

**WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
WORKING FINAL AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
Annex Conference Room
Charlestown Town Hall, 4540 South County Trail, Charlestown, RI 02813
July 18, 2017
6:00 PM**

Thomas M. Ferrio, Elizabeth V. Richardson, Pete Ogle, Robert D. Frost, Frederick H. Klinger, Robert Clift, Margot Willis-Doyle

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of April 26, 2017 Wastewater Management Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

IV. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible vote on whether the Wastewater Management Commission should expand its advisory purview to cover potable water and storm water, in addition to wastewater. Discussion requested by Ms. Beth Richardson.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The Public is welcome to any meeting of the Wastewater Management Commission. If communication assistance (readers/interpreters/captions) is needed or any other accommodation to ensure equal participation, please contact (711-364-1210) at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.

**Wastewater Management
Commission
April 26, 2017
Regular Meeting
~ Minutes ~
Draft**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM by Chairman Thomas M. Ferrio

II. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Robert Clift		Present	
Thomas M. Ferrio	Chairman	Present	
Elizabeth V. Richardson	Vice-Chairman	Present	
Robert D. Frost	Commissioner	Present	
Frederick H. Klinger		Present	
Peter Ogle	Commissioner	Present	

III. PRE-ROLL CALL

1. Discussion and Decision on April 2017 WWMC Meeting Date(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works)

Normally scheduled meeting to take place on Wednesday, May 10, 2017. Mr. Ferrio asked all commission members if they were available for the regularly scheduled meeting date. All commission members stated that they are available for this date. Mr. Ferrio stated that the meeting will take place as scheduled on May 10, 2017 at 6:00 PM in the Town Council Chambers.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Review and Approval of DRAFT Minutes for December 19, 2017(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works) Approved

Motion to approve the minutes of December 19, 2016.

2. Review and Approval of WWMC Regular Meeting January 11, 2017(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works) Approved

Motion to approve the minutes of January 11, 2017.

Mr. Ferrio asked for any discussion of the minutes. Ms. Richardson stated that she thinks the minutes should be amended to more closely resemble the minutes of December 19, 2017. Ms. Richardson further stated that in the December minutes there was a nice summary of the "public comments" discussion and she was puzzled why the January minutes were so "clipped". Town Solicitor, Wyatt Brochu, commented that the verbatim motions and the votes are what is required and the level of detail is "give and take". He further stated that legally, a verbatim or a stenographic record is generally not required and generally discouraged. If the commission wants that type of record, then they should consider hiring a stenographer for the meetings. Mr. Brochu stated that if someone from the public wanted correspondence included in the minutes, then the process would be for them to send the correspondence to the commission for inclusion on the agenda. The commission would then have to vote on a motion to include this correspondence in the formal public record.

Mr. Brochu further stated that his advice to the commission regarding public comments is to receive and acknowledge each public comment and if the comment regards an issue the body wants to discuss, then it should be put on a future agenda for discussion. Public Comment is not the time under the RI General Law Open Meetings Act to have an active discussion back and forth and have the commission give the public answers which means that the commission would be taking action that is not on the agenda.

V. Motion to move "NEW BUSINESS" #1 Discussion of Harbor Management Plan and Related Wastewater Issues to here in meeting.

1. Motion to move "NEW BUSINESS" #1 Discussion of Harbor Management Plan and Related Wastewater Issues to here in meeting. Approved

Jane Weidman, Town Planner, joined the meeting to discuss the Harbor Management Plan. Ms. Richardson stated that she was going through the DRAFT Harbor Management Plan and she read the bullet to "accelerate the replacement of conventional septic systems. Since 2008 approximately 35 OWTS per year have been upgraded to N-reducing technology in the Salt Ponds Watershed for a net reduction of approximately 350 pounds per year. This could be accelerated by expediting the upgrade of older conventional OWTS to N-reducing OWTS. The Town could propose several mechanisms for fostering upgrades to N-reducing OWTS." Ms. Richardson stated that she was surprised to see that and she was wondering how it got there. Mr. Dowling stated that he was asked by Jane to take part in the DRAFT of the Harbor Management Plan, (Water Quality Section) as were other Town staff, to assist in the development of the document in its entirety. Mr. Dowling stated that in just coming out of doing a ton of research as part of the application for the EPA Grant, research and compilation of data and a lot of concepts pre written as part of the grant, this was a likely start for the water quality section of the plan. Mr. Dowling wrote a draft using those documents and using information that was obtained during the commission's development of correspondence to the Town Council regarding actions that could be implemented to mitigate Nitrogen loading from septic systems. Also, he included language from the EPA Grant proposal application to use as another potential mechanism for reducing nitrogen levels in the groundwater. He gave this information to Jane.

Jane Weidman stated that the current Harbor Management Plan is out of date and they are in the process of creating a new document. By state regulation, one of the issues that has to be addressed is water quality. The other issues are Mooring Management, Storm Preparedness and Public Access. Ms. Weidman stated that the Water Quality Section from the previous plan is pretty bare bones. They looked at all the water quality issues, not only OWTS, but stormwater management, overall development, runoff into ponds, oil spills, as the plan is intended to cover every aspect of water quality in the salt ponds. She stated that she took Matt's thorough write up and incorporated it into

the plan. Ms. Weidman further explained that a document like this is a policy document and is not the same thing as an ordinance, reviewed by both RIDEM and CRMC.

Regarding the previously mentioned concern, with accelerating the placement of denitrification systems, this language put too much tension on the plan and the Town Council asked for it to be removed, explained Ms. Weidman. The DRAFT has been pulled, the Public Hearing has been stopped, they are reworking the OWTS language as well as addressing some other issues and they hope to have a new DRAFT by June to bring before a Public Hearing.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

1. Wastewater Manager's Report(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works)

The Wastewater Manager read his monthly report aloud and it will be placed on file in the Wastewater Manager's Office.

2. Town Solicitor's Report(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works)

Mr. Brochu explained the Municipal Court procedure for Wastewater related cases for the newest members of the Commission.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion of and Possible Decision Regarding Status of Hardship Waivers(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works)

Mr. Ferrio explained that one of the responsibilities of the Wastewater Management Commission has been to assist in the Cesspool Phaseout/Hardship Waiver Program. Mr. Ferrio thought that it would be informative to know where some of the outstanding Cesspool Phaseout/ Hardship Waiver Program applications stand. In talking with Mr. Brochu, Town Solicitor, he was advised not to discuss individual cases without permission from the applicant first. He asked Mr. Dowling for an overview of the program. Mr. Brochu then gave an overview of how the Cesspool Phaseout/Hardship Waiver Program developed in order to assist property owners in trying to replace their cesspools. Mr. Dowling stated that the Town currently has thirteen properties that have cesspools on them that are being managed through waivers, municipal court or administratively. Discussion ensued regarding the CSSLP loan program and the various options available to homeowners who need financial assistance to replace their cesspool.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Harbor Management Plan and Related Wastewater Issues(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works)

This item was moved on the agenda - please see above

2. New Application(Requested by Bonnie Langlois, Public Works)

Margot Willis-Doyle

3. Motion to recommend to the Town Council the appointment of Margot Willis-Doyle to the Wastewater Management Commission Approved

Ms. Willis-Doyle stated that she is semi-retired, she works part time from home. She moved here about three years ago permanently. She came from CT where there was city water and city sewer. She stated that water is big to her, she's worried about the water quality in Town and she has an interest in what's going on in the Town.

Mr. Ogle stated that she should try to take some of the courses offered at URI, that this is a good idea if she could find the time, and that Matt has a budget for this.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Steve Hoff commented on wording in the EPA grant that reads "recent shallow well-water sampling indicates that nitrate concentrations approach or exceed 10 mg in Charlestown". To him, this seems like a very strong statement. Mr. Hoff stated that he believes the Town is fairly intent in wanting to speed up replacement of traditional septic systems even if they are functioning; the Town wants to speed up putting in denite systems, and this is a very expensive thing for a homeowner to do. Mr. Hoff stated that he took sixteen databases and put them all in one batch and sorted them on a couple factors; how many parcels were tested and what percentage of those had nitrates higher than 5 mg. He went on to describe his findings in detail.

Mr. Hoff also mentioned the private well testing that the Town is doing. He stated that all this has to do with speeding up denites, he believes that is what is going on. He went on to describe the private well testing data and his findings in detail. Mr. Hoff believes that we need more testing in other areas in Town, and that by re-testing the same areas, this gives you a bigger "hit rate". Mr. Hoff believes we need more oversight on this.

Mr. Ron Meneo stated that he thinks the Wastewater Management Commission has no authority to deal with potable drinking water. The well-water testing that has been done by the Wastewater Department, originated with Matt's office and Matt, being an environmental scientist, has the authority to conduct that testing. The data that has been collected has been available to the Wastewater Management Commission without any FOIA request by the commission members. Mr. Brochu asked if Mr. Meneo was suggesting that it was inappropriate for Matt to share data with the commission. Mr. Meneo stated that he thinks there is some inconsistency in taking this data and plotting it on a map and making it available to the public and the commission, since the commission has said that it is solely within Matt's province to deal with this, being the authority on this. Mr. Ferrio stated that the commission was asked by the Town Council to comment on and make suggestions to the potable water working group.

Mr. Meneo further stated that in the DRAFT Harbor Management Plan, under the drinking water quality section, Mr. Dowling referred to "a problem with the groundwater" but that nowhere in the document was there evidence or data to support this statement. Mr. Meneo is hoping that going forward, the Harbor Management Plan would contain factual evidence to support this statement and not solely conclusory statements.

Mr. Meneo continued that there are really two issues we are concerned about as a community, one being our drinking water and the second one being the quality of our Salt Ponds and the nitrate levels. Mr. Meneo asked why we are devoting so many resources to study a problem that may not exist.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was closed at 7:32 PM

Attest:

Bonnie Langlois, Recording Secretary

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Apr 26, 2017 6:00 PM (REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES)

**Wastewater Management Commission**

Charlestown Town Hall
Charlestown, RI 02813

SCHEDULED**AGENDA ITEM (ID # 3414)**

Meeting: 07/18/17 06:00 PM
Department: Wastewater Management Commission
Category: Communication
Prepared By: Bonnie Langlois
Initiator: Bonnie Langlois
Sponsors:
DOC ID: 3414

Discussion and Possible Vote

Discussion and possible vote on whether the Wastewater Management Commission should expand its advisory purview to cover potable water and storm water, in addition to wastewater. Discussion requested by Ms. Beth Richardson.