

Wastewater Management

Commission

May 13, 2015

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

Final

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Thomas M. Ferrio

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Thomas M. Ferrio	Chairman	Present	
Elizabeth V. Richardson	Vice-Chairman	Present	
Peter Ogle	Chairman	Present	
Robert D. Frost	Commissioner	Present	
Barbara Lutzell	Commissioner	Present	

II. ROLL CALL

Also in attendance were Mr. And Mrs. Ron Meneo, Mr. Steve Hoff, Ms. Lorraine Joubert, and Town Council Liason Ms. Virginia Lee.

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Review and Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting April 8, 2015

Minutes were reviewed and approved as written.

RESULT:	APPROVED [4 TO 0]
MOVER:	Peter Ogle, Chairman
SECONDER:	Barbara Lutzell, Commissioner
AYES:	Thomas M. Ferrio, Peter Ogle, Robert D. Frost, Barbara Lutzell
ABSTAIN:	Elizabeth V. Richardson

IV. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

1. Wastewater Manager's Report

Wastewater Manager's report was received and placed on file.

RESULT:	NO VOTE TAKEN
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2. Solicitor's Report

No Solicitor's report available.

RESULT:	NO VOTE TAKEN
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V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Charlestown Potable Water Working Group

Discussion ensued regarding the last meeting held by the Charlestown Potable Water Working Group, led by Mr. Tom Gentz. Mr. Ferrio stated that presentations were made to the group and then assignments were handed out to the Planning Commission, Wastewater Commission and to an Educational Ad Hoc Group.

Several options were discussed regarding the high nitrogen levels in the Quonochontaug East Beach Public Water System, including looking for other sources of water by enlisting the help of Ken Burke of the Water Resources Board and conducting a feasibility study of tying into a Westerly water source, or tying into the large aquifers located in the Town on the north side of Route 1. Also discussed was identifying the area of concern by creating an "overlay district" to deal with potential septic system issues and the issue of the use of lawn fertilizers. The comment was made that the nitrogen in the groundwater applies to the entire Town.

Other items discussed were requiring conformance and/or monitoring of denitrification systems, and discouraging the use of lawn fertilizer. Lorraine Joubert suggested approving at the Town level, a URI certification program for lawn care providers, similar to the septic system providers certification program, which would require the lawn care providers to adhere to certain standards such as using only natural insecticides, using lime, aeration, compost and decompaction, and putting the burden on the homeowner to comply with these requirements.

Suggestion was made to look at the well head areas that have elevated nitrogen only, trying to protect the drinking water and then making a determination as to whether or not to go beyond those areas.

Mr. Ron Meneo stated that the Department of Health monitors the drinking water and questioned why the Town is using its resources for this issue. He further stated that there is no enabling legislation giving the Town the authority to intervene.

Discussion continued regarding the overlay district and requiring any new denitrification system being installed in the overlay district to use the best technology. Shallow narrow drain fields were discussed and the requirement of the 3" water table depth. No newly designed systems have been approved for general use. There are more experimental systems currently being evaluated, such as the Hydro Kinetic system. Lorraine Joubert suggested having RIDEM exert pressure on the managers of the Carmody database to provide a checklist for the IA system service providers and to have them provide analytical data on each system. Also, to pressure the IA system service providers to put this information online and to provide the homeowner with a copy of the cut sheet.

Mr. Ferrio stated that before the next meeting, he will get together with Mr. Dowling to decide where to go with this.

Ms. Virginia Lee asked how much money was left in the budget to sample areas of concern, areas of high density and that perhaps now would be the time to conduct more testing. She suggested the Wastewater Management

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Commission write a memo to the Town Council requesting that more funds be made available for additional sampling.

Mr. Meneo then reiterated that the Commission has no authority to manage the drinking water and that this issue is not within the realm of the Wastewater Ordinance.

Mr. Meneo stated that the data already exists from the 2010 study and that he does not support the use of Town resources for this. He further stated that drinking water is regulated at the State level and not the Town level. Mr. Meneo continued by stating that the real elephant in the room is treating the water, the wells, and perhaps the water systems for elevated nitrogen levels, which would be an affordable, immediate, and effective option.

Mr. Ferrio countered that he is simply responding to what he was asked to do at the Potable Water Meeting.

Mr. Steve Hoff stated that he is in support of Mr. Meneo. Mr. Hoff stated that he installed a new conventional septic system on his property in Quonochontaug several years ago and he does not support the possibility of mandating that all systems in this area, in this Public Water System area, be converted to denitrification systems in a manner faster than the state requirements.

Ms. Virginia Lee asked that an agenda item be placed on the WWMC June 2015 Agenda for a request for more funding for sampling areas of high density for high nitrogen concern.

RESULT: NO VOTE TAKEN

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was closed at 8:15 PM

Attest:

Bonnie Langlois, Recording Secretary