



MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2019 REHOBOTH WATER COMMISSION

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Rehoboth Water Commission was held at Dunkin Donuts, 227 Winthrop Street, on Friday, January 18, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES

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

MINUTES

Motion: Joseph Nunes made a motion to approve the minutes of October 9, 2018
Motion 2nd: Tish Vadnais

Motion: Tish Vadnais made a motion to approve the minutes of November 26, 2018
Motion 2nd: Ted Ballard

BOARD OF SELECTMEN OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLIANCE TRAINING

Town Counsel Jason Tallerman will be presenting open meeting law training sessions for town employees on February 13, 2019. There will be two sessions, one at 3:00 p.m. at the Town Offices and another at 7:00 p.m. at the COA.

2019 TOWN MEETING

The annual town meeting will be held on May 13, 2019. The deadline for the annual summaries is February 28, 2019.

Ted Ballard – The planning board is delaying the groundwater protection discussion until the fall meeting. Reorganization of the bylaws will be addressed in the May town meeting. Ted Ballard wants to represent the Water Commission at the planning board meeting where these issues will be discussed.

Tom Nicholson passed out information on hydrofracking and a data log sheet for well drillers to complete upon fracking a well.

Ted Ballard – There was a fracking protocol started 2 years ago. Drillers need to post the before and after fracking yields. His subcommittee recommended regulations, which were given to the health agent and Board of Health, to establish methodology to protect abutters. When drilling Zone I wells, drillers should monitor abutters' wells. Ted is waiting for the ZBA/40B hearing on the Anawan School Project to inquire about fracking. Helen Dennen will notify Ted about that meeting. The well issue has been resolved with the Anawan School Project.

Joe Nunes says that one goal is to get information on all new and existing wells.

Ted Ballard wants to give an update as to where the mapping subcommittee is. They want to expand the groundwater protection district, but the first priority is straightening out the bylaws (according to the attorney). Ted wants to do the two things in parallel. He wants to present that idea to the Planning Board at the next meeting (January 23, 2019).

PRACTICE PRESENTATION FOR THE PLANNING BOARD

Ted Ballard – No one knows where the water in town comes from. Water comes from rain and is absorbed by the soil, where it then stabilizes in the water table. Water generally moves toward lower ground. Water finds its way into bedrock via fractures. Rehoboth has two types of rock: one is hard, one is soft. In each, the fractures develop differently. Rehoboth is comprised of 4 ridges and 3 valleys. The south part of Rehoboth is lower than the north. Ted shows the August 2016 Water Resource Protection map made by SPREDD. This map has watershed boundaries and topography. Ed Bertozzi looked at the map and realized that the protection district doesn't cover all of town.

The Water Commission went to the Planning Board in July presenting a package for new district boundaries with the goal of being ready for the spring town meeting. There need to be dialogue changes in the bylaws because the map doesn't fit with the current bylaws. Ed Bertozzi ran out of time on the project before he left town for the winter. Presenting the map will be delayed until the fall town meeting. The attorney suggests cleaning up issues from the past in the spring town meeting. Ted Ballard says that it is a public safety issue, and that if the protection district discussion is delayed until the fall town meeting, something could happen with negative effects for the town. He believes that there should be two separate articles in the spring town meeting: 1. The bylaw change (the attorney and planning board will change the format) and 2. Redefine the protection district without a map.

To summarize: change the bylaws to state that the groundwater protection district is all of town.

Tom Nicholson – The legal problems will arise when someone has land that is outside of the current protection area and suddenly finds themselves within the groundwater protection

district. It will be more restrictive with more government control. It will mean more restrictions, permissions, etc.

Ted Ballard asks Tom Nicholson if having two members of the Water Commission at the Planning Board meeting will violate open meeting laws. It will not.

Motion: Tom Nicholson made a motion to elect Ted Ballard to represent the Water Commission at the Planning Board meeting in the matter of reclassifying the groundwater protection area in Rehoboth.

Motion 2nd: Joe Nunes

ACTION ITEMS

Summary of May 2018 to May 2019 Water Commission activity. Ideas for the next meeting, Monday February 11, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at the COA.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Motion made by Tish Vadnais to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.

Motion 2nd: Tom Nicholson

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Eyer
Rehoboth Water Commissioner
Secretary