

**City of Norwalk
Mayor's Water Quality Committee Meeting
November 5, 2020
Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER 6:02 PM

ATTENDANCE

Members: Joe Schnierlein, Pete Johnson, Steve Bartush, John Romano, Dick Harris, Geoff Steadman, Diane Lauricella, Louise Washer, John Crespo, Chris Malik

Staff: Thomas Closter

Guests: None

MEETING HELD BY ZOOM

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Motion to Approve by Pete Johnson, second by Dick Harris. Unanimous Vote.

DISCUSSION

- 1) Chairman Schnierlein said there has been no communication with Eversource and their plans for the transmission line relocation project. Committee members are still very concerned about the path and method.
- 2) Chairman Schnierlein discussed the wastewater treatment plant and their renewal permit (DEEP NPDES) and if the plant can handle the increase in population with new developments. District Water Companies state there is enough water but there are concerns, especially with the current drought conditions. Ralph Kolb from the Water Pollution Control Authority states the facility is well below the capacity threshold set in its operating permit by DEEP. The Water Pollution Control Facility is an 18 million gallon per day advanced wastewater treatment facility that has installed six new main lift pumps able to handle wet weather flows of up to a peak of 95 million gallons per day. The Water Pollution Control Authority is in the process of evaluating future capacity within its updated facility plan and it will incorporate projected growth and development for the next 20 years.
- 3) Chairman Schnierlein talked about the Save the Sound Annual Report for the Norwalk Harbor. The Norwalk upper harbor received a grade of F. The middle harbor received a grade of B- and the outer harbor received a grade of B+. The grading is based on dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll, oxygen saturation, macroalgae, and water clarity. The data used was from 2019 and there are a lot of questions. The sampling and studies did not take place year round. Chlorophyll is a good test but needs to be taken in conjunction with plankton and algae samples. The report has no Nitrogen data. Save the Sound did not compare any data with the Norwalk Health Department, Bureau of Aquaculture, Army Corp of Engineers, Coast Guard, or with Dick Harris. Geoff Steadman said the report also had no mention of bacteria.

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- 4) Members discussed concerns regarding the water quality data gathered each summer by hired interns. When and how is the data received and how is the data being used. The Mayor's Water Quality Committee, the Harbor Commission and the Shellfish Commission need to have access to the data in real time and any red flags need to be reported in a timelier manner so they can be addressed.
- 5) Chris Malik said he talked with Ralph Kolb from the Water Pollution Control Authority and they discovered a manhole by the Wall Street Bridge on the east side of the harbor that during high flow events there may be a mix of wastewater and storm water. It has been repaired and will be monitored with testing equipment and also by Harbor Watch and Dick Harris. Chris also said there is a FEMA Grant that may be available to upgrade the pump station at Keeler Brook.
- 6) Geoff Steadman stated he has concerns about the Norwalk Watershed Initiative and would like to see quarterly meetings started again. He also talked about the passing of Tony Mobilia, what a great friend he was and how important he was to Norwalk Harbor.
- 7) Diane Lauricella, after reading the Save the Sound Report, talked about moving forward with a great opportunity and how important it is to include green infrastructures and impervious surfaces.
- 8) Louise Washer talked about Bill Lucey, Soundkeeper, coming to talk to the Committee about Norwalk becoming a Storm Water Authority City.
- 9) Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, December 3, 2020 at 6:00pm (Zoom)

Motion to adjourn meeting by Steve Bartush, second by Pete Johnson 7:01pm

Minutes by Thomas Closter