

**City of Norwalk
Mayor's Water Quality Committee Meeting
October 1, 2020
Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER 6:02 PM

ATTENDANCE

Members: Joe Schnierlein, Pete Johnson, Steve Bartush, John Romano, Dick Harris, Geoff Steadman, Jim Bartley, Diane Lauricella

Staff: Thomas Closter

Guests: None

MEETING HELD BY ZOOM

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Motion to Approve by Dick Harris, second by Diane Lauricella. Unanimous Vote.

DISCUSSION

- 1) Chairman Schnierlein discussed communication from Rick Reardon regarding a steady stream of copper colored water coming from the Norwalk River into the Harbor through the channel. It is a distance line of color that comes in and out with the tides. This discoloration has not been noticed. Dick Harris said it could be dinoflagellates, which are single cell small marine organisms, usually considered algae and mostly marine plankton.
- 2) Chairman Schnierlein said he and John Romano also have received emails from Rick Reardon regarding concerns that 21,000 gallons of leachate per day are generated and may be leaking into the Norwalk River from Oyster Shell Park. Chairman Schnierlein contacted Kristin Derosia-Banick from the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Aquaculture and she stated the shellfish and water are tested and monitored and there is no indication of any issues.
- 3) 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.
- 4) Jim Bartley gave an update on the Public Hearing and plans to raise the Grupes Reservoir Dam in New Canaan and the First Taxing District dam safety permit. The dam was built in 1871 and is in need of repair. The plan includes removing over 400 native trees and shrubs along 1500 feet of riverbank in order to build a series of walls and berms along the eastern riverbank. There are concerns that the potential negative environmental effects of removing the vegetation from the riverbank and disconnecting the wetlands of Browne Sanctuary from the Silvermine River have not been included for review.

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- 5) Chairman Schnierlein and Diane Lauricella discussed the wastewater treatment plant and their renewal permit (DEEP NPDES) and if the plants designed capacity 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.

Motion by Diane Lauricella, second by Jim Bartley to provide comments to DEEP regarding the NPDES Permit Renewal, to make sure that the design capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Plant can meet its requirements as it relates to the forecasted increases of use based on the development curve that Norwalk is experiencing as well as climate change. Unanimous Vote.

- 6) Geoff Steadman said a letter was sent to Mr. Ian Cole of Eversource Energy from John Romano, Chair of the Harbor Management Commission, and Pete Johnson, Chair of the Shellfish Commission, asking for an update of the status of plans by Eversource Energy concerning the proposed Norwalk Harbor crossing to relocate two existing 115-kV overhead electric transmission lines, the response was that Eversource declined to participate in the Harbor Management Commission meeting and they are still working on their plans. The relocation project is a critical element of the Walk Bridge Project and discussions are essential so both Commissions may complete the required comments and recommendations for DEEP. The Commission has asked DEEP to not make a decision on the application until plans are reviewed and comments made.
- 7) Diane Lauricella said Alexis Cherichetti was promoted to the Deputy Director of Planning & Zoning position.
- 8) Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 6:00pm (Zoom)

Motion to adjourn meeting by Jim Bartley, second by Diane Lauricella 7:01pm
Minutes by Thomas Closter