

Minutes of the April 4, 2014 Meeting  
Warwick City Council Sewer Review Commission

**THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS. FOR COMPLETE MEETING AUDIO MINUTES GO TO:**

**[http://www.warwickri.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&catid=196:sewer-review-commission&id=1264:sewer-review-commission](http://www.warwickri.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&catid=196:sewer-review-commission&id=1264:sewer-review-commission)**

Meeting was called to order by Councilman Ed Ladouceur, Chairman at approximately 12:40 PM in the conference room at the Warwick Sewer Authority.

Commission members present:

Councilman Ed Ladouceur, Chairman

Representative Frank Ferri, District 22

James Boyd, RI Coastal Resources Management Council

Michelle Komar, Chairman's Citizen Appointment

Topher Hamblett, Save The Bay

Steve Sylven, Warwick Sewer Authority Board

William Russo, Advisor to Committee/Designee of the Mayor's Office

Members not present: Councilman Joe Gallucci, Vice Chairman, Mark Carruolo, Mayor's Chief of Staff, Angelo Liberti, RI Department of Environmental Management, Peter Ginaitt, Warwick Sewer Authority Board, David Picozzi, City of Warwick Department of Public Works Director, Doug Harris, Narragansett Indian Tribe, Senator William Walaska, District 30, Ernie Zmyslinski, City of Warwick Finance Director, Aaron Guckian, Warwick Sewer Authority Board

Also present: Janine Burke, WSA Executive Director

The Chair read a message from Mark Carruolo on behalf of the Mayor, appointing Bill Russo as his designee and representative to the Commission for this one meeting.

**10 Minute Open Microphone Session**

Don Fife: Introduced Fran who he had mentioned at the last meeting as a good example of a hardship case.

Fran Allin: Said she already had sewers, got them about a year ago. She said her sewer assessment was \$13,200 and she understood that cost was now \$20,000 to \$30,000. She asked why there was such a big difference? She said she had a grinder pump and asked if every house has a grinder pump? She mentioned she was a Gaspee Point resident. She said she was not a "happy camper". She said she was a widow, 81-years old. She said after she connected her utility bill went from \$30 to \$90 a quarter.

Mr. Fife reiterated this was a hardship case and that no one was happy with the cost of sewers.

**April 2<sup>nd</sup> Minutes**

Draft minutes were distributed at the meeting. The chair tabled approval of these minutes to the next meeting.

## **Discussion – Grinder Pumps**

None.

## **Discussion – Cesspool and Septic System Inspection Guidelines**

None.

## **Discussion in Regards to Enabling Legislation**

Discussion resumes using the updated working document dated 4/3/2014.

Ms. Komar asked if the penalty provisions at Line 609 was introducing a double penalty with the connect capable fee. Ms. Burke said it was WSA's intent to only assess one or the other. Ms. Boyd pointed out that it was not creating a new situation as Lines 610-611 were already in the existing enabling legislation.

The provisions and recommended language for Section 2.17 B were reviewed again. There was a lengthy discussion about the necessity or value of Section 2.17 C but the general group consensus was to leave it in. Mr. Hamblett urged review by a lawyer to make sure it didn't undermine the other provisions as drafted.

Ms. Komar again expressed her opposition to Section 2.17 B Subsections 1 through 4. She said people should be allowed to choose when they want to connect to sewer. Mr. Boyd made the point that Section 2.17 B with the mandatory connection schedules would be the biggest challenge and suggested the group have alternative deadlines for discussion while maintaining Section 1 for cesspools.

The group discussed the WSA's proposed addition of Section 2.26 regarding other powers which was intended to address implementation of a wastewater management ordinance but was perceived to be a "power grab" by the WSA. Mr. Boyd pointed out that State law already authorizes every municipality to adopt wastewater management ordinances. Ms. Burke cautioned that the WSA enabling legislation did not give WSA authorities related to the implementation of non-sewer related programs. It was suggested the City Council could delegate that authority to the WSA via resolution. There was general agreement to delete this section.

The group finalized the suggested language for the Effective Date starting at Line 719 to state "This legislation shall become effective upon passage. The WSA shall adopt rules and regulations within one (1) year thereafter in accordance with this Act."

Representative Ferri made a motion to approve the proposed changes to the enabling legislation, having been discussed and refined by the Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Russo. Commission members Ladouceur, Ferri, Hamblett, Sylven and Russo voted in favor. Mr. Komar was opposed. Mr. Boyd abstained.

The Chair thanked the group and reminded everyone that the WSA enabling legislation was scheduled to be discussed at the City Council meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup> and expected all Commission members to attend.

The next Commission meeting dates were scheduled for April 10<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM at the offices of the Warwick Sewer Authority.

Councilman Ladouceur adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:10 PM.