

For Immediate Release

At its June 16th meeting, the North Branford Town Council unanimously voted to approve issuance of a contract to the firm of George E. Sansoucy, P.E., LLC, of Newington, New Hampshire to perform appraisal services for the properties of the South Central CT Regional Water Authority (SCCRWA) located within the Town of North Branford. These properties are the subject of annual Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) made to the Town in accordance with the enabling State Statutes that created the Authority approximately 28 years ago.

Since early 2008, the Town Council has been engaged in discussions with the SCCRWA with the intention of mutually selecting one firm to conduct the appraisal and to determine the value of the annual PILOT payment to be made. According to Town Manager Richard V. Branigan, "When it appeared that the process was taking too much time and the potential for missing another year of valuation was becoming more and more of a reality, the Town Council determined that it needed to take action and the best course of action was to pursue the appraisal independently." It was also made clear at the meeting that ultimately, it is the Town's responsibility to properly determine the value of the assets. As such, the Council action was viewed by the members as their obligation to the taxpayers of North Branford.

He added "There is a great deal at stake here since over 35% of the Town's total lands are owned by the SCCRWA and that their PILOT payments constitute one of the single most significant sources of income to the Town. In this economy where every penny counts, the Council had no choice in pursuing the matter in this way." Mr. Branigan said that "the Council members were unanimous in their sentiment that they were only trying to do the right thing."

The Town Council plans to continue to maintain the dialogue with the SCCRWA over this and other issues of great importance to both parties and the residents of North Branford.

The firm of George E. Sansoucy was selected from a number of consulting firms that had responded to a Request for Proposals published by the Town in January. According to Mr. Branigan, "It was clear to all those reviewing the responses that the experience of this firm was extraordinary." He added that "their understanding of the issues relating to a unique asset like the Lake Gaillard Dam and its related structures was without parallel. Their ability to provide the Town with a most credible determination of real value was the key factor in their selection."

The appraisal process will be initiated as soon as possible.

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