

**Wastewater Management
Commission
February 10, 2021
Regular Meeting
~ Minutes ~ Draft**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Thomas M. Ferrio

II. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Thomas M. Ferrio	Chairman	Present	
Elizabeth V. Richardson	Vice-Chairman	Present	
Robert D. Frost	Commissioner	Absent	
Frederick H. Klinger	Commissioner	Present	
Margot Willis-Doyle	Commissioner	Present	

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES Motion to approve minutes of February 12, 2020

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [3 TO 0]
MOVER:	Frederick H. Klinger
SECONDER:	Margot Willis-Doyle
AYES:	Thomas M. Ferrio, Frederick H. Klinger, Margot Willis-Doyle
ABSTAIN:	Elizabeth V. Richardson
ABSENT:	Robert D. Frost

IV. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

None

V. OLD BUSINESS

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Introduction of New Town Council Liaison to the Wastewater Management Commission, Mrs. Grace Klinger.

Mrs. Klinger was introduced to the Commission members by Chairman Ferrio. Mrs. Klinger stated that she is glad to join the Commission and that she is familiar with the work of the Commission.

B. Discussion of how WWMC members view the obligations and opportunities of this Commission.

Tom Ferrio gave an overview of the work the Commission has been involved in, in particular their involvement with the Cesspool Phaseout Program.

Grace Klinger stated that the seven member Commission was formed in September 1994, which preexisted the Cesspool Phaseout program. In 1994, the Commission was formed to establish a Wastewater Management District in Charlestown. She stated that she believes there is more to the Commission than just the cesspool issue.

Fred Klinger stated that he believes the Wastewater Ordinance is a thorough document and made the suggestion that every member of the commission read the document thoroughly. He stated that it covers every Onsite Wastewater treatment system located in Charlestown when it establishes the District, it establishes the criteria of the formation of the Commission, it establishes the roles of the personnel in Town Hall working in Wastewater issues, it establishes the inspection of the systems and the criteria to be an inspector of the systems and that the Commission members are the administration arm of it. He further stated that it covers groundwater, surface water, protection of wells, and that it coincides with the regulations of the RI DEM.

Fred Klinger initiated the topic of educating the public regarding their septic systems, which is one of the responsibilities of this Commission as stated in the Wastewater Ordinance. He stated that most of the recent uptick in home sales are people from cities who may not be aware of what their system is and how they need to care for it. Beth Richardson stated that she feels this is important. Matt Dowling stated that educating the public is a large part of what his department does and that every new homeowner in Charlestown is sent a letter of welcome along with a comprehensive package of informational material regarding their specific type of septic system. Not only is this done for new property owners but also at the point that a new system is installed on a property, as well as when a system is due for an inspection. His department has been doing this for many years and he has noticed that over time, through municipal court, education outreach and inspection notice requirement, residents are extremely savvy relative to what is going on with their septic systems. Mr. Dowling further stated that the Town sets the tone and the tenor for what is going on with individual septic systems throughout New England.

Matt Dowling stated that he thinks we are doing a good thing through education and getting residents to understand how their septic system functions and how this relates to their drinking water.

Grace Klinger stated that this Commission, not matter how frequently it meets, is an important one and was given an assignment to oversee and make sure the rules are followed correctly.

Wastewater Management Commission, Regular Meeting

Beth Richardson stated that she thinks that people are interested in protecting their investment and that the pamphlets sent to homeowners as well as the well testing program sponsored by the Conservation Commission are great ideas.

Tom Ferrio asked that the welcome packets that are sent to the homeowners be sent to each of the Commissioners to look over.

Fred Klinger mentioned educating residents about the Town of Charlestown Fertilizer Resolution and the Charlestown Recommended Landscaper Process. Matt Dowling stated that his understanding of the wording in the Ordinance is for his office to manage and mitigate groundwater impact *relative to septic*. Other things that Matt does in his office, such as stormwater issues or installing a rain garden in your yard are outside of the purview of the Wastewater Management Ordinance. He stated that his involvement in such matters has evolved over time.

At the next meeting there will be a discussion about the welcome packets that are sent to residents. There will be a discussion about potentially forming a sub-committee to focus on possible improvements to the welcome packets and to work on aspects of communication to residents. Also there will be a discussion about the Town Charter and Wastewater Ordinance and discussion of the Wastewater Management Commission's involvement in groundwater and stormwater issues as relates to the Wastewater Ordinance. Fred Klinger would like a brief update of the research results of the URI LSEM research project that was conducted as part of the EPA SNEP grant, which looked at 50 existing nitrogen reducing septic systems to try to better understand how these systems were functioning.

C. Annual Election of Wastewater Management Commission Chairman and Vice Chairman from among its members as required by Town of Charlestown Ordinance No. 210-8.3

1. **Motion to Nominate Tom Ferrio for Commission Chairman for 2021**

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Elizabeth V. Richardson, Vice-Chairman
SECONDER:	Frederick H. Klinger
AYES:	Thomas M. Ferrio, Elizabeth V. Richardson, Frederick H. Klinger, Margot Willis-Doyle
ABSENT:	Robert D. Frost

2. **Motion to Nominate Elizabeth Richardson for Commission Vice Chairman**

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Thomas M. Ferrio, Chairman
SECONDER:	Margot Willis-Doyle
AYES:	Thomas M. Ferrio, Elizabeth V. Richardson, Frederick H. Klinger, Margot Willis-Doyle
ABSENT:	Robert D. Frost

VII. **PUBLIC COMMENTS VIII. ADJOURNMENT Motion to Adjourn at 7:11 PM**

None

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Frederick H. Klinger
SECONDER:	Thomas M. Ferrio, Chairman
AYES:	Thomas M. Ferrio, Elizabeth V. Richardson, Frederick H. Klinger, Margot Willis-Doyle
ABSENT:	Robert D. Frost

Attest: Bonnie Langlois, Recording Secretary

POSTED AT TOWN HALL	2/24/21	JJG
POSTED ON TOWN'S WEBSITE	2/24/21	JJG
POSTED ON SOS WEBSITE	2/24/21	JJG