

Minutes of the November 12, 2013 Meeting
Warwick City Council Sewer Review Commission

The meeting was called to order by Councilman Ed Ladouceur, Chairman at 3:20 PM at the Warwick Sewer Authority Building.

Councilman Ladouceur welcomed the Commission members and roll call was taken.

Commission members present:

Councilman Ed Ladouceur, Chairman

Councilman Joe Gallucci, Vice Chairman

Mark Carruolo, City of Warwick Mayor's Chief of Staff (Arrived after start of meeting)

Aaron Guckian, Warwick Sewer Authority Board, Chairman (Arrived After start of meeting)

Angelo Liberti, RI Dept. of Environmental Management Appointment

Jane Austin, Save The Bay Appointment

Michelle Komar, Chairman's Citizen Appointment

Members not present: David Picozzi, City of Warwick Dept. of Public Works Director and

Doug Harris, Narragansett Indian Tribe, Representative Frank Ferri, District 22, Senator William

Walaska, District 30, Ernie Zmyslinski, City of Warwick Finance Director, James Boyd, RI

Coastal Resources Management Council Appointment

Also present: Janine Burke, Executive Director of the Warwick Sewer Authority (WSA)

There was no quorum present at that time, so the Commission members informally reviewed minutes to collect corrections and edits provided in advance of the meeting in preparation for formal consideration. Chairman Ladouceur informed the members that Senator Walaska had been prevented from attending recent meeting due to illness.

Roy Dempsey, a member of the public, asked on behalf of the members of the public present that the Commission members listen to public comment while they awaited a quorum. Commission members completed informal review of outstanding minutes and members of the public were invited to speak. Members of the public commented on the following topics:

- Concern expressed about potential loss of long-time home by elderly mother and caretaker aunt. Commented on public meeting of 10/30/2013: timing the night before Halloween and at dinner time it was hard for families; presentations were long and repetitive, considered it a tactic to conceal the financial impact, competed with the Red Sox. Challenged any perception that significant number of attendees were in favor of sewers. Cited real estate and demographic information on unsold homes in areas of Warwick, financial distress of lower and middle income residents and the need for a better way to handle the costs. (Lois Graydon)
- Asked about response to Letter from Senator McCaffrey, current level of WSA debt, said most people opposed because of costs, stated that newspaper reports of support erroneous (Don Fife)
- Cited high levels of mortgage delinquencies as evidence of financial distress, expressed concern about the 12% rate increase tied to the upgrade, expressed hope that commission does best to inform homeowners and taxpayers of impact and costs; Estimated that 80% of attendees at public meeting were opposed. Noted that unemployment is high and people are hurting. (Eugene Nadeau)

- Pointed to Lois Graydon as typical of hard-pressed opponents to sewers. Everyone wants sewers – if they can afford it. Reported on activities and concerns in Ward 2. Said didn't know the answer, but that money has to come from somewhere. Was sorry for the coastal residents, but said that they were unusual. We all want a clean Bay. (Roger Durand)
- Cost the issue. Questions the benefits of the Phosphorus upgrade at the three Pawtuxet plants. Asked for review by DEM before proceeding. Objected to extrapolating from the single example provided at the prior meeting by City Public Works Director, David Picozzi, on the impact of failing systems. Suggested that city utilize newly hired stormwater engineer to identify other approaches. (Roy Dempsey)
- Said that 100% of Ward 2 residents are opposed to any new projects and area would implode they were pushed through. (Lorraine Miller)

Mark Carruolo and then Aaron Guckian joined the meeting and quorum was reached.

Commission members reviewed the edits to past meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Jane Austin and seconded by Mark Carruolo to approve the minutes as amended for August 14, August 15, September 4, September 13, September 19, September 26, October 3 and October 10. Motion approved 7 – 0.

Michelle Komar informed Commission members that she had voted in error on during the November 7 meeting on the motion to recommend passage of PCO-21-13 and PCO-23-13. She suggested several factors that contributed to the error, described her steps to inform Chairman Ladouceur and asked that the minutes be amended to reflect her opposition to the motion. Chairman Ladouceur noted that he had referred Komar to Harrington (Legal Counsel) and had contacted Harrington himself. The Commission members discussed what, if any, action could be taken at this point. It was agreed that the minutes could not be amended because they had to reflect the vote cast at the time. The possibility of entertaining a motion to reconsider was discussed, but it was noted that the subject of the vote was not on the agenda for the meeting which precluded any action during the meeting. Ladouceur said he would put the topic on the next agenda and review the matter further with Harrington. Komar asked to be given time to review the tapes of the November 7 meeting before the minutes were approved. Komar also noted that she had a question regarding a topic that came up in discussion with Burke after the meeting. Komar asked where the funding for the plant upgrade included in the current 12% rate increase had gone.

A motion was made by Councilman Gallucci and Carruolo to delay consideration of the November 7, 2013 minutes to provide additional time for review. The motion was approved 7 – 0.

Commission members discussed how best to inform the City Council members of Komar's current position regarding passage of the ordinances. The possibilities such as attaching a statement written by Komar to the one page report of the Commission, a public statement by Komar at the meeting, or an e-mail from Komar to City Council members as well as a report by the Commission Chairman to the Council were discussed. Concerns were expressed that a dissenting opinion without the context of a written statement for the majority would undermine the work of the Commission. A consensus was reached that Chairman Ladouceur would make a simple statement at both the finance committee and full council meeting reporting on Komar's

opposition to the motion recommending passage of the two ordinances. It was noted that Komar could make additional comments during the public comment period.

Commission members reviewed anticipated handling of Ordinances at the committee and Council level, including handling of public comment. Gallucci anticipated some opposition in the O'Donnell area based on cost estimates; but cited the Crown Plaza Proposal as similar situation and felt need to "bite the bullet". Ladouceur pointed out that the alternatives were not free for anyone and need to act in the best interests of the City.

[Aaron Guckian left to attend a class.]

Commission returned to the topic of notifying the Council of Komar's vote, reviewed the planned statement and expected procedure. The importance of keeping the Commission in sync was noted by all.

The next Commission meeting date is scheduled for November 19th at 8:00 AM in the Lower Conference Room at Warwick City Hall.

Motion made by Austin and Gallucci to adjourn was approved. Councilman Ladouceur adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:40 PM.