents, informational notices have been published in the Town Hall Newsletter and letters have been mailed to individuals residing in the area where a problem has occurred. The second largest expense is the City of Meriden Use Charge. This use charge is paid to Meriden for accepting and treating wastewater from the Lake Beseck Sewer District. The use charge in 2020 was \$4.69 per 100 cubic feet (748 gals) plus a 13.6% surcharge (misquoted the surcharge at this meeting as 16.6%) for a total of \$5.33 per 100 c.f. In 2025, the use charge is \$6.49 per 100 c.f. plus the 13.6% surcharge for a total \$7.37 per 100 c.f., an increase of 38%. As a comparison, the City of Middletown changes its residents \$8.39 per 100 c.f. Also, Middletown's "sewer only" (flat sewer rate) is \$788.68 per year (\$197.17 per quarter). This is within \$12 of the \$800.00 per year that the WPCA is proposing.

Lake Beseck Sewer is a low pressure sewer system (sewer mains operating under pressure). A low pressure sewer system is totally dependent on pumps to move the wastewater. The WPCA's electrical expense to power these pumps for the fiscal year 2024-2025 was \$21,669.63. The operational expenses of a low pressure sewer system is much greater than a system utilizing gravity flow (open channel flow) to move the wastewater. The Lake Beseck sewer system was implemented to address the failing septic systems throughout the Lake Beseck community. Due to the terrain, a low pressure sewer system was required.

**Motion made by Greg Makuch to approve the Lake Beseck Sewer area use charge of \$800.00 per EDU (Equivalent Dwelling Unit) effective October 1, 2025, payable at \$400.00 semi-annually in October and April. 2nd by Pete Sibley. Motion carried.**

**Public Comments:** None.

**Old Business:**

- 24 Massasoit Road: the sewer lateral was disconnected on April 2, 2025. The structure (cottage) has been demolished.
- 32 Merrimack Road: pending connection to the public sewer. The sewer assessment (\$15,223.38), the connection fee (\$750.00) and the sewer permit fee (\$25.00) have been paid.
- 43 Lake Shore Drive: the sewer lateral was disconnected on March 14, 2025. The structure (house) is demolished. A site plan for the construction of a new house on this property has been reviewed by the Town.
- Update: STEAP Grant for wastewater infrastructure improvements. Tucker Mechanical submitted a base bid of \$326,200 for the Brookside Drive Pump Station which includes \$26,200 for electrical system upgrades. The bid documents had three add-alternates. Tucker Mechanical bid the add-alternates as follows: #1, the electrical transfer switch, \$11,070; #2, complete blower system replacement, \$103,150 and #3, exterior force main pipe work, \$23,960.

**New Business:**

- Started discussions regarding who should be responsible for the expense of inspections for new sewer connections.

**Report of System Repairs:**

- Duplex Grinder Pump Station #71 (2 pumps), Seneca Road. July 17, both pumps were in failure. Technicians from Williamson Pump & Motor lifted the pumps out of the basin. Both pumps were found to be clogged with cigarette butts and wipes. The technicians disassembled the pumps, removed the clogs, reassembled the pumps and reinstalled the pumps within the basin. There are 7 homes connected to this pump station, therefore it is impossible to identify the source of the cigarette butts and wipes. The Chairman drafted a letter and mailed a copy to each of the 7 homes. The cost to unclog the pumps was \$3,170.
- Other recent repairs will be discussed at the next WPCA meeting (December 3rd).

**Adjourn**

- **Motion by Bob Monthei to adjourn the meeting of September 3, 2025, 2nd by Patricia Flynn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.**

Prepared by  
Gregory P. Makuch  
WPCA Chairman