

Wastewater Task Force Meeting – January 6, 2009

DRAFT

Attendees:

Jeff Adams
Alan Cathcart
Toby Kramer
Paul Mahoney
Marcia Rasmussen
Brent Reagor
Richard Reine
Chris Whelan
Jeff Wieand

Review & Finalize Warrant Article/Review BOS West Concord Article – Comments from 12/15/08 meeting

A draft of the warrant article was presented by Jeff Adams at the Town Meeting Coordination meeting. An additional discussion occurred at the Board of Selectmen's meeting on December 15th. Chris Whelan explained that this final article provided clarity to the board, who had some questions previously. There was some concern expressed about the range of gallons per day and whether voters would understand its intent.

Brent Reagor made a comment about the last phrase “return to a future annual town meeting.” The task force agreed that rather than being bound to an annual town meeting, the word “annual” should be deleted.

Rich Reine explained that we are presently in the planning phase for options up to 320,000 gallons per day. There may be opportunities to discuss revisions to our current permit which would allow for increased discharge. This will require negotiations with regulatory agencies. Exploration of options is underway.

Toby Kramer suggested that the Wastewater Task Force's article would also dovetail with the West Concord Task Force's article at Town Meeting.

If this article is not passed at town meeting, then the Town would not seek municipal wastewater alternatives beyond the 320,000 gallon per day (gpd) increase that reflects our present needs. If we were to also not address the present needs, a sewer moratorium may need to be put in place to address the lack of additional centralized treatment capacity. The group then discussed whether a “no” vote on the article prevents the Town from proceeding with the initial 320,000 gpd, and clarification was made that this is not the intent of the article – that the initial 320,000 gpd is necessary and is not the subject of the vote.

Chris Whelan indicated that we are not specifically asking for approval of funding, we are asking for support of the Town Manager's decision to expend \$142,000 from the Sewer Improvement Fund for the alternatives analysis recommended by the Wastewater Planning Task Force. It's more the planning and growth-management discussion that will take place. Toby Kramer stated that this needs to be made clear at the beginning of any discussion about this issue, to avoid confusion.

Paul Mahoney stated that the intent of the article is to explore ways that we can facilitate previously discussed and approved plans of the town (Long Range Plan and Planned Production Housing); nothing new is being proposed in terms of growth that was not already proposed in one of these plans. The group then discussed the need to be prepared should an amendment to the article be proposed at Town Meeting.

Rich Reine stated that the Town will start looking at alternatives for up to 320,000 gpd at this time, including continuing to explore conservation efforts, as well as engaging the DEP to increase the allowable volume under our existing discharge permit. Alan Cathcart mentioned that we can now begin looking at the treatment plant, now that upgrades have been made, to see where capacity bottlenecks might exist. Pump station capacity will also begin to be explored. Alan noted that conservation information is now provided in the WWPTF report, to answer some potential questions that could arise.

Discussion/Finalization of Draft Wastewater Planning Task Force Report

Copies of the December 9, 2008 draft will be distributed to the task force for final comment, which should be submitted by January 20.

Next Steps Leading up to Town Meeting

- **Establish Timeline** – The first step is to finalize the Task Force Report. (January 20, 2009)
- **Public Education Summary Sheet/Handout** – A one or two page summary of the whole process needs to be prepared, including the background and findings. A one page document, simplified with graphics would be ideal. A list of FAQs would also be helpful as an attachment. A map or table showing the village overlay and major users may be helpful, although there was some skepticism about whether a map helps or confuses the discussion. Brent Reagor suggested turning off the parcel layer on any map provided. Rich Reine noted that including a map will help stress that we're not proposing expanding the sewer area beyond what was proposed previously in the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan. The summary sheet will be prepared for review at the next Task Force meeting. Referencing that the more detailed maps and reports online was suggested for those who would like more detail than is provided in the handout. The handout will be prepared to bring to the next WWPTF meeting.
- **Public Meeting/Public Outreach** – Chris indicated that the FinComm meeting is not the appropriate forum for a detailed discussion on this topic; therefore, a standalone meeting could be held to address this issue after the FinCom Meeting, sometime in

March. A discussion should also occur at the various boards and committees that have an interest in this topic, including the West Concord Task Force, Business Partnership, Public Works Commission, Planning Board, Natural Resource Commission, and Conservation Coffee. The decision as to whether or not to have a standalone meeting can be made after gauging the reaction and need based on the various committee meetings. Brent Reagor will also take this issue to the Board of Health in March. Paul Mahoney stated that information should be placed in the local newspaper. The newspaper article should be prepared in late March or early April when the report is finalized, which could be part of a larger topic announcing the issuance of the Task Force Report, then explaining the warrant article. CCTV could also be utilized to present this issue. As long as this is part of a bigger picture explaining wastewater in general for the town, it was agreed that this was a good idea. Rich Reine will look into this to see if there is time to put this together. Chris indicated that the Town Meeting warrant article should be a Wastewater Task Force article with the endorsement of the Board of Selectmen.

- **Presentations** - Toby Kramer noted that the slides used for the Selectmen's meeting had too much information on each slide and suggested paring it down for the FinCom presentation. The presentations for the FinCom and Town Meeting will be made more concise and will be reviewed at the next meeting. These should be made by citizen board members, supported by staff. Jeff Wieand, Paul Mahoney, Fred Watriss, and/or Toby Kramer may make these presentations. The amount of time at Town Meeting for the presentation is approximately eight minutes.

Action Items

Committee members would be provided with clarification as to the "final" draft version of Task Force Summary Report with one last opportunity for comment. Report will be finalized shortly afterward.

The summary sheet and working draft of the presentation will be ready for the next meeting. Drafts will be sent out to the Task Force the Friday before the meeting. The Finance Committee meeting is on February 23rd.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, February 3rd at 7:30 A.M.

Public Comment – None.