

NEW SHOREHAM WATER COMMISSION & SEWER COMMISSION

APRIL 19, 2010 MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

Present were WATER Commission members Chair Sandra Finizia, Vice Chair Robby Brown, Wayne Battey, Peter McNerney, Cliff McGinnes, alternates Frank Leslie and Rally Migliaccio, and District Clerk Janet Ziegler.

Present were SEWER Commission members Interim-Chair Robby Brown, Tom Doyle, Sandra Finizia, Peter McNerney, Cliff McGinnes, alternates Frank Leslie and Rally Migliaccio, and District Clerk Janet Ziegler.

Also present were Public Works Director Nancy Dodge, Finance Director A. Land, Superintendents Ray Boucher and Dave Simmons, and Attorney Elliot Taubman.

R. Brown called the meeting to order at 4:34 P.M

**SEWER DISTRICT**

1. Accept February 24, March 15 Open and Closed session Minutes. NOD absent on March 15.

**MOTION:** by R. Brown to by accept the minutes of February 24 as distributed, and that of March 15 Open and Closed sessions noting that N. Dodge was not in attendance. With no further corrections, the minutes were approved.

**MOTION:** by R. Brown to seal the March 15 minutes of the Closed Session. The motion was seconded and the vote was:  
AYE: 5 (Brown, Doyle, Finizia, McGinnes, McNerney). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

E. Taubman questioned whether the minutes could be sealed at a later time outside of the original meeting; he will contact the Attorney General's office for a clarification.

2. Finance.

- February/March Financials.

A. Lewis noted that the sewer account only had \$12K in available cash and that a spending freeze should be instituted immediately. R. Boucher said that he had a few more pumps that were ready for repairs, but that there were no other foreseeable expenses.

N. Dodge announced that there would be a meeting on April 29 with the installers of the RB Allen alarms and that costs would be known at that time; noted was that the alarm in sewer's primary pumping station in the Old Harbor has failed. At this point, sewer cannot bring anymore revenue in the door; the only alternative is to absolutely stop expenses. Sewer's revenues are not on target this year, nor were they last year. In the upcoming year the flow of and timing of expenses will be critical.

- Aging Report

The Commission discussed outstanding uncollected debts from customers and projects (allocation fees, application fees, infrastructure fees, and maintenance agreement). They asked that when the finance entertained payment plans from customers, regular payments had to be strictly enforced; if payments were skipped, the accounts need to be warned of imminent 'shut-off'.

- Review of Audited Water FY 2009. *No comments.*

3. Sewer Plant Operations.

Boucher said that there had been increased flows of 1 million gallons into the plant due to rain infiltration. Most of the plant's upgrades have been completed, however electrical improvements will be a large expense. Boucher was asked to submit capital plans for the next several years.

N. Dodge stated that confidential personnel records involving physicals, background checks etc. needs to be kept at Town Hall and asked that Boucher supply the recent documents on the new employee.

- Update Roof Repairs, Alarm Status.

The roof patch has been repaired and the entire roof sprayed with fire retardant. The only alarm not installed is at Champlin's.

- Improvements for Generators and Roof.

Geremia's office is preparing application documents to submit to USDA for a sewer grant/loan this fall. Distributed at the meeting was a draft of the Electrical Study (from Geremia's office) which will be submitted to USDA as part of the preliminary engineering report. Phases 1 and 2 would be executed in the beginning of the low flow season when the plant is on the BIPCO power grid; phase 3 would be completed during the next high flow season when the plant is isolated from BIPCO and the final phases, 4 and 5, would be executed in the following low flow season.

#### 4. OWTS (On-site Wastewater Treatment System) Inspections.

Because of the high water tables on Block Island, the Wastewater Management Inspector reported finding many systems now in jeopardy and in need of being pumped or, worse, becoming a failed system.

#### 5. Correspondence.

- March 22, Notice of a tank failure from the Wastewater Management Inspector.
- April 9, Letter and invoice to homeowner for emergency repair of their private sewer line and suggestions for changes.

#### 6. Announcements and Open Forum.

N. Dodge noted that an extraordinary number of small black plastic circles had been found on Block Island beaches recently; the origin appears to have come from a Groton/New London Connecticut wastewater treatment facility, that was flooded by the recent rains, and released about one million gallons into the Thames River.

### **WATER DISTRICT**

#### 7. Accept February 24, March 15, March 31 Minutes.

**MOTION:** S. Finizia to by accept the minutes of February 24, and March 15 open (noting that N. Dodge was not in attendance) as distributed. With no further corrections, the minutes were approved.

#### 8. Finance.

- February/March Financials, Aging Report.

A. Land stated that looking at revenues verses expenses, everything looks stable. She warned that water needs to look carefully at expenses through June, but the situation was not a dire as sewer's position.

- Aging Report. Collections remain a on going problem with finance.
- Review of Audited Water FY 2009. *No comments.*

#### 9. Water Plant Operations.

Simmons reported that the Archeological Survey of the Ocean Avenue/Trims Pond area did not find significant artifacts; the findings act as a clearinghouse to move forward with engineering plans to extend the water main on Ocean Avenue and West Side Road.

Issues were reported with well #5 and # 6; electrical problems on #5 are moving in a positive direction, but #6 is indicating failing casings which need to be addressed in the next five years.

The main production water meter was changed recently; the new numbers indicate a 45% decrease in production. Since the plant is in the low production time of the year, the numbers will be carefully scrutinized before comparing them with other years.

#### 10. Correspondence.

- April 1, Letter from Sand Farm Homeowners Association regarding potential trespass.

#### 11. Announcements and Open Forum. *none*

#### 12. Sands Pond Information and Mitigation Strategy; May go into Closed Session Pursuant to § 42-46-5(a)2.

**MOTION:** by S. Finizia to move the agenda item to the end of the meeting. The motion was seconded and the vote by water commissioners was unanimous.

**JOINT MEETING WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT.**

13. Report on Inquiry for Energy Grant.

E. Taubman stated that he was waiting for the Electrical Report before moving onward with the question of feasibility.

14. Finance

- Schedule for Water/Sewer FY 2011 Budgets.

A. Land said that the first draft of the next budgets could be ready by May 6 if the Commissioners wanted to schedule a special meeting. A poll will be taken of each Commissioner’s schedule to determine a meeting date.

(A. Land leaves at 6:11 PM)

15. Recommendations for Appointments to Water Commission & to Sewer Commission.

**MOTION:** by Water Commissioner R. Brown to recommend to Town Council the reappointment of S. Finizia and C. McGinnes as full members and R. Migliaccio and F. Leslie as alternates. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote was unanimous.

**MOTION:** by Sewer Commissioner R. Brown to recommend to Town Council the reappointment of S. Finizia and C. McGinnes as full members and R. Migliaccio and F. Leslie as alternates. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote was unanimous.

16. Correspondence.

- April 13, Copy of Proposed Amendment to New Shoreham Zoning Ordinance.

17. Consider Responses to Water/Sewer Bids Received for FY-2011: Legal Services.

May Go Into Closed Session Pursuant to § 42-46-5(a)1 to discuss job performance, character, or physical or mental health of a person.

In a general discussion of reviewing cost of services from the responders, the Water and Sewer Commissioners agreed to narrow the choices down to Chris D’Ovidio and Blake Filippi and asked that interviews be set up at the same time that the draft budget were reviewed. E. Taubman requested that the Commissioners vote to go into Closed Session to discuss his job performance and that he had received written notice of his rights. The Commission will take up the possible Closed Session at the end of the meeting.

Water District Item moved to end of meeting.

12. Sands Pond Information and Mitigation Strategy; May go into Closed Session Pursuant to § 42-46-5(a)2.

**MOTION:** by Water Chair S. Finizia to go into Closed Session pursuant to RI Open Meetings Laws to discuss mitigation strategy since disclosure at this premature time may lead to litigation. The Town’s First Warden Kim Gaffett and Town Manager, present in the audience, were invited to attend. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote to go into closed session was:

AYE: 5 (Battey, Brown, Finizia, McGinnes, McNerney). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Water Commissioner S. Finizia to also include in the Closed Session agenda item #17 Legal Service and Taubman’s job performance. The motion was seconded, a quorum of Water Commissioners was present and the vote for Closed Session was:

AYE: 5 (Battey, Brown, Finizia, McGinnes, McNerney). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Sewer Commissioner R. Brown to also include in the Closed Session agenda item #17 Legal Service and Taubman’s job performance. The motion was seconded, a quorum of Sewer Commissioners was present and the vote for Closed Session was:

AYE: 5 (Brown, Doyle, Finizia, McGinnes, McNerney). NAY: Ø. ABSTAIN: Ø.

The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned into closed session at 6:23 PM.

The open meeting was reconvened at 8:50 PM.

R. Brown reported that no votes were taken in closed session.

**MOTION:** by Sewer Chair R. Brown to seal the minutes of the Closed Session. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote to seal the minutes was:

AYE: 5 (Brown, Doyle, Finizia, McGinnes, McNerney). NAY: ∅. ABSTAIN: ∅.

The motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Water Chair S. Finizia to seal the minutes of the Closed Session. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote to seal the minutes was:

AYE: 5 (Battey, Brown, Finizia, McGinnes, McNerney). NAY: ∅. ABSTAIN: ∅.

The motion carried.

**MOTION:** by R. Brown to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded, a quorum was present and the vote to adjourn was approved unanimously by all Sewer and Water members present.

The meeting adjourned at 8: 52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janet Ziegler, District Clerk  
Approved: May 19, 2010



every drop counts