

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 507

Approved October 20, 1992

WHEREAS, Prior to the adoption of Rhode Island Public Law 1915, Chapter 1278, all land and communities within the Pawtuxet River Valley were entitled to water from this river, and

WHEREAS, increased development led to pollution of the river, and it became necessary to secure pristine water upstream from this intensive development, and

WHEREAS, the City of Providence took the necessary steps to authorize the financing and construction of the Scituate Water Reservoir and Treatment Complex. The City has pledged its full faith and credit as security for the original and Subsequent Bond Issues, and provides operating cash to the Water Supply Board. Absent financial and operational support from the City of Providence, the Water Supply Board could not have functioned as it has over the years, and

WHEREAS, as time went on, communities outside of the Pawtuxet River Valley needed water and petitioned the legislature to secure rights to Scituate water. The legislature heard such requests, and over period of time, granted additional supplies to communities in areas outside of the Valley be entitlements rather than by contractual rights. It was anticipated that the Big River Reservoir Project would eventually "compensate" the original population within the Pawtuxet Valley for the water used, and

WHEREAS, after many rural and suburban communities experienced rapid growth, due in part to the availability of almost free and clean Scituate Reservoir water and in part due to people who were leaving the City of Providence, the state and federal governments abandoned the Big River Reservoir Project, and

WHEREAS, when the legislature determined in its 1992 legislative session that Bristol should receive up to 7.5 million gallons a day from Scituate, it decreed at the same time that the flow in the Pawtuxet River shall be maintained at 9 million gallons per day to protect the sewage disposal permits of Cranston, Warwick, Coventry and West Warwick. Task Forces were established to determine the technical feasibility of providing water to Bristol through the East Providence pipeline, and to negotiate an additional surcharge to be paid by Bristol Water Authority to East Providence for the use of their system.

WHEREAS, no mention was made of compensation to the City of Providence or its taxpayers for their investments over the years in the systems and its pipelines. Nevertheless, if the legislative extension of all these water rights were to lead to a water shortage, the people of Providence would be expected to conserve water, possibly by retrofitting their homes with water-saving fixtures and toilets at a potential cost of \$600 per household.

WHEREAS, under the current proposal everyone within the state, including water consumers of Providence, Cranston, Johnston, and North Providence will pay for maintaining and/or restoring Bristol's supply facilities through the State Water Resources Board.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Solicitor and/or the Attorney for the Water Supply Board are hereby authorized and encouraged to take any and all such legal actions as may be necessary to insure that:

- 1.) An adequate supply of water from the Scituate Reservoir is always available to the People of Providence, and
- 2.) The proprietary rights which the City of Providence, its Water Supply Board, and its taxpayers have in the water supply system are protected.
- 3.) That any excess water which is sold to other communities be sold at a rate which allows a return on the investments made by the City of Providence in its Water Supply Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the document entitled "Providence Water Supply Board Supply/Demand Analysis Position Paper" submitted by Richard O. Rafanovic, P.E., Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Water Supply Board, which formed the basis for this Resolution, shall be made part of the Permanent Records of the Committee on Finance.

IN CITY COUNCIL
 OCT 15 1992
 READ AND PASSED
James J. Petrucci
 PRES.
Michael R. Clement
 CLERK

APPROVED
 OCT 20 1992
Steven A. Coover
 MAYOR

**THE COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE**

**Approves Passage of
The Within Resolution**

Michael R. Christ
Chairman

Clerk
October 8, 1992