



## **Operations Committee - Board of Representatives**

Joseph Coppola, Jr., Chair

John Zelinsky, Jr., Vice Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Wednesday, June 18, 2014

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** Republican Caucus Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard

The Operations Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Coppola, Vice Chair Zelinsky and Committee Member Reps. Adams, Coppola, Mahoney, McMullen and Reeder. Absent or excused were Committee Member Reps. Buckman, Coleman and Giraldo. Also present were Rep. Ryan; Kathryn Emmett, Corporation Counsel; Michael Handler, Director of Administration; Bill Brink, Rhudean Bull and Dan Capano, WPCA.

Chair Coppola called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Committee Action</b>
1. <a href="#">O29.014</a>	REVIEW; Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company Northeast Expansion Project, upgrade of existing pipeline system 03/19/14 – Held in Committee 04/23/14 – Held In Committee 05/21/14 – Held in Committee	<b>Held in Committee</b>

Chair Coppola stated that this item would be held because Tennessee Gas was not available this month.

12. O29.019	RESOLUTION; increasing the building permit fees (commercial only). 05/07/14 – Submitted by Rep. Zelinsky 05/12/14 – Held at Steering	<b>Held in Committee</b>
-------------	--	--------------------------

Mr. DeMarco stated that he did a breakdown of the revenue created by various increases to the commercial building permit fees and did a comparison to the fees charged by neighboring towns as shown on the attached [handout](#).

Committee members discussed

- whether the neighboring towns are the appropriate comparison
  - Mr. DeMarco will provide statewide comparables

---

<sup>1</sup> Video Time Stamp 00:01:04

- whether it makes sense to increase a fee that is charged based on construction costs
- increasing building fees may create the impression that the City is unfriendly to development
- in response to questions from the Committee, Mr. DeMarco stated:
- whether the building fee would impact someone's decision to build in Stamford

<sup>23</sup>. O29.022      REVIEW; City Ordinance 200-32, Use of Public Sewers and the SWPCA's proposed enforcement efforts. **Report Made**  
05/19/14 – Submitted by Michael Handler

Chair Coppola noted that the WPCA does not need Board approval to put this policy in to place. This is an opportunity for Board members and the public to learn more about it.

Mr. Brink stated that the WPCA has prepared a letter to send to the 900 homes which are not currently connected and would be charged. He explained that:

- Under the Code §200-32, if sewer lines are available for use, residents are supposed to connect within 100 days
- Generally people choose to connect
- The WPCA wants to create an incentive for people to connect
  - It is a public health issue
  - It spreads the cost of expanding the system
- The can't charge a user charge to people who don't use the system, so they want to charge based upon typical usage, which would be \$224 every 6 months
- The charge will be semi-annual beginning in October

Committee Members discussed the following with Mr. Brink, Ms. Rhudean, Mr. Capano and Ms. Emmett:

- When the system is extended, homeowners pay 40% of their portion of the assessed value of the cost of the connection. The other 60% is absorbed by the WPCA. This pays for the capital cost of extending the sewer. It does not cover any operating costs.
- Whether homeowners who don't use the system should be charged user costs
- If all 900 homes connected, these additional connections would not cause exceedences
- The WPCA eliminated the minimum charge per household not connected to the sewer or a minimal sewer use in 2008
- This charge is only for locations with consumption usage, not demolished properties, based on consumption usage from Aquarian; these individuals are in violation of the ordinance requiring connection
- State statute permits municipalities to order individuals to connect to the sewer at their own expense
- Under the Ordinance, it is the WPCA's option whether or not to charge

---

<sup>2</sup> Video Time Stamp 00:19:23

- This is not being done for revenue reasons, the WPCA would prefer people to connect rather than pay the fee for health and safety reasons
- The WPCA may require connection at the time a house is sold
- Whether there should be a fixed charge plus a user charge
- Sewer lines are public improvements, which improve property values; if someone with a septic system allows their system to fail and pollute groundwater, this is a public health issue for their neighbors and reduces property values; the WPCA Board felt this was the least onerous way to make people connect to the system

***As Secondary Committee:***

1. [PS29.009](#) REVIEW; regarding Chapter 7, the use of CCTV cameras.  
03/05/14 – Submitted by Rep. Buckman  
04/02/14 – Held in Committee  
04/29/14 – Held in Committee  
05/22/14 – Held in Committee
2. T29.012 REVIEW; Traffic Congestion in Stamford and what is being done to correct it.  
05/30/14 – Submitted by Rep. Zelinsky

Chair Coppola encouraged people to attend these committee meetings.

Chair Coppola adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Coppola, Jr.

*This meeting is on [video](#).*