ANSONIA NEWS REPORT
September 2025

# Ansonia Sells WPCA for $41 Million in December

## *Only $1.8 Million Left by May; Residents Ask: "Why?"*

**ANSONIA** - The Cassetti administration pushed through the sale of the Water Pollution Control Authority, a major city asset to the Aquarion Company for $41 million in December of 2024. By May of 2025, $39 million or nearly 96% of the proceeds had already been spent by the city leaving only $1.8 million in the city treasury.

Mayor Cassetti's finance director, a fellow Republican from a neighboring town working part-time to manage a $60+ million annual budget provided a list to the Valley Independent Sentinel detailing the administration's practice of selling municipal assets to pay for current budget deficits. At the time of the budget passages by the GOP-controlled Board of Aldermen, the taxpayers were not informed that the budgets were seriously out of balance.

Kurt Miller told the Valley Independent: "We've been using one-time revenue sources to pay for recurring expenses. So essentially what we've been doing is we've been paying our mortgage with our savings account."

The Valley Independent Sentinel noted in the June 30 article: The city's use of WPCA money to bolster its operating budgets is not without critics.

It was cited as one of the reasons S&P Global Ratings downgraded Ansonia's credit outlook from stable to negative in 2024.

S&P Global Ratings issue bond ratings for municipalities. Bond ratings are essentially credit ratings, and affect how much a community can borrow and at what interest rate.

S&P Global Ratings didn't lower Ansonia's bond rating, but expressed concern about budgets relying too heavily on the WPCA money.

"The negative outlook is driven by Ansonia's plans to use one-time proceeds from the sale of $41 million of wastewater assets to fund recurring budgetary expenditures through fiscal 2030," the report stated.

Despite Miller's admission and the warnIngs from S&P Global Ratings against using one-time revenues for current operating expenses, Cassetti and Miller repeated the dangerous practice in Ansonia's current budget for Fiscal Year 25/26 which went into effect just months after the sale and the ratings agency warnings.

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>
> **- Valley Independent Sentinel, June 30, 2025**

# Ansonia's Investment Rating Downgraded Again - Twice in Six Years

## *Ratings Agency Loss of Confidence Ominous for City Taxpayers*

On December 5, S&P Global Ratings changed Ansonia's debt outlook from "stable" to "negative." The ratings downgrades indicate that the city's financial situation could deteriorate, and if it does not improve, S&P may lower the city's bond rating.

A bond rating measures the financial strength of a city. If a city has a better rating, it pays less interest when it borrows money. A worse rating means higher costs to borrow. Higher borrowing costs will ultimately lead to increased property taxes.

S&P stated that Ansonia incurred a loss in both 2022 and 2023. The city is also planning to cover its everyday expenses with money from selling its wastewater system, but this revenue is only available once, not annually. The city is doing this because its costs are growing faster than the money it collects from taxes and other sources.

"Ansonia produced operating deficits in fiscal years 2022 and 2023 and plans to use one-time revenues from the $41 million sale of its wastewater assets to fund operations in fiscal years 2025 through 2030, primarily because expenditures have grown faster than the tax levy and other revenue sources," the report says.

> **"We could lower the rating if Ansonia does not make meaningful progress toward eliminating its reliance on fund balance for ongoing expenditures."**
>
> **– S&P Report December 5, 2024: Downgrading Ansonia Investment Rating**

"We could lower the rating if Ansonia does not make meaningful progress toward eliminating its reliance on fund balance for ongoing expenditures. We could also lower the rating if lower-than-anticipated electricity revenues from the fuel cell project pressure operations or if management practices otherwise deteriorate," the report says.

S&P said it could lower Ansonia's rating if the city continues to use its savings to cover regular expenses or if it does not earn as much as expected from the new fuel cell project. Poor management could also lead to a lower rating.

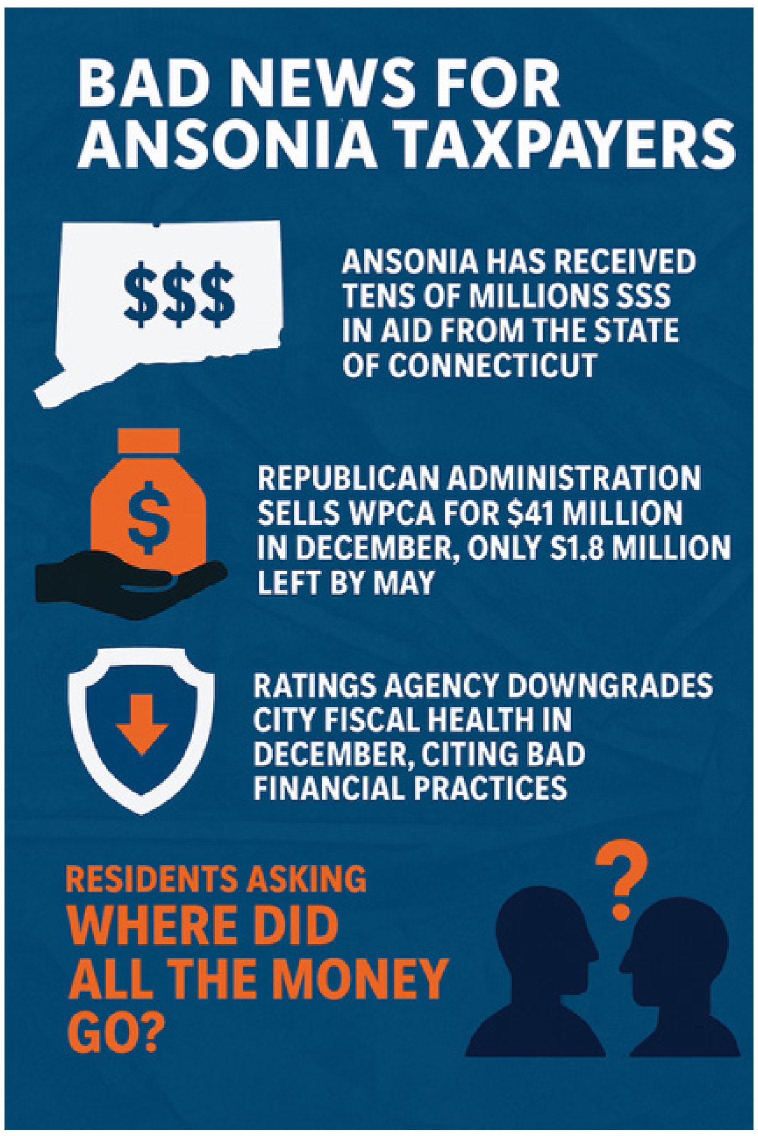
S&P's "negative outlook" label indicates that the agency is warning that the city's financial situation could deteriorate soon. If nothing changes, S&P might lower (downgrade) the city's bond rating.

If the city's finances do not improve, S&P may make borrowing money more expensive for the city by giving it a worse rating. That outcome would lead to higher interest costs when the city needs to borrow for projects or basic services.

S&P had previously downgraded Ansonia's long-term rating from AA to AA- in 2019, citing multiple years of reserve drawdowns and a decline in available fund balance from 25% to 11% over four years. This earlier downgrade also reflected concerns over the city's financial flexibility and limited forward-looking planning.

### Update

Four months later, the Republican Cassetti Administration ignored the S&P report and once again used one-time revenues in the new city budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025.




# Sewer Use Charges Climb 38% After WPCA Sale

*Ratepayers Supposedly Protected By "Stabilization Fund"*

Residential & commercial Ansonia sewer use ratepayers will suffer an initial 38% increase in the sewer use rate beginning in 2025. For the first several years, the massive rate increase will allegedly be shielded by a new "rate stabilization" fund created after the controversial sale of the Ansonia Water Pollution Control Authority to the Aquarion Water Company.

The proposed rates are:

• $5.15 per 100 cubic feet for residential customers

• $26.45 per month for flat rate customers (customers on wells)

• Additionally, a new monthly service fee will be introduced. For most residential customers, the new monthly fee is $26.45

The old rates were:

• $3.73 per 100 cubic feet for residential customers

• About $26.17 per month for flat rate customers

Aquarion itself is expected to be acquired by the Regional Water Authority pending approval by state regulators. The latter sale means that Ansonia sewer use ratepayers will be denied the ability to argue against future rate increases before either the local WPCA board of the State of Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority.

Instead, Ansonia will be represented by one member of the Regional Water Authority on the 20-person Representative Policy Board. However, the Policy Board has 101 weighted votes according to the population of the member communities. Ansonia has three votes out of the 101 total, which guarantees very little protection for Ansonia ratepayers and sewer users.

The Ansonia WPCA board was dissolved as part of the sale, which the Republican-controlled Board of Aldermen approved at the behest of Mayor David Cassetti, Corporation Counsel John Marini, and Budget Director Kurt Miller.

At the time of the sale, Cassetti and his chief Republican advisors, Marini and Miller, offered confusing explanations for the reasons behind the sale. The Valley Independent Sentinel reported in a June 26, 2024, article:

"Opponents have also pointed to a $5 million line item titled "use of future revenue" in the budget passed by the Aldermen last year. That's money the city doesn't have, but can get by doing things such as selling its sewer system to a private company.

Mayor Cassetti previously indicated that money from the Aquarion sale could serve as that 'future revenue,' though city attorney Marini and budget director Kurt Miller both said at the time that the sewer sale is unrelated.

The $5 million upfront payment from Aquarion arrives in the final days of that budget. The new budget, which includes $7.4 million in 'future revenue' and was passed by the Aldermen in May, will take effect July 1."

In a report downgrading Ansonia's financial rating, S&P Global cited the city's use of one-time revenues, such as the WPCA sale, in balancing annual budgets. The Sentinel report referred to the Fiscal Year 24-25.

Ignoring the warning from the financial analysts, Cassetti, Marini, and Miller repeated the practice of using one-time revenues again in the current budget, which took effect on July 1, 2025.

## Ansonia Sewer Use Rate Increase – After Sale to Aquarion

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# State of Connecticut Funding to Ansonia

### Includes Educational Cost Sharing & Municipal Aid

| | |
|---|---|
| FY 19: | $17,624,427 |
| FY 20: | $18,205,945 |
| FY 21: | $18,815,200 |
| FY 22: | $19,484,692 |
| FY 23: | $20,569,403 |
| FY 24: | $21,415,989 |
| FY 25: | $22,110,460 |
| FY 26: | $22,722,988 |
| FY 27: | $22,742,537 (estimated) |
| Total: | $183,691,641 |

## State Bonding & Grants for Ansonia:

### 2020

**$500,000** bonding for building demolition for a blighted eyesore at 35 North Main Street in Ansonia

### 2021

**$2,000,000** for the economic redevelopment of the Ansonia Brass site.

**$1,000,000** for the environmental clean-up of Farrell/SHW as part of planned demolition

**$1,500,000** for improvements to the James J. O'Donnell senior apartments in Ansonia

**$10,000,000** DOT funds for upgrades and modernization of the Ansonia Train Station

### 2022

**$200,000** additional funding for the remediation and demolition of the Farrell/SHW building in Ansonia

**$6,500,000** for upgrades to the bridge to Ansonia Brass

**$500,000** for the repair or demolition of the walk bridges within the Farrell site in Ansonia

### 2023

**$6,700,000** million for environmental clean-up and redevelopment of the former SHW factory site

**$2,500,000** for cleanup and demolition on the Ansonia Copper & Brass site

### 2024

**$750,000** to the City of Ansonia for one-time bailout for the City's forfeiture of Motor Vehicle reimbursement Funds

**$100,000** for Improvements to Gatison Park in Ansonia

**$500,000** for a new Ansonia Animal Shelter

**$3,500,000** for the demolition on the Ansonia Copper and Brass site

### 2025

**$200,000** to Ansonia for site assessment of 35 and 65 Main Street, the former Farrel Ansonia Facility, to determine the best future use

**$3,840,000** to Ansonia for improvements to the Naugatuck River Greenway

# Frank Tyszka Nominated for Ansonia Mayor

## *Offers Honest Budgets & Respect for All Citizens*

The Ansonia Democratic Party has nominated lifelong Ansonia resident Frank Tyszka as its candidate for mayor in the 2025 municipal election. Tyszka was nominated by his longtime friend and running mate, Town Clerk Elizabeth Lynch.

Speaking to a packed house of enthusiastic citizens, Lynch cited Tyszka's sterling qualifications for the office: "I have known Frank Tyszka since he was a star athlete at Ansonia High School. He possesses the experience and personal qualities we need at this challenging time for the Ansonia we love - toughness, decency, respect for others, and a strong financial background. He will make a great Mayor for our citizens."

Tyszka is a graduate of Ansonia High School and the United States Merchant Marine Academy. He received an MBA from the School of Business at Sacred Heart University.

Tyszka served five years at sea with the US Merchant Marines and later served as a naval officer aboard the aircraft carrier USS Lexington.

He is a former member of the Ansonia Board of Aldermen, a city fire commissioner, and a longtime police commissioner. His career in the private sector included managerial positions at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft and as a quality engineer at Sikorsky Aircraft before he retired.

Tyszka has been married for 46 years to his college sweetheart, Paula Gantomasso Tyszka. They are the parents of two grown daughters and enjoy time with their granddaughter and traveling.

He is a lifelong parishioner and Parish Council Member at St. Joseph's Church in Ansonia.

Frank is the fifth of seven children. He and two of his brothers served in the United States military. His older brother, Edward, was killed in action in Vietnam in 1969.


## Frank Tyszka

- Lifelong Resident of Ansonia
- Graduate - Ansonia High School
- Graduate - United States Merchant Marine Academy
- Veteran - United States Naval Reserve
- Officer - USS Lexington - Naval Aircraft Carrier
- MBA - Sacred Heart University - Top Student in the Program
- Elected to Two Terms - Ansonia Board of Aldermen
- Fire Commissioner
- Police Commissioner
- Shift Supervisor - Pratt & Whitney Company
- Quality Engineer - Sikorsky Aircraft
- Married for 46 years to his college sweetheart, Paula Gantomsso Tyszka
- Father of two grown daughters
- Grandfather to Ava
- Lifelong Parishioner - St. Joseph's Church in Ansonia
- Eucharistic Minister & Member, Parish Council
- All-State Halfback - Ansonia High School
- Three-year starter - Ansonia High School Baseball

# Democrats Nominate Beth Lynch & Joe Confinante for Needed Change & Reform in Ansonia

## *United Team Praised As 'Strong, Intelligent & Honest'*

Elizabeth Shortell Lynch & Joseph Confinante were unanimously nominated for Ansonia Town Clerk and City Treasurer by a packed house of enthusiastic Democrats and interested citizens at the nominating caucus in late July.

Both are lifelong residents of the city with deep family and personal ties in the community. Democratic Town Chair praised the team headed by Frank Tyszka, the party's mayoral candidate, as" strong, intelligent, and honest.

Political observers analyzed the ticket as offering broad appeal to voters due to their abilities, lifelong commitments to their community, and a deep understanding of city government.

"It's the strongest Democratic ticket in Ansonia in more than two decades. The three candidates offer deep experience with youthful energy," noted Hannon, who pointed to growing support from unaffiliated and Republican voters.

Beth Lynch is the daughter of the late Bernice & Matthew "Pop" Shortell. She has served as both Assistant and Town Clerk for most of the last 20 years and is known for providing patient and friendly service to citizens who need licenses, documents, and other city-related requests.

She has been married to Thomas Lynch for 53 years and is the mother of three adult sons and grandmother to eight young Ansonians.

Lynch is a Connecticut-certified Town Clerk and a member of the Town Clerks Association. She is a lifelong parishioner of Assumption Church in Ansonia.

While this is his first citywide candidacy for public office, Joe Confinante is no stranger to the city's government. He was a 26-year veteran of the board of Apportionment & Taxation, serving in the administrations of five mayors from both political parties.

Confinante, known for his budget expertise and bipartisanship approach to service, worked for 40 years as a logistics manager for Sikorsky Aircraft in Stratford before his retirement in 2018.

He was married for thirty years to the late Kathleen Crowley of Ansonia until her sad passing in 2010. Joe is the father of Nicole, a lawyer who works as a Senior Contracts Administrator at Sikorsky Aircraft, and Joey, a line technician for Xfinity. He is also a grandfather to three children.

Lynch and Confinante expressed enthusiasm about joining a united ticket led by Frank Tyszka. "We both have known Frank for decades and trust his strong intelligence, strength of character, and background in our city government. We will help him bring about the change and the needed fiscal reforms to get Ansonia back on track."

## Beth Shortell Lynch

- Lifelong resident of Ansonia
- 30 years of municipal government experience
- Certified Connecticut Town Clerk
- 20 years as Assistant and elected Town Clerk in Ansonia
- Noted for handling thousands of constituent requests in a kind, professional and respectful manner
- Married for 53 years to Thomas Lynch
- Mother of three grown sons – Daniel (Anne), Timothy (Lisa) and Patrick (Julie)
- Grandmother to Riley, Brendan, Molly, Benjamin, Alexa, Amelia, Carter & Ella
- Lifelong parishioner of Assumption Church

## Early Voting is Monday, October 20, - Sunday, November 2, 10 AM - 6 PM

**Tentative location is Hilltop Hose, 80 Pulaski Highway**

## <u>POLLING PLACES:</u>

**Wards 1 & 2, Ansonia Armory, 5 State Street**

**Ward 3, Holy Rosary Church, 10 Father Salemi Drive**

**Wards 4 & 5, Ansonia Middle School, 115 Howard Avenue, (rear entrance on Day Street)**

**Ward 6, John G. Prendergast School, 59 Finney Street**
**Ward 7, John C. Mead School, 75 Ford Street**

## Joe Confinante for City Treasurer

- Lifelong Ansonia Resident
- Graduate Ansonia High School
- Graduate of Sacred Heart University
- MBA in Business Management
- 1978-2018 Sikorsky Aircraft/Lockheed Martin US Navy MH-60R Logistics Manager
- Danish Navy MH-60R Program Logistics Manager
- Responsible for all Logistics Management and Operations
- Member of the Ansonia Board of Appoint ment and Taxation for 26 years spanning the terms of five Mayors from both parties
- Married to the late Kathleen Crowley for 30 years until her passing in 2010
- Two married children Nicole living in Southport CT and Joey living In Ansonia