



MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 9, 2020
REHOBOTH WATER COMMISSION

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Rehoboth Water Commission was held at Dunkin Donuts, 227 Winthrop St. and called to order at 7:08pm.

ATTENDEES

Members: Joseph Nunes, Edwin Ballard, Patricia Vadnais, Thomas Nicholson and Katie Eyer

GUEST

William Costa

MINUTES

Motion: Tish Vadnais made a motion to approve the minutes of June 26, 2019

Motion 2nd: Tom Nicholson

Motion: Tish Vadnais made a motion to approve the minutes of October 11, 2019

Motion 2nd: Joseph Nunes

October 11, 2019 minutes discussion:

Tom Nicholson sent the hydrofracking questionnaire to Karl Drown via email in early summer.

Ted Ballard requested fracking data from Palmer River Elementary School, where 5 zone hydrofracking took place.

2020 ELECTIONS

Tish Vadnais and Katie Eyer are up for re-election.

GROUND WATER PROTECTION DISTRICT

Ted Ballard – There will be two articles: 1. Expansion of the groundwater protection district, and 2. Amendments to the current bylaw. The Planning Board voted to combine the two and send up one article for the spring town meeting. It is likely to require a 2/3 vote. At a large meeting, people may vote against it. The Water Commission needs to be prepared to state the Water Commission position during the Water District meeting.

Joe Nunes – does not think it is necessary to speak until the motion comes up for discussion.

Ted Ballard – thinks that Joe Nunes should express that the Water Commission gives full support to the expansion of the protection district.

Bill Costa – The district should be expanded to protect all existing wells.

Tish Vadnais – suggests printing a Water Commission endorsement of the article in the warrant.

Joe Nunes – suggestion to amend bylaw changes – add “MA-certified” laboratory to Section 6, Paragraph H, Subsection 6a.

Ted Ballard – the current bylaw is set up with the assumption that the town would be using a municipal water system. It becomes a public safety issue because 40% of the town is not protected.

Motion: Tish Vadnais made a motion to endorse the article in the warrant (once the Water Commission has seen the final draft).

Motion 2nd: Ted Ballard

Joe Nunes – The Planning Board still has open public hearings on the matter. The Planning Board will settle on a final version, the Water Commission will review it, then the Water Commission will speak to the Town Clerk about adding an endorsement to the warrant.

Ted Ballard – still thinks the Water Commission should also endorse in the Water District meeting.

WATER SUPPLY SIGNS

The signs reading “Water Supply” that have been installed around Rehoboth are the result of an Eagle Scout project meant to easily identify water supplies for both local and out-of-town fire departments.

Motion: Ted Ballard made a motion to send a letter to the scout troop and Board of Selectmen saying that the signs should indicate fire department usage.

Motion 2nd: Tish Vadnais

SHAD FACTORY POND

Joe Nunes – according to Selectman Gerry Schwall, nothing will happen with the Shad Factory Pond Dam for a few years at least.

Ted Ballard – Gerry Schwall is misinformed. The Bristol County Water Authority (BCWA) doesn't need the dam or the water. There is a proposal from Save The Bay, State and Federal fisheries, and the EPA, with which Bill Dalpe agrees, to remove the dam and reenergize the fish run. The Water District is responsible for "buying and selling water" in town.

Ted Ballard – The BCWA wants to give the dam and the property to the town. In 1910-11, the BCWA got deeds for usage of the waterway from abutters. Rehoboth has no secondary source of water after groundwater wells.

Bill Costa – The Water Commission should look for grant money to research future water demands.

Bill Costa – The tidal effect comes upriver as far as the Shad Factory Dam. If there is no dam, brackish water might come further upriver.

ACTION ITEMS

Letter to request clarification of Water Supply signs.

Bring items to include on the 2019 summary report for the spring town meeting.

Next meeting: February 11, 2020, 7:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Motion made by Tish Vadnais to adjourn at 8:54 p.m.

Motion 2nd: Tom Nicholson

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Eyer
Rehoboth Water Commissioner
Clerk