

**Minutes**  
**Acton Water Resources Advisory Committee**  
**December 13, 2006**  
**A/B Junior High**  
**Library**  
**15 Charter Road, Acton**

Attendees

Members: Andrew Magee, Eric Hilfer, Helen Probst, Joanne Bissetta, Allen Nitschelm, Ann Chang, Nancy Tavernier, Jane Ceraso

Associates: Carol Holley, Ron Beck

Support Staff: Doug Halley, Brent Reagor, J. D. Head, John Murray

Public: Mary Michelman, Terra Friedrichs, Aidan Smith, Andy Munro, Aidan Smith, Stephen Gargas, Don Barron, Connie Montagna, Joe Montagna, Patrick Forsyth

The meeting opened at 7:07 P.M.

Mr. Magee, as Chairman pro-tem, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Mr. Murray appeared before the Committee to give a presentation regarding Sewer Financing. During his presentation he went over the undecided status of the next phase of sewers, definitions for common sewer vocabulary, town by-law provisions which restrict the expenditure of tax funds for sewer related projects, Mass. General Law provisions on betterments and sewers, special legislation obtained by the town, sewer bonding requirements, current user fee requirements and lessons learned from the past sewer project.

Questions were asked during the presentation. The issue of properties mandated to have betterments if the sewer was accessible to their property was discussed. The ability of the Town to deny access to the sewers if full capacity is being utilized was discussed, in addition to, the policy of the Selectmen to not let that happen. At the conclusion of Mr. Murray's presentation he was thanked for the informative presentation.

Mr. Magee requested that the Sewer Expansion Feasibility Subcommittee report on their status. Mr. Halley noted that the subcommittee had determined that it was necessary to do a cost analysis of potential sewer expansion areas in order to provide appropriate information to each needs area. Woodard & Curran submitted a proposal today which would assess the financial impacts of expanding sewers to Need Areas 10, 12 and 13 individually and as a unified project. The projected cost for the study was \$52,500 but W&C also provided study costs for each individual need area (Area 10 – Spencer/Tuttle/Flint \$18,900, Area 12 – West Acton Center A&B \$23,600, Area 13 – Indian Village - \$28,800).

Concern was raised regarding inclusion of Indian Village in the study. A question was raised regarding Indian Village's priority in the CWRMP. It was noted that the CWRMP rated Indian Village as a high priority, specified sewers as the preferred solution but recommended a wastewater management district due to the current restricted capacity at the treatment plant. Mr. Gargas questioned the possibility of Indian Village taking capacity away from the Spencer/Tuttle/Flint area. It was noted that the Indian Village's inclusion was not meant to displace the Spencer/Tuttle/Flint area but rather was a reflection of the potential of accessing additional capacity at the plant.

Mr. Magee then asked the Capacity Optimization Subcommittee to give their report. Mr. Reagor noted that the subcommittee had determined that it was necessary to do an engineering assessment of the maximum capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Collection System and the Rapid Infiltration Basins. Woodard & Curran submitted a proposal on November 27<sup>th</sup> with a budget of \$42,500. They also provided a follow-up memo that split the proposal into three parts; evaluation of Wastewater Treatment Facility – \$13,200, evaluation of Rapid Infiltration Basins - \$25,100, evaluation of collection system and pumping stations - \$4,200.

The subcommittee reviewed the proposal and determined that the capacity of the RIBS was the limiting factor in any future increase of capacity. Based on that conclusion the subcommittee voted to recommend to the WRAC that the evaluation of the RIBS be done and that the other elements of the proposal be held until the initial evaluation of the RIBS is completed.

The WRAC discussed the subcommittee's recommendation. It was expressed that moving expansion forward was very important. Concern was expressed that a study to further increase expansion could slow down a Spencer/Flint project. There was also concern that Indian Village may take capacity away from the Spencer/Tuttle area. Mr. Beck said the Expansion subcommittee should look at other Needs Areas adjacent to the sewer system.

Mr. Beck noted that he had sent out to the committee an Acton Water: Methodologies proposal which detailed ways to evaluate alternatives for the wastewater needs areas. Mr. Magee requested that Mr. Beck's proposal be placed on the Committee's next agenda.

On a motion made by Ms. Chang and seconded by Mr. Nitschelm the committee voted 6 to 1 to recommend to the Selectmen that the \$25,100 proposal to evaluate the capacity of the Rapid Infiltration Basins be done prior to Town Meeting. It was noted that the funding of this proposal would potentially have to be done in compliance with the Sewer Assessment Bylaw and it was unknown if there were funds available within the current budget year. Mr. Magee asked staff to seek guidance from Town Counsel regarding sewer planning funds and the Sewer Assessment Bylaw.

On a motion made by Ms. Chang and seconded by Ms. Probst the committee unanimously voted to recommend to the Selectmen that a holding article be placed on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for the possible inclusion of planning studies that would determine the financial feasibility of sewer expansion.

Ms. Probst requested that the next meeting include a discussion of the dangers to the Town's water. The discussion would focus on continuing examination the needs areas with proposed solutions other than sewers. The Committee agreed to discuss this at their next meeting.

Due to the length of the meeting Mr. Magee suggested that the discussion on the Mission Statement be placed first on the agenda of the next meeting.

Minutes for the meeting of November 15, 2006 were discussed.

Ms. Chang moved to accept the minutes of November 15, 2006 as amended. Ms. Probst seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

DRAFT MINUTES