

WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PO Box 970
Shelter Island, NY 11964

MINUTES OF MEETING
July 13, 2015

Members Present: Hoot Sherman, Peter Grand, Ken Pysker, William Anderson, Albert Dickson, BJ Ianfolla, Gregory Toner, Town Liaison Supervisor Dougherty

Others Present: Julie Lane, Paul Shepherd, Art Williams, Kiera Nissen

The meeting opened at 7:30 PM

The next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, August 10, 2015 at 7:30PM.**

June 22, 2015 Meeting Minutes were approved.

New Business:

Irrigation Intern Presentation:

Kiera Nissen, Irrigation Intern, presented the WAC with an overview of how she is proceeding with implementing the new Irrigation Law and shared the data that she has been collecting.

She reported that 43 Irrigation Permits have been approved, another 15 people have begun the application process, 13 people have stated that they no longer use their irrigation systems, and that she has not heard from 47 people at this time. She noted that she has been trying to reach out to these 47 people to encourage them to come in and begin the application process.

Kiera further reported that two permits have been denied because of high chloride levels in their wells. She stated that only irrigation systems located in the Near Shore Overlay require salinity testing of their wells. She shared the map she has created which displays the wells that have been salinity tested, and described the color coding system that depict the results. She explained that the color green indicates that the well tested 0-125 mg/L, and the well does not require testing again for one year; the color yellow indicates that the well tested 126-250 mg/L which warrants being monitored all summer; the color red indicates that the well tested over 250 mg/L which is cause to deny the Irrigation Permit.

Kiera reported that an approved Ram Island irrigation system went from 60 ppm chloride to 500 ppm chloride over the course of one month's usage this spring. She noted that 500 ppm chloride is double the upper limit for potable water; but fortunately, stopping use of the irrigation system resulted in the chloride level dropping below the upper limit for chlorides and the well is again producing potable water.

Kiera stated that the Irrigation Law allows no more than one inch of water per week, which does not sound like a lot, but went on to explain that this amount equals 27,154 gallons of water per week per acre. She noted that experts recommend .16 inches per week which significantly reduces the water usage to 4,345 gallons per week per acre.

Kiera concluded that Shelter Island residents are using approximately double what is necessary to maintain their lawns, but not necessarily using as much as allowed.

Monitoring Well Information:

Member Pysher reported that ten well levels have trended down this month, 2 wells trended up, and one remained at the same level for this period between May 20 and June 18, 2015. He noted that 5 wells were at their lowest ever June readings: Little Ram, Menantic Rd/Evans, Dering Harbor, Hay Beach and Shorewood. He stated that it was interesting to note that both the Little Ram and Big Ram wells trended up this period which was counter to the downward trending of all wells on the “main” Island. He felt this evidence supports the theory of multiple Shelter Island aquifers. He concluded his report stating that all wells, except the SI Heights well, are below their June averages.

Old Business:

USGS Water Quality Proposal:

The WAC reviewed and discussed the information and proposal received from the USGS at the June 22 meeting, weighing the need for this water quality information with the significant increase in cost.

The WAC agreed that it is important to continue monitoring the well levels, and generally agreed that monitoring chloride levels is also very important.

The WAC had various opinions regarding the need to test for pharmaceuticals, with some members noting that there is no fix for this because you cannot stop people from taking medications. Member Grand opined that testing for pharmaceuticals would show lapses occurring in septic systems, which could be corrected.

The WAC reviewed the possibility of saving money by proposing alternative ways to collect water samples, but generally agreed that the USGS has the ability to qualify and archive the information collected.

The WAC also reviewed the need for electromagnetic imaging, another service proposed by the USGS, which provides a look at where the salt water intrudes into wells.

Councilman Shepherd noted that the USGS reported that Shelter Island would likely qualify for a grant to cover 20 percent of the costs, and that the Town Board is investigating hiring a grant writer.

The WAC generally agreed that prior to submitting a recommendation to the Town Board, they would like the USGS to make a similar, but shorter, presentation to the Town Board at an upcoming work session. Member Sherman indicated that he would contact the USGS and schedule this.

New Business:

Crescent Beach Water Quality:

Member Sherman reported that the Suffolk County Department of Health Services report to the Town indicated that the water at Crescent Beach is not potable and beach goers are being advised that the water

is safe for hand washing, but not for drinking. He further reported that the lack of potable water is likely to be corrected within a year or so by connecting to the West Neck Water District.

Fresh Pond:

Member Grand reported that the flocks of geese have left Fresh Pond this year. Member Andersen noted that there are no geese at Westmoreland this year either.

Eco Fair:

Member Pysher reported that the WAC will continue to participate at this annual event and WAC members are needed to man the booth.

Pool Construction in the Near Shore Overlay:

Member Pysher reported that a neighbor is in the process of installing a pool, and as they excavate, the hole continues to fill with water which is continually being pumped out into the bay. He noted that there are currently no laws to prohibit piercing the water table and pumping it dry. He indicated that he planned to have his well tested for chlorides in the near future.

The WAC briefly discussed the need for laws prohibiting this.

Meeting adjourned 9:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Danielle LiCausi
Clerk to the Committees