

SEWER COMMISSION MINUTES

January 11, 2006

Mrs. Briggs - The regular meeting of the Town of North Smithfield Sewer Commission meeting was called to order on Wednesday, January 11, 2006 at 7:04 pm.

Roll Call - Mrs. Paul - In attendance were: Thomas McGee, Paul Nordstrom, Linda-Jean Briggs, Michael Connolly, Manny Alvarez and Patricia Paul, Secretary.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Briggs -Approval of December 14, 2005 minutes. Are there any corrections, additions, deletions?

MOTION made by Mr. Nordstrom and seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an aye vote to accept and approve the December 14, 2005 minutes.

Mr. Connolly – The aye’s have it. Motion carried 4-0 on an aye vote.

2. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Mr. Alvarez refers to his report. He stated that the VFD (Variable Frequency Drive) unit was installed at Branch River Pump station and said that it is the 2nd one. He is looking into installing three of them

total. And currently he is waiting for the tech to do some wiring so all three pumps could run simultaneously. Right now only two of them are running. And the third one is not getting any exercise at all.

One of the tech's Eric Smith from F.R. Mahoney & Associates Inc. called regarding a pump at #6 Old Field Dr. Mr. Alvarez asked him to give us some details instead of a report. (Refer to report). Mr. Smith's thinks that during installation that the pump was installed damaged or became damaged and it wasn't working the way it should have been since day one. The installation was in 2000. When speaking with the owner, he stated that no one was there when the pump was turned on. It was installed, turned it on & left.

Mrs. Briggs – Asked who installs the grinder pump and who hires the contractor?

Mr. Alvarez stated that the contractor installs the pump and the homeowner hires the contractor. The town bought the pump and the owner gets the contractor. Part of the procedure is that they call F.R. Mahony & Associates Inc. for the on-site start up so they can go through their tests and to make sure that the pump is working correctly. According to the homeowner, that was not done and the pump failed and they are looking for payment. The homeowner feels that it wasn't his problem and that the pump wasn't installed correctly and failed. Either the Town, or the contractor or E1 Rep. (one of the three) is suppose to be on-site for start-up to do the high-flow test

and check for leaks and to make sure that the pump is operating correctly.

Mr. McGee stated that in the ordinance that once the Town gives the homeowner the pump, the homeowner owns the pump.

Mrs. Briggs stated that it is subject to maintenance by the homeowner.

Mr. Alvarez stated that in this case there was no proof on file that anyone was there for the tests. The homeowner said that when the pumps ran, the house shook. Basically you can hear the pump running. When the temporary pump was put in, the homeowner couldn't tell that it was on.

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Mrs. Briggs also stated that there is nothing on file that it wasn't installed properly either. She stated that the resident should be reminded that the ordinance does read that the homeowner does accept responsibility for the upkeep of that grinder pump and it should have been seen between the years 2000 and 2005. Who turned on the pump?

Mr. Alvarez's response was that he thinks it was the contractor but is unsure.

Mrs. Briggs feels that for the Town of North Smithfield to continue to back down to residents who are not willing to read and or abide by the ordinance as it is written. We make it clear that the maintenance is the homeowner's responsibility. If there was a problem with the installation or no one was on site, that resident should have said something long before 5 years elapsed. She feels that legal council should be seeked out first and feels that the Town is not responsible.

Mr. Alvarez stated to the homeowner that he wanted to see the excavation and what was going on and will pursue the matter with the Town Administrator to see what they want to do.

Mrs. Briggs recommendation and speaking on behalf of herself is that he seeks legal council and what will probably be said is that it is in our ordinance and that the fact of a resident isn't aware of what is in the ordinance does not then make the town responsible for their repair.

Mr. Alvarez stated that Giguere & Marchand notified them of the grinder pump problem and the pump inlet was excavated and outlet piping and found that the outlet piping had settled. They made the repairs and they also checked the tank for any debris that could have caused the pump cutter damage. The Sewer Dept. and F.R. Mahoney Reps were on site during the repair. The tank is located outside.

3. SEWER BOND REFERENDUM IN 2006

Mrs. Briggs was asked to place the sewer bond referendum on the agenda because of receiving information from elected officials entertaining the thought of putting a bond referendum together and discuss and bring forward at the next Town Council meeting. She reminded everyone who contacted her that the last time the facilities plan information was updated dates back to 1992. The State requires that it be updated every 10 years. The date on the facilities plan is 1993. As she referred to the plan back in 1992, the dollars of what was needed in 1992 dollars to fully build out the town was \$35 million dollars. Now in translating that in 2006 dollars, it would be a \$52 million dollar bond. She reminded them that the facilities plan needs to be updated before the Sewer Commission can go back and make any recommendations as to the amount of the bond and the number of areas and to see what areas are in desperate need and that is what the facilities plan will tell all. Several residents have come before the Sewer Commission looking for relief. Park Drive/Warren Avenue has been reaffirmed with the State that they are in situation where that they are in need. And the estimate that came in was more than twice as much as what was left over in potential bonds.

Mr. Nordstrom made the comment that nothing can be done without having a facilities plan.

Mrs. Briggs reminded the officials that when she spoke to them that the Council made a resolution for Laurelwoods. Once the residents

paid for their units beyond the credit, that money would go towards updating the facilities plan. And would like to put it on the agenda for November's ballot.

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Mrs. Briggs asked how long would it take Geremia & Associates to update the facilities plan?

Mr. Nordstrom stated that it would probably take one year.

Mrs. Briggs stated that if it doesn't go on November's ballot, it still needs to be updated and feels that it isn't too soon to act. No motions made.

4. EDDIE DOWLING HIGHWAY EXTENSION

Mrs. Briggs referred to the Executive Summary received from Mr. Marsella for the Commission to review in their packet for North Smithfield Commons. This property is the old United East located at 408 Eddie Dowling Highway and Mr. Marsella has joined with some individuals to make some major renovations and asking Mrs. Briggs of what the process would be to take that sewer line at Eddie Dowling Highway at the top of the hill and bring it down to his building.

Mr. Tom Marsella wants to convert the 65,000 sq. ft property into something that is going to be useful to the town. They want to

provide a daycare center, a combination of retail stores, professional offices and a restaurant. Also moving his mortgage company offices from North Providence there. Some children's activities such as a children's arcade, some party rooms to hold birthday parties. He is looking for permission to do a feasibility to see if it is possible to bring the water and sewer down there. He has septic and well water right now and it would probably make it a lot easier to bring the water and sewer line down.

Mr. Alvarez met with Geremia and Associates today and discussed the property with them.

Mrs. Briggs stated that he is beyond Rockcliff.

Mr. Alvarez stated that the sewer isn't the town's just yet and did tell Mr. Marsella that. It still belongs to Rockcliff. They are still doing their work and the pumping station still has not been turned over to the town. When looking at the plat map, it appears to be 2000 feet from the first manhole in front of Rockcliff. The State road being a State road is an issue and that road was just finished. He did speak to the engineer to try and figure it out and let him know what it would cost to run the line to Rockcliff's first manhole when they turn it over.

Mrs. Briggs stated that when the pumping station is fully operational, it will be turned over to the town. She also stated that if you were to connect to any municipal water in that area, the only municipality that

is serving that area is the City of Woonsocket. I don't know what the new contract says for the Town of North Smithfield and the City of Woonsocket or any of the details of that contract or what it says for future contract. Manny Alvarez the Water Superintendent can work with Mr. Marsella on that.

Mr. Nordstrom stated to Mr. Marsella that what he would need to do is to hire a site engineer and they will do the calculations on how much flow based on the use.

Mr. Marsella asked if the shoulder on the State road is owned by the State or by the town?

Mrs. Briggs stated she wasn't sure of who owns it.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that probably the State but they probably won't allow you to dig in the road. They may allow on the shoulder. The site engineer would know how to do stuff like that.

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Mr. Marsella asked if they would have to coordinate with the towns engineer after the plans are done?

Mr. Nordstrom responded that they would have to coordinate and submit plans to get approvals and your free to pick whom ever you want.

5. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

No new correspondence received.

6. OLD BUSINESS

No old business to report on.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Briggs stated that Mr. Alvarez brought with him copies of the redevelopment of the Slatersville Mill for review and consideration.

Mr. Alvarez stated that he met with Geremia and Associates on January 11, 2006. He will forward a report afterwards. Mr. Bob Braga was also called who was working with us on this plan. Sewer lines are on their property and they will be tying in three different areas and they are going to have a pump station. They conducted a full analysis test and will be forwarding the results of that and just to check the load on the sewer line and to see if it meets the capacity. They will be tying into those three manholes.

All Commission members reviewed plans.

Mr. Alvarez stated that since there is money in a particular fund the town is looking at using that to make some repairs in the sewer system (muffin monster).

Mrs. Briggs stated that she is opposed to it because she still can't get a number of what the taxpayers will have to end up having to absorb when the bonds come due. And to take a bond that we (the town) haven't already borrowed against with no plan in place, to pay back what we're (the town) already deficit of and to add more money into that. At some point she has to address the fact that the people who are using the system are not paying enough to maintain the system. And they are not paying enough to pay off the outstanding debt. Mrs. Briggs asked Mr. Alvarez if he has gotten the accounting and what the variation is?

Mr. Alvarez stated that he was told to sit down with them and go over the numbers for the sewer department.

Mrs. Briggs asked Mr. Alvarez of where in his budget was the muffin monster placed?

Mr. Alvarez stated that he was told to put it into the capital budget and that part wasn't addressed. The bottom line is that it is an enterprise fund.

Mr. Nordstrom stated that the enterprise fund (sewer program) is suppose to be self-sufficient. It shouldn't come from the town for money. And the capital request that they need should be handled through the sewer use fees. A capital form shouldn't be filled out because we're not asking the town for the money. It should be in his

sewer budget.

Mr. Connolly stated that it is sewer use fees and not general revenue.

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Mr. Alvarez stated that they are using the repair maintenance and is suppose to be for bigger items. There is not enough money in the repair maintenance to take care of the station because when repairs are done, there is not enough money generated with the sewer usage fee. He was directed that everything that was large items had to be put into capital. And the sewer didn't reflect any increase because everything was in capital. So everything that is in capital should be put into sewer.

Mr. Nordstrom requested that the sewer budget be forwarded to the Commission before it goes to the Town Council for review.

Mrs. Briggs stated that she has never seen a budget in the past five years.

Mr. Alvarez did give a copy of the budget to Mrs. Briggs last year for the first time. Treatment charges have gone up approximately 35% recently.

Mrs. Briggs will speak to the Town Council and will reiterate that it is very important that this get funded and the bottom line is to have a

supplemental sewer operational and maintenance bill and doesn't see another way around it. There is only 20% on sewers within the town. And it needs to be resolved before this year's budget.

Mr. Alvarez will be meeting with the Finance Director next week to discuss the sewer budget. Mr. Alvarez will forward a copy of what he has currently for his budget to Sewer Commission members for review and if any questions arise they can be addressed at next months meeting.

Mrs. Briggs stated that she would like to see and review the proposed 2006-2007 budget and that she would like to also see last years budget of what was approved to what Mr. Alvarez originally requested.

Mr. Alvarez agreed to provide that information to the Commission.

8. ADJOURN

MOTION by Mr. Nordstrom and seconded by Mr. McGee and voted unanimously on an aye 4-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Patricia A. Paul

Sewer Commission Secretary