

Draft minutes for Warwick Sewer Authority Review Commission

Thursday, October 23, 2013

Warwick City Hall, Lower Level Conference Room

Attendance: Ed Ladouceur, Joseph Gallucci, Michelle Komar, Jim Boyd, Peter Ginaitt, Aaron Guckian, Angelo Liberti, Jane Austin, Joanne Cournoyer, Janine Burke, John Murphy (NEIWPCC)

Meeting convened at 8:05 AM by Chairman Ladouceur

No public comment offered.

Roll was taken. John J. Murphy, Environmental Engineer, from New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) was introduced by Janine Burke. Murphy has agreed to serve as the moderator for the public meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 30th. Murphy provided the commission with information about NEIWPCC, as well as his background and experience in facilitation. He reviewed the types of ground rules typically put in place to insure that all opinions are heard, discussion stays on topic and decorum maintained. Commission members offered comments and additional suggestions. No formal time limits to be enforced but the members of the public are to be asked to sign-in, be brief (1 -2 minutes) and avoid repetition. Murphy offered to serve as a scribe, making note of the comments and issues during the meeting.

The Commission members then worked on finalizing the agenda itself for the October 30th meeting. Information to be presented includes:

- Overview of activities of Commission,
- Description of the two funding decisions pending before the City Council,
- Description of the city's wastewater treatment infrastructure,
- Comparability of sewers to septic system replacement in terms of installation and maintenance costs,
- Anticipated timing of sewer construction,
- Availability of RI Clean Water Finance Agency (RICWFA) funding,
- The difference between revenue bonds and general obligation bonds,
- The benefits of sewerage,
- The problems associated with cesspools and failed systems, and
- The differences in treatment afforded by various on-site systems and wastewater treatment plant.

The importance of providing specific information on full costs for individual property owners was stressed, including assessments for construction, on-going usage rates, plus any costs associated with tying in, maintaining grinder pumps, etc.

Commission members noted the importance of describing the on-going activities of the Warwick Sewer Authority (WSA) to strengthen the systems operational and financial health, as well as the importance of continuing cooperation between the Warwick Sewer Authority, the City Council, the Mayor's Office, and the City's State legislators. The commission discussed the handing of questions regarding the enabling legislation and efforts to improve the equitability of the WSA's assessment and rate setting policies. The

enabling legislation will be the focus of further discussion by the WSA Board and the Commission with the goal of recommending changes to the City Council by December 2013.

The Commission set the sequence of topics and rough timing for the meeting as follows:

- Introduction and overview by Chairman Ladouceur (10 minutes)
- Need for and benefits of wastewater treatment and sewers (Boyd, Austin and Liberti) (10 minutes)
- Warwick Sewer Authority presentation on WSA activities and projects (Burke, Ginaitt, Guckian) (10 minutes)
- Comments by Councilman Gallucci and Mayor's Office
- Question and Answer Period facilitated by John Murphy (NEIWPCC)

The Warwick Sewer Authority will also be setting up and staffing tables to provide information on particular project areas, financing and general sewer authority operations. At table will be provided for information on the archaeological significance of the areas being considered for sewerage.

The importance of the hearing in providing information to the public and for informing the subsequent discussion and consideration of the recommendations of the Commission was noted.

The Commission scheduled its next meeting for Monday, October 28th at 8:00AM at City Hall for a dry run for the public meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM.