

SEWER COMMISSION MINUTES

October 11, 2006

Mrs. Briggs - The regular meeting of the Town of North Smithfield Sewer Commission meeting was called to order on Wednesday, October 11, 2006 at 7:03 pm.

Roll Call - Mrs. Paul - In attendance was: Mr. Thomas McGee, Mr. Nordstrom, Mrs. Linda-Jean Briggs, Mr. Alvarez and Mrs. Patricia Paul, Secretary. Not present was Mr. Tikoian and Mr. Connolly.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Briggs -Approval of Sewer Commission for September 13, 2006 minutes. She stated that there were only two people that were present from last month. As a result, Mrs. Briggs entertained a motion to table the approval of September's minutes to November's meeting.

MOTION made by Mr. Nordstrom, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an aye vote to table the approval of September's minutes to the November meeting.

2. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Alvarez didn't have anything available for the October meeting.

Mr. Alvarez's stated that the bids went out for the wastewater improvement and are looking for a recommendation on that. Information was included in member's packets.

3. FACILITY PLAN UPDATE REVIEW-Mr. James Geremia

Mrs. Briggs stated that the purpose is to develop and prioritize a project list and Mr. James Geremia will make the presentation.

Mr. Geremia began his that they developed a wastewater management facility plan for the town and it has to be developed with the public involvement and participation. They had drafted and made the facility plan available to the public at the reference section at the public library on Main Street. He will go over the executive summary but the entire 500 page document can be referenced at the library. Copies are also available at the Wastewater, Planning departments and at the Town Administrator's office. At the meeting he had also provided a copy of the executive summary that summarizes the whole facility plan. He explained how the town was divided and 51% of the town is on septic systems and 49% is on sewers. It is evenly divided between the two sections within the community. He referred to section 1-1, the existing sewer area and he explained how North Smithfield entered into a inter-municipal agreement with the City of Woonsocket. The city of Woonsocket owns and operates the wastewater treatment facility. North Smithfield does not manage or own any wastewater treatment facility in the town. An inter-municipal agreement was signed within the town indicating 3 million gallons of

flow generated from North Smithfield would be processed at the Woonsocket wastewater treatment facility. Currently, the town is generating approximately 760,000 gallons a day of wastewater from the existing sewer area. He stated that the City of Woonsocket bills North Smithfield on a wholesale basis on the two metering stations and they bill the sewer commission of North Smithfield. The sewer commission then takes that and bills their users and tacks on the costs to operate the internal system within the Town of North Smithfield. His cost to manage the entire facility has to be added to the overall cost assessed by the City of Woonsocket. Mr. Geremia indicated referring to the maps where the failed systems and what areas are affected and went indepth discussing the sewer areas. He also explained that there are approximately 2100/2200 on septic or ISDS systems and out of that group there are about 102 that have failed. He also explained that out of the 102 failures, which is misleading, it was those systems that asked for repairs or modifications or needed to upgrade the system because they are expanding on their home. He explained that out of the 2100 or 2200, 100 of those needed to have permits pulled so that upgrades could take place within the system.

Mrs. Briggs asked that those 100 residents may have had issues but not have yet gone the next step.

Mr. Geremia replied yes. He stated the map shown is for those that have ISDS failures. He also stated that the document provided is not

a stand alone document. The document presented goes along with the comprehensive plan and look at planning, projection and need at the comprehensive plan.

He explained why septic systems fail which could be for a number of reasons. They fail because of population density and can be caused due to over saturating a given area, or due to lot sizes being too small, or because the system isn't operating correctly and failed ISDS systems can pollute nearby waters (reservoir). He stated that it is important to look at the needs of the community. The solution to the problem of ISDS failures, one is to create a wastewater management district. The Sewer Commission and the Town of

North Smithfield has made a conscience effort to indicate that the entire town will not be sewerred. They will focus on the areas that need it as a result of constraint, population density and environmental concerns with the recharge area of the reservoir. As he

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discussed the expansion of the sewer district. they identified and focused on 13 future sewer areas and those sewers will be extended to. They range from the Great Road area, Parkview, Providence Pike, St. Paul, Victory Highway and all the way to Tanglewood. The extent is to focus on those areas that are in close proximity to the existing infrastructure of sewers and those that have ground water contamination or the potential. About 3,000,000 gallons capacity they

want to make sure that they do not exceed to that capacity. The present flow is approximately 764,000 gallons a day, is processed through the community. Even if he took the future expansion and population to the year 2025, the future flow they are predicting to be under 1.6 million gallons per day. That is slightly more than half of the reserve capacity that is what is at the Woonsocket treatment plant.

Mrs. Briggs asked if it would be beneficial for a community to get closer to that contracted amount?

Mr. Geremia stated that the only benefit to the community is that the fact that any capital improvement at the Woonsocket treatment plant are shared by a smaller group of individuals. It would be based on what is being contracted for. The usage is based on actual consumption. The 13 areas that they are looking at, the capitol expenditure is over \$36,000,000. He stated that the report located at the library, is a detailed breakdown of each one of the project cost. It is based on the linear footage in each of the service areas. Its based upon the need, the cost associated with the pumping station and also based upon the cost of rehabilitating the roads. Putting sewers in a state road like North Smithfield, the cost to rehabilitate that road is pretty dramatic. Probably 20% of each one of the project costs reflect to rehabilitate the road. It is a very expensive and costly process to rehabilitate a state road for a sewer project to undertake. They identified it as a potential problem. While they have the capacity to

sewer 90% of the town, they don't look to undertake those projects because it isn't environmentally sound to do it and it is too costly and the debt service would severely impact the bonding capabilities of the town. They then take a look at the 20 year projection bond payment based upon the SRF funding of these projects, they look at a 3% loan.

Unfortunately, in the Union Village district, there is no funding or grants available. In past years, ninety cents on the dollar was paid by the state and federal government paid most of it. In these particular instances, the residents, homeowners who benefit by the project pay the entire bulk. Mr. Geremia referred to table 1-7, which shows the annual costs. In chapter 8, it shows the projected cost for a homeowner which is based on an annual basis. It doesn't mean that the cost cannot be combined. There is a certain network that A connection connects into B and B connects into C. But in general since the main artery is being used for existing sewers, the town may want to combine projects and determine what priority the town has with regards to sewerage various areas within the town They need that within the facility plan to prioritize it.

In talking about the wastewater management district he stated that there is an option for those that are not on sewers to create a wastewater management district. The way it is accomplished by the town is to adopt a plan when they are establishing a district. He is currently looking at the Planning Department or the Sewer Commission to take over that responsibility. It has to be a body who understands the needs of the sewers and the needs to manage it.

The Planning Department and Mr. Phillips where it originated from will be looking at it particular area from a planning view. What needs to be looked at over the next 5 years is all ISDS systems within the town should be inspected. They are looking at mandatory pumped out every three years and that would tie into the inspection process. They are also looking at the replacement of cesspools. He stated that those systems are outdated. All cesspools within a specific period of time must be updated or replaced. He is proposing that when a property is transferred within a 12-month period of time, it should be part of a home inspection and the ISDS should be inspected. He stated that most lending institutions may require it. And when a property is being transferred, it should be inspected and proposing a 12-month duration and a cesspool must replaced in a 12-month period of time which could be negotiated at the time of purchase process or it gets upgraded within that 12-month period. There is a list of approved license inspectors/contractors at DEM who would do licenses and inspections. He also stated to allow the residents the opportunity to borrow at low interest loans through SRF. Once it gets approved by DEM and the ISDS division, as the residents of the community upgrade their systems if they live within the wastewater management district, they would be available for the low interest loan. Once a few of the priorities are ironed out it can then be submitted to DEM. DEM will then review the documentation and he will also be sending the documentation to statewide planning, the historic preservation commission, the Department of Transportation. Once the document is reviewed and approved by DEM, then they

would get permission to go to a formal public hearing. The formal hearing will remain open for a 10 day period so the public will have an opportunity to give any written responses to the document and then they can move forward.

Mr. Kevin Benoit at 120 Great Road referred to Table 1-7 under annual unit cost per dwelling. He question that if it was approved to combine all of the dwellings, average that cost by all of the homeowners?

Mr. Geremia's response was that they are breaking it down by individual. Until the Commission and the town decide what the magnitude of the bond authorization, then it will be decided.

Mr. Benoit also asked about the reserve capacity with the City of Woonsocket and is it a long term contract or is it anything that could be changed?

Mr. Nordstrom responded that it is a long-term contract and has not been changed.

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Mr. Geremia stated that it is very costly to put in sewers due to the ledge.

Mrs. Briggs asked if a resident residing in a wastewater management

district, but the town isn't purchasing ISDS, as a resident can they go and begin the process on their own?

Mr. Geremia stated that normally they will need to go through the Planning Department. There is a certain criteria and to do it on their own so they can go to SRF to get that loan money. That individual can't do that until the document is done. The Planning Department has a small grant to do the wastewater management district. It is generated within the facility plan so it would make sense and cost effective to add into the component and they couldn't do it on their own with the funding but with the commission funding and their contribution, it makes sense for the community to look at it and allow many of the residents that opportunity.

Mr. Geremia stated that he couldn't go any further with the report until the sewer commission discusses, prioritizes and gets back to him.

Mrs. Briggs suggests to members to add to November's agenda and they will discuss at that time and will get back to Mr. Geremia to see if they want him to return.

Mrs. Briggs requested to move up item #9 by unanimous approval Wastewater Improvement Project Bids-Recommendation so Mr. Geremia can speak.

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an eye vote to move this discussion up on the agenda item #9 Wastewater Improvement Project Bids – Recommendation.

9. NEW BUSINESS

WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT BIDS – RECOMMENDATION

Mrs. Briggs referred to a letter that is dated October 11, 2006 from Mr. Geremia addressed to herself.

Mr. Geremia summarized the bid as he referred to his letter and stated there were three bidders. Eastern Pipe’s bid is the lowest totaling \$409,301. His recommendation would be to do the upgrades, deleting the sewage pump from the contract and there would remain a contingency of \$24,016. Once all is completed, they could put portions of the SCADA system up and establish the main frame and one other station and then every year since the document is there it can be funded one station at a time as opposed to spending money on a transfer pump.

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an eye vote to make a recommendation to the Town Council that they award the contract to Eastern Pipe and Engineering Inc. for modifications to the Branch River, Pound Hill and Sharon Parkway Pump Stations for \$409,301 minus the cost of the self

priming sewage pump for \$46,046 totaling \$363,255.

4. STOP & SHOP - VHB

Mr. Richard Dupuis from VHB provided plans to commission members to review and discuss the proposed Stop & Shop building located at Rt. 102 across from Homecrest Avenue. He stated that Stop & Shop has received approval from the Planning Board on the site plans and coordinating with Mr. Alvarez on both water and sewer for the project. He is requesting the commission's approval for the flow rates that have been identified in a letter provided to Mr. Alvarez dated on September 21, 2006.

Mrs. Briggs stated to Mr. Dupuis that the Commission doesn't need to take any action and would give Mr. Alvarez the commissions recommendation given it falls within his area of responsibility.

5. KEVIN BENOIT – SEWER IMPROVEMENTS-POUND HILL ROAD

Mr. Kevin Benoit at 120 Great Road. He purchased the property on the corner of Great Road and Pound Hill and the two-family property behind it located at 4-6 Pound Hill. At the time it was one lot, and he divided and made two lots and discovered that both system were failing. It made more sense to him to pay to have the sewer line extended and putting in two non-conforming septic systems on the small lots. He has installed approximately 180 feet of sewer of eight-inch sewer main and on Pound Hill Road and connected the laterals to both of them. Pursuant to the sewer ordinance, he was

assessed for \$5,200 per unit as a connection fee per the North Smithfield code. His total expense to put a sewer line in the road as a capital improvement which benefits the town was approximately \$30,000. The cost for the sewer line alone cost \$16,500 which is excess of the \$15,600 which he was assessed at. He referred to section 8-36 to credits for privately financed sewers. He referenced the regulations and statee that the application of the sewer lot development fee is retained in the sewer enterprise fund and the commission is allowed to allocate the funds as they see fit. He has provided a capital improvement and asking not be assessed for the fee and the fee is collected from someone other than himself then that fee be refunded as a cost to the town for capital improvement nothing in excess of the \$15,600 but just up to that fee.

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Mr. Nordstrom asked what has already paid for the sewer connection fee?

Mr. Benoit stated he initially paid \$1,300 and took the four-year option and owned all three units at the time, paying approximately \$4,000. And he has since sold the two-family behind him and paid a portion of that at the closing that was adjusted. He currently resides at the house on 120 Great Road which would be subject to the 3 installments.

Mrs. Briggs asked once the property was transferred behind him was the assessment paid off in full?

Mr. Benoit's response was no it was assumed.

Mrs. Briggs asked when was the property sold?

Mr. Benoit stated March of 2006.

Mrs. Briggs stated she understood that the ordinance that was put in place says that once a property was sold that it would be paid in full at the closing.

Mr. Benoit's response was that the lawyer must not have done it appropriately. He also stated that initially 120 Great Road is a two-family when Ella Charpentier owned it and it was listed as 120 Great Road and 2 Pound Hill Road. The back house technically is 4-6 Pound Hill Road. In reviewing the field cards, tax assessors records they are listed myriad of addresses one being listed as 2-6 Pound Hill, 4 Pound Hill Road and 120 Great Road. The minimum that has been paid is \$3,900.

Mr. Nordstrom will draft a letter, address it to the town and copy Mr. Benoit.

Mrs. Briggs asked Mr. Benoit that in the past was he looking to

provide an easement to his side neighbor on Great Road and if that had taken place?

Mr. Benoit stated no it did not. He asked them before the driveway was paved and they didn't express interest at that point in connecting.

Mrs. Briggs stated why they would consider abating some of the assessment was because he had come forward and said that he definitely talked with the neighbors and they were looking for it and that was for the good of the community.

Mrs. Briggs asked Mr. Benoit that he has two units on 120 Great Road.

Mr. Benoit stated he lives at 120 Great Road on plat 9 lot 026, one unit. He sold plat 9 lot 907 two units located at 4-6 Pound Hill Road. He has left the bill of sale with the clerk and the road has been paved.

6. TUPPER MILL PROJECT – Blackstone Smithfield Corp.

Mrs. Briggs referred to the letter in the members packages, dated September 22nd, 2006 received from the Town Clerk Debra Todd requesting the commission discuss the Blackstone Smithfield Corporation owners of the Tupperware facility in the town of Blackstone. There is a another letter sent to Mr. Robert Lowe, the Administrator from the attorney from the town of Blackstone. The

letter reads as follows:

Robert Lowe, Town Administrator

Town of North Smithfield

Town Hall

1 Mai St.

Slatersville, RI 02876

Re: Proposal for Mixed Use Zoning by Blackstone Smithfield Corporation

Dear Mr. .Administrator Lowe:

The Blackstone Smithfield Corporation, owners of the Tupperware facility have entered into an agreement with the Town of Blackstone to connect their facility to the Blackstone municipal wastewater collection system. As part of the Agreement a connection fee payable to the Town of Blackstone will be remitted upon connection of the Tupperware facility project to the system.

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The Blackstone Board of Selectmen seeks two additional documents to complete the Blackstone Smithfield Corporation's agreement for sewer connection.

1. They would like a letter from the proper official of the Town of North Smithfield to the Town of Blackstone, That the flow from the Tupperware facility will be part of North Smithfield's quota requirements to the Regional Waster Water Agreement with the City of Woonsocket.

2. They would like a letter from the proper official of the City of Woonsocket to the Town of Blackstone that they have no problem with the Town of North Smithfield accepting this flow as part of their annual quota to the Regional Wastewater Agreement.

I seek your assistance in providing me with a letter from the Town of North Smithfield indicating that North Smithfield's quota commitment to the Regional wastewater agreement.

Respectfully, Daniel T. Doyle, Esq.

Mrs. Briggs states that the Town Council has asked the commission to take the letter and make a recommendation to them whether the commission wants to accept their terms or not.

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom, seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an aye vote to deny the request and request instead that the Town of Blackstone approach the Woonsocket Regional Authority about purchasing that capacity for themselves out of North Smithfield's quota and for North Smithfield to be reimbursed and

Woonsocket set the value/fee and Blackstone would pay North Smithfield for that capacity.

7. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

Mrs. Briggs already reviewed all correspondence received.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Briggs has some concerns regarding the radio surveillance contract that has not been awarded and wants to know what the status is?

Mr. Alvarez stated that he has spoken to the Finance Director on more than one occasion and are waiting for it to be awarded but doesn't know what the hold up is.

Mrs. Briggs suggested sending a memo to the Town Council requesting the status of the radio surveillance contract and to place it on the November agenda.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Already discussed earlier in evening.

10. ADJOURN

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom and seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an aye 3-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Patricia A. Paul

Sewer Commission Secretary