



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
Water Resources Board Corporate
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PUBLIC DRINKING WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

July 25, 2006

Members Present:

Robert Griffith
Frank Perry
William Stamp
Elizabeth Scott
June Swallow

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Juan Mariscal
William Riverso
Beverly O'Keefe
Romeo Mendes

Guests:

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Griffith called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present.
- 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** With a motion by Ms. Scott, seconded by Mr. Stamp, the minutes of the June 27, 2006 meeting were approved.

3. ITEMS FOR ACTION:

A. RI PUBLIC DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM - PHASE III:

- (1) Quonset Development Corporation – Watershed/Wellhead Protection Projects – Conservation Easement Projects in the Towns of East Greenwich and North Kingstown - Request for Eligibility Approval**

Mr. Griffith introduced the item. Mr. Riverso reviewed QDC's fund status and recent land project submittals and status. He reported that QDC would like to revisit these two land acquisition projects one in East Greenwich, the other in North Kingstown seeking eligibility approval. He reported that QDC's intentions for both projects. They would be granted a conservation easement whereby QDC will be named in the Deed under the Conservation Easement, both projects are consistent with their approved Wellhead Protection Plan and the acreage associated with the easement will be a portion of the total

acreage as determined by the appraised value. Also, they will commit approximately \$103,000.00 to one land acquisition project. He reported that QDC has had numerous follow up conversations with the Town Planners of North Kingstown and East Greenwich regarding viability of these projects. Mr. Riverso described both projects and recommended approval.

Ms. Swallow asked for clarification on the East Greenwich project if it is within the Wellhead area. Mr. Riverso reported it was 9,000 feet from the wellhead but within the recharge area. Ms. Scott stated that although this project may aid one or more supply wells in the area, it is not benefiting QDC's well. She stated that QDC should be targeting properties that would benefit their well. Mr. Stamp asked if this property was privately owned. Mr. Riverso stated yes. Mr. Griffith asked if all the land in the recharge area is privately owned. Mr. Riverso stated yes. Mr. Griffith asked if there were any other efforts to protect recharge area land through purchase of development rights or conservation easements. Mr. Riverso stated that according to QDC these are the only projects that have come forward. Mr. Stamp asked for clarification from Ms. Scott regarding valuation of the project. She stated that the property although shown on the map as being partly in the recharge area, it still has no connection to the water that is captured for QDC's well. Further discussion ensued regarding intent of program. Mr. Mariscal stated that future rules and regulations may be needed to clarify intentions. Ms. Scott stated that the North Kingstown project is directly connected to QDC's well but the East Greenwich project is not. Mr. Griffith stated this being the case then a motion to approve the North Kingstown project and rejecting the East Greenwich project is in order. The motion was moved by Ms. Scott and seconded by Ms. Swallow, the committee approved the motion.

B. WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT PLANS (WSSMP):

(1) United Water Rhode Island (UWRI) – WSSMP 30-Month Interim Report – Request for Approval

Mr. Griffith introduced the item. Ms. O'Keefe reported UWRI's WSSMP was approved on September 9, 2003 subject to four items. UWRI submitted responses to the "subject to" items, which was then approved by the Board on September 14, 2004. The Board recommended additional information on supply augmentation with a time schedule, and an updated water quality protection component be submitted by UWRI with the Thirty-Month Interim Report (Report). Ms. O'Keefe stated UWRI submitted their Report on March 8, 2006 which was distributed for agency review and comment. She reported RIDEM submitted agency review comments requesting additional water quality protection and source augmentation information. Ms. O'Keefe reported she had completed review of the Report and found UWRI's responses were adequate meeting basic requirements. She recommended approval of the report.

Ms. Scott questioned the failure to update the water quality protection section of the plan as previously requested by the Board. Ms. O'Keefe stated in her opinion the information was minimal but adequate. Ms. Scott stated the information addressed supply augmentation but not the full requirements of a water supply protection plan. Ms. Scott stated UWRI was asked to prepare a water quality protection component and the Report should not be

approved unless UWRI submits the required information. Ms. Swallow agreed with Ms. Scott stating UWRI is one of two water systems the RIDOH sees detections of pesticides. Discussion ensued. Ms. Swallow commented the water suppliers have been instructed on how to update their water quality protection plans. Ms. O'Keefe stated she would do what the Board asks. Mr. Griffith noted the consensus seems to be that we do not approve of the report and find the responses inadequate regarding UWRI's water quality protection plan. He polled the committee. Discussion ensued regarding needed clarification of a system knowing how to handle updates of these plans. Mr. Griffith suggested tabling this item to the next meeting. He asked staff to get together with RIDEM and RIDOH to manage the specific solution for this item and clarify procedures for the future. A motion to table the item was moved by Mr. Perry and seconded by Mr. Stamp, the committee approved the motion.

(2) City of Woonsocket Water Division (WWD) – WSSMP 30-Month Interim Report (Report) – Request for Extension Approval

Mr. Griffith introduced the item. Ms. O'Keefe reported Ms. Carol Lariviere, Superintendent of WWD contacted staff on July 11, 2006 and requested a time extension to prepare and submit the Report. Ms. Lariviere stated was unaware the report was due, asked for an extension, and followed up with a letter requesting a 90-day extension. Ms. O'Keefe stated a consultant has been hired to complete the report who has also contacted staff. Mr. Griffith asked if Ms. O'Keefe knew the status of any "subject to" items. Ms. O'Keefe believed there weren't any. A motion to approve the extension was moved by Mr. Perry and seconded by Mr. Stamp, the committee approved the motion.

(3) Town of Johnston Water Control Facility (JWCF) – WSSMP 30-Month Interim Report (Report) – Recommendation for Action – Finding of Non-Compliance

Mr. Griffith introduced the item. Ms. O'Keefe reported the original plan was approved on July 8, 2003 with six "subject to" items. She stated at that time, JWCF was also required to submit a 15-month progress report addressing the six items, which was submitted and accepted by the Board on December 14, 2004. She reported the Report was due on December 24, 2005, and, after an approved extension request, was received March 9, 2006 and distributed for agency review.

She reported the submitted Report is brief and omits the required information as specified per the Rules and Procedures. Also, it is difficult to determine if any progress has been made in accomplishing the "subject to" items. She added review comments submitted by both the RIDEM and RIDOH noted the failure to provide the required dated information and data in an acceptable format. She recommended a finding of "non compliance" be made. She requested JWCF submit a replacement report no later than December 6, 2006. She noted that George Corrente had retired. A motion for a finding of Non-Compliance was moved by Ms. Swallow and seconded by Ms. Scott. As part of the motion Mr. Griffith asked that a letter be sent to the mayor's office and that a progress report be submitted in 60 days. The motion also included a request that a representative of JWCF appear before the Board. The committee approved the motion. Mr. Stamp asked if there has been any discussion on why they are not getting things together in an orderly fashion. Mr. Perry responded by providing a brief history on the Board's work with the JWCF.

4) ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

A. HUNT RIVER ISSUES:

Mr. Griffith introduced the item. Mr. Mariscal provided an updated on issues regarding the Hunt River. He reported one issue concerned the installation of remote read meters by the water suppliers. He noted the issue was raised during the July PDWP meeting by Harold Ward who noted RI General Laws requiring water suppliers to install remote read meters by 1996 hasn't happened. Mr. Ward requested the installation of such meters should be started to support the implementation of a seasonal rate program. Mr. Mariscal reported Ms. O'Keefe has completed a study of where the water suppliers stand.

Ms. O'Keefe reviewed findings from the Radio-Read Study. She reported all systems have installed automatic read metering with most systems reporting 90% or more installed accounts. She noted incomplete installation was oftentimes the result of equipment which could not support the remote read meters, or account holders who refused to install the meters. She reported many water suppliers are planning to study or are in the process of installing the "radio-read" meters, and that the older "remote read" equipment is no longer available for purchase.

Discussion ensued on history of these "automatic read/remote read/radio-read" devices in the state. Most members agreed "radio-read" meters had not been widely available in 1996 but were now the industry standard. Mr. Perry stated he believes Mr. Ward's concern is based on a terminology problem. It was Mr. Perry's belief that when Mr. Ward was talking about remote read meters, he was interpreting the statutes to mean "radio read" meters. Mr. Perry noted most water utilities have hand held devices that can read just from outside the house. Mr. Perry provided further insight regarding these devices and reasons why suppliers have not reached 100%. Mr. Griffith stated that to achieve any success with seasonal billing you really have to go to monthly billing so the consumer sees more immediately the impact of his use on his bill. Mr. Perry provided insight on complications of going to monthly billing.

Mr. Griffith introduced discussion on establishing a Hunt River Watershed Council and resurrecting the Wellhead Protection Committee. He stated at the last meeting there seemed to be agreement to create a Hunt River Watershed Association and also some discussion to resurrect the wellhead protection area plan committee with Water Resources Board assistance. Mr. Griffith requested committee concurrence to start more detailed discussions on how to implement this discussion. He recommended implementation of Phase I could begin by providing a definition of the baseline facts, and the establishment of a goal. These two items would become part of the agenda for an initial meeting of this watershed council. He recommended staff participate on the Council in an advisory capacity. After discussion, Mr. Griffith asked Mr. Mariscal and Ms. Scott to propose members for these committees and for staff to go back the municipalities involved and identify potential candidates to serve on a reconstituted wellhead protection area committee. Ms. Scott suggested the name of the committee be the Hunt River Water Resources Protection Committee, the committee agreed.

B. DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM – Drought Condition Update

Ms. O’Keefe reported current conditions in Rhode Island have continued in the normal range as a result of the increased precipitation received in June and July. Precipitation for August is currently down about a half inch. Thirteen new high groundwater levels were recorded for July in Rhode Island.

C. WATER SUPPLY SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRAM - Update

Ms. O’Keefe reported that the program is proceeding as normal whereby the reports are coming in on time. She added that there are three five-year updates under review by agencies and staff. She reported the Board has expanded review of plans, making them available to all staff who have an interest in current and proposed water supply operations. She stated a water supplier meeting is being scheduled for next month.

1). Harrisville Fire District (HFD) Relationship with Pascoag Utility District (PUD) Regarding Future Water Supply Expansion and Needs – Update

Ms. O’Keefe reported there is no further progress regarding regionalization issues between PUD and HFD.

C. RI PUBLIC DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROG. PHASE III – Update

Mr. Riverso reported that additional projects should be resolved by next month’s meeting and that a letter is being drafted to go out to the supplier’s asking for comments regarding future phases.

D. GROUNDWATER PROTECTION/ACQUISITION PROGRAM:

Mr. Riverso reported that we are moving along with negotiations on the Heaton Orchard Road property and that we will be onsite tomorrow with the Geologist to initiate further exploration on the property. He stated that Tuckahoe Turf appraisal has been completed and reviewed but just recently Tuckahoe Turf has asked for an amended appraisal because they now want to include one house lot on each side of Switch Road. He added that the appraisal for the Charlestown wellsite is complete and will be forwarded soon.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Griffith adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Griffith
Chairman

Note: The complete proceedings of this meeting are available on audiotape by request.

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