

SUSSEX COUNTY WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2016

The meeting was opened at 7:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Webb. The meeting was held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 of 1975, as amended, and notice has been forwarded to the newspapers and posted on the bulletin board maintained at the Sussex County Administrative Center for public announcement.

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise Webb, Wantage Township, Vice Chair
Peter Spinney, Andover Township
Keith Gourlay, Hampton Township
Carrine Kaufer, Hardyston Township
Ryan Earley, Sandyston Township
Ian Blanchard, Stillwater Township
Cynthia Tracey, Stillwater Township Alternate
Richard Gottemoller, At-Large
John Nugent, At-Large

EXCUSED MEMBERS: David Muscalo, Lafayette Township
Richard Innella, Montague Township
Eric Powell, Sparta Township

STAFF MEMBERS: Alice Brees, Principal Planner
Antoinette Wasiewicz, Recording Secretary

MINUTES CORRECTION/APPROVAL:

A motion was made by Richard Gottemoller to approve the Minutes of February 11, 2016. The motion was seconded by Keith Gourlay. All were in favor, with abstentions from Denise Webb, Peter Spinney, Carrine Kaufer, Ian Blanchard and Cynthia Tracey. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Richard Gottemoller to approve the Minutes of April 14, 2016. The motion was seconded by Corrine Kaufer. All were in favor, with abstentions from Denise Webb, Peter Spinney, Ian Blanchard and John Nugent. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Richard Gottemoller to approve the Minutes of May 12, 2016. The motion was seconded by John Nugent. All were in favor, with abstentions from Denise Webb, Carrine Kaufer, Ryan Earley and Ian Blanchard.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Alice Brees reviewed the correspondence listed on the attached sheet and answered questions on Correspondence Numbers Three and Five.

PLANNER'S REPORT:

Alice Brees said the DEP is still working on the new rules. There was a conference call where there was discussion on septic management. The DEP heard from counties and towns that enforcement of septic management will be a problem. DEP is trying to soften the language so that it is acceptable. The County Planners had a meeting last month. The letter in the correspondence relates to the meeting. She has also been working on whatever she is able to do before the rules come out.

Ms. Brees said there has been some discussion about the Martin site in Hampton. Steve Martin came in to clarify what had been approved previously. There are plans for housing in the future near the site, but it is not currently approved. Originally the site had been for both commercial and residential, but then the applicant removed the residential part.

Ms. Brees said she is also receiving notices with the towns for affordable housing plans going to the court. Sometimes this relates to sewer areas. The Martin property in Fredon may be another possibility. That was also a site for affordable housing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. WATERSHED UPDATES: UPPER DELAWARE, WALLKILL:

Ian Blanchard reported that there were 100 trees planted on the Paulins Kill in Stillwater during June as part of the collaboration between the Environmental Commission, the Nature Conservancy and the Wallkill River Watershed Management Group. When asked what the tree survival rate was, Mr. Blanchard said the earlier trees were smaller and had a much lower survival rate. Nathaniel Sajdak has transitioned over to larger trees and the vast majority of the tubes have foliage coming out of the top.

B. DEP REVIEW OF COUNTY WASTEWATER PLAN: CHANGES DUE TO NEW DEP RULES, MAPPING UPDATES, SEWER FLOW DETAILS, TEXT REVISIONS AND MUNICIPAL CHAPTERS:

Ms. Brees said the once the new DEP Water Quality Rules are adopted, she will know exactly what the rules involve and what changes need to be made. She will be resubmitting the County plan. The new rules have fewer requirements, such as not requiring existing sewer service area maps. Also, DEP won't be dealing with water supply issues in the wastewater plan. However, another County Planner thought that there was still language somewhere that would require Water Conservation Plans for some towns in the Highlands.

Carrine Kaufer said that Hardyston's specific issues related not to sewer service areas and water deficit areas, but to water allocation permits in water deficit areas. They had a major modification for existing water allocation permits. As a condition of the Highlands review, they required that Hardyston Township adopt a town-wide water conservation management plan. The town had to commit to the Scope of Work. Once they approved the Scope of Work, then the Highland's staff would give the okay for the DEP to say that they town has met their condition. Then the DEP could proceed with issuing a permit or a modification on the criteria they need. She believes that this is the process for towns in the Highlands. The DEP's rules say they need the Highland's input on whether it's a planning area or preservation area. There was a lengthy discussion about how this affected projects in Hardyston.

C. DEP WATER QUALITY RULE – PENDING ADOPTION IN FALL 2016:

Ms. Brees said there was a letter from the County Planners to DEP which expressed their frustration regarding the grant money that was available. There are certain time deadlines for grant money to be spent but since the rules aren't adopted, they can't move forward. The counties are asking for flexibility.

Ms. Brees also reported that the Freeholders decided not to apply for the grant. Mr. Spinney asked when the Freeholders made that decision. Ms. Brees said the issue never made it to the Freeholder agenda. He asked why they decided against the grant. Ms. Brees said it would be difficult to proceed with a scope of work when the definite rules aren't in place. When asked if the grant opportunity is now gone, Ms. Brees said, "Yes, for this year." There may be a second grant related to septic management in the future.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. DISCUSSION OF "UNASSIGNED SEWER SERVICE AREAS":

Ms. Brees said this is part of the DEP review comments on the County Wastewater Plan. This is a new category that the DEP is willing to entertain on a map. There are some towns that have "unassigned sewer areas", which means a sewer area was proposed, but there is no proposed wastewater facility yet. She believes this may be

more geared for a county such as Morris County where they have a sewer area, but in order for a town to grow in that area, they have to expand their treatment plant. In the future, DEP would be more flexible and would allow a sewer area to be shown, even if sewer capacity were not available or no proposed treatment plant yet.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Keith Gourlay. The motion was seconded by John Nugent and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.