

**Wastewater Management  
Commission  
February 13, 2018  
Regular Meeting  
~ Minutes ~  
Draft**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. ROLL CALL**

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Thomas M. Ferrio	Chairman	Present	
Elizabeth V. Richardson	Vice-Chairman	Absent	
Robert Clift	Commissioner	Present	
Robert D. Frost	Commissioner	Present	
Frederick H. Klinger	Commissioner	Present	
Margot Willis-Doyle	Commissioner	Present	

**III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1. Approval of November 8, 2017 Wastewater Management Commission Regular Meeting Minutes**

Minutes of November 8, 2017 were approved as written.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Frederick H. Klinger, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Margot Willis-Doyle, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Ferrio, Clift, Frost, Klinger, Willis-Doyle
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Elizabeth V. Richardson

**IV. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS**

**1. Wastewater Manager's Report**

The Wastewater Manager's Report was read aloud and is available on file in the Wastewater Manager's Office.

**2. Town Solicitor's Report**

There was no new information to report at this time.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Discussion and Potential Action Regarding Continuing Education for Town Approved OWTS Service Providers**

The Town has been approving, under the ordinance, septic system inspectors for the past fifteen years or so. They have had to complete the Inspector 100 course from the University of Rhode Island, fill out an application, and have a one million dollar (\$1,000,000) liability insurance policy on file. Once approved, they are given the policies and procedures for doing septic system inspections in Charlestown. Over the past ten years, we have been working with inspectors over time but we have been noticing that a subset of these inspectors are not conducting these inspections to our standards. We see some lackadaisical reporting, some issues with understanding the complete inspection protocol, we see mixed results from different inspectors; there are some issues with continuity of how the inspections are done between different companies, some issues being quite substantial.

The Commission discussed the feasibility and potential framework of a conceptual policy that would require all of the approved conventional septic system inspectors to retake the Inspector 100 course at URI. The course material has changed over time with research that is continuously being done at URI and elsewhere.

The Town currently lists 48 Town Approved OWTS Inspectors representing 31 septic system servicing companies. Inspectors are Town approved according to Ordinance 210-8.1(D) and 210-8.1E (1) (b). All Town Approved OWTS inspectors are initially required to take the URI New England On-site Wastewater Training Program (NEOWTP) course INSP-100A and INSP-100B to be approved as a Town provider. According to the Town records 80% of our inspectors took that training greater than 10 years ago and 60% took the course greater than 15 years ago. The understanding of OWTS has improved in the time the course has been offered and new data and findings are incorporated into the course as research is published, much of which is conducted by our local experts and students at URI. There are currently no state certifications or educational requirements in RI for septic system inspectors, and no RI communities currently require any continuing education requirements for septic system inspectors.

The discussion topic looked at the necessity and feasibility of requiring all Charlestown Town Approved conventional OWTS Inspectors to complete one 8-hour inspector training course at the RI New England On-site Wastewater Training Program (NEOWTP), either INSP-100A and INSP-100B before December 2018 and then possibly one additional class every two years. As RIDEM requires four continuing education units per year for all RIDEM licensed septic system designers Class 1 through Class IV, these NEOWTP courses are approved by RIDEM for 2 to 4 CEUs depending on topic and course contact time. Town approved inspectors who are also designers could use the INSP 100 course as RIDEM CEUs.

Several purposes could be served by implementing this proposal, to include, bringing inspectors up to date, mitigating bad inspection habits, maintaining continuity of inspections, assisting with identifying poorly functioning systems,

bringing Charlestown on parity with Massachusetts Inspectors, and providing property owners with the best possible service.

Further discussion ensued regarding Town of Charlestown OWTS Inspectors and Continuing Education. This proposal or something similar could get all of the inspectors on the same page, get them all the newest information that has been included in these classes over the years. Mr. George Loomis of the NEOWTP voiced support of this concept and he is willing to provide any classes that will support this program. Mr. Clift stated that he thinks there should be a focus on accountability on the part of the inspector. Mr. Frost stated that he thinks the homeowner should be notified one year prior to when their inspection is coming due. Mr. Dowling stated that the Town already notifies property owners when their systems are coming due and any further correspondence would likely not be feasible. Mr. Klinger stated that the due date of the next inspection is on the copy of the inspection report and the homeowner needs to be diligent. Mr. Ferrio stated that the inspector oftentimes sends out reminder cards to the homeowner. Mr. Dowling presented a draft letter to the Approved OWTS Providers for review by the commission members.

Attorney Petrarca commented that he had spoken with Attorney Brochu about this proposal and that they would like the Commission to decide as a group what they would like to see and that he and Attorney Brochu would work on applicability under existing ordinance. Discussion ensued regarding the frequency of classes. Mr. Ferrio stated that he sensed a general agreement (or lack of disagreement) with the concept of continuing education, and that it is more a matter of how to phase it in and how frequent the class requirements would be. There was a general consensus among the commission members. Margot Willis -Doyle thought that perhaps every two years was too frequent, perhaps it should be every three years. Mr. Ferrio stated that just for now, the requirement could be for everyone who had the class more than ten years ago to retake Inspector Course 100A and 100B. Mr. Clift, Mr. Klinger, and Ms. Margot Willis-Doyle thought this was fair. Mr. Frost stated that taking the Inspector 100A and 100B every 5 years seems fair. Mr. Ferrio concluded that he thinks for the first cycle through this proposal, (and due before December 31, 2019) everyone would have to take INSP 100A and INSP 100B. After this, in every 5 year cycle, each inspector would need to have 8 CEUs (2 courses) chosen from a provided list of courses that would be considered appropriate. Mr. Ferrio stated that what he anticipates doing is sending Mr. Dowling and the legal team (Attorneys Brochu and Petrarca) the information gathered here tonight for consideration of what would be acceptable within the Wastewater Ordinance. This proposal could then be later presented to the commission for future discussion. There was no vote taken tonight.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was closed at 7:15 PM

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Attest:

Bonnie Langlois, Recording Secretary