



MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 4, 2020 REHOBOTH WATER COMMISSION

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Rehoboth Water Commission was held via Zoom and called to order at 7:29p.m.

ATTENDEES

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

GUESTS

Jim Muri and Steven Reiss

MINUTES

Discussion:

Joe Nunes will call Deb Arruda about being kept in the loop regarding Shad Factory Pond.
Tish Vadnais will speak to Bill Dalpe.

Motion: Tish Vadnais made a motion to approve the minutes of November 6, 2020

Motion 2nd: Tom Nicholson

Roll call vote with unanimous approval

WATER COMMISSION TELEVISION BROADCAST

Joe Nunes – Ted Ballard has asked Derek Rousseau to broadcast Water Commission meetings on Channel 9. (see corresponding e-mail following minutes)

Motion: Tish Vadnais made a motion to allow Chairman Joe Nunes to decide if a meeting of the Water Commission should be broadcast on local television on a case-by-case basis.

Motion 2nd: Tom Nicholson

Roll call vote with unanimous approval

SHAD FACTORY DAM

Joe Nunes asks for a status update from Selectman Jim Muri.

Jim Muri – The BCWA has had discussions with the harbormaster indicating interest in decommissioning the dam. They want to have discussions with the state because the state controls water and dams. Jim Muri spoke with the harbormaster six months ago. Things aren't moving fast. The Water Commission should meet with the harbormaster (Bill Dalpe, Sr.)

There are rumors that Swansea is interested in taking non-brackish water from upstream.

The DEP controls regulation of water rights, both surface water and well water. The town does not control water withdrawal.

Joe Nunes – Section 10 of the bylaws – regarding who has the responsibility, the Water Commission would like to have an attorney review the bylaws.

Jim Muri – The state trumps local bylaws. The DEP is the big player. Local bylaws have some say, but it is mostly up to the DEP. The EPA is at the top when it comes to contamination.

Jim Muri - would be happy to discuss the matter with the town counsel.

Joe Nunes – the bylaws state that the Water Commission needs a clerk and a treasurer.

Jim Muri – that was based on the belief that the town would have a public water supply. Those positions don't apply at this time. In the future, they may if there is municipal water.

If Swansea wants to put a pipe into the Palmer River, the rights issue would be with the land more than the water on a local level.

Joe Nunes – if the town decides to remove the dam, could the state override the decision? Jim Muri - needs to consult the town counsel to see precisely where we stand regarding the decommissioning of the dam and water withdrawal by other towns.

Jim Muri – the Water Commission should put together a list of questions to ask the town counsel (agenda item for next meeting).

Jim Muri – the current bylaws should be reviewed by the Water Commission and modified for the next town meeting so there is no future problem with the treasurer and clerk positions and to avoid a ballot vote.

Jim Muri – the Water Commission should ask Daniel Roach to help put together language for the next town meeting.

Joe Nunes – we will work to bring the bylaws up to date. Daniel Roach will make it into a warrant article. Is Ted Ballard still the treasurer after 25 years? Jim Muri believes not.

Joe Nunes asks Tom Nicholson how long it takes to do studies of a dam. Tom Nicholson – a couple of years of seasonal studies.

ACTION ITEMS

Joe Nunes – is going to talk to Bill Dalpe Sr. to find out what has gone on with the Shad Factory Dam and where things stand.

Discuss Sections 9 and 10 of the bylaws in February.

Put together a list of questions to ask the town counsel in February.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Motion made by Tish Vadnais to adjourn at 8:16p.m.

Motion 2nd: Katie Eyer

Roll call vote with unanimous approval

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Eyer
Rehoboth Water Commissioner
Clerk

Dec 4, 2020, 4:55
PM

Greetings Water Commission,

I received a request from Mr. Ballard regarding airing your meetings live on channel 9. Unfortunately I am having some trouble getting connected with him. I have tried to reach out today via email on some other questions but since your meeting is tonight I figured I would share with everyone.

Although I cannot guarantee to live broadcast the meeting, given they are being recorded on zoom, I would be happy to rebroadcast them on Channel 9 especially if there is a presentation or topic the public should be aware of. I would ask your committee to make a quick vote and have the chairman email me with which meeting they would like rebroadcast. To be honest since you typically hold your meetings on Friday, live viewership would be rather low and replaying and on demand would be far more effective.

Also I did let Mr. Ballard know he did not need to use zoom and could simply call in using the numbers on the agenda. Not sure if he has been having trouble getting on.

Thanks,
Derek Rousseau
Director of Information Technology and Media
Town of Rehoboth