

WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PO Box 970
Shelter Island, NY 11964

MINUTES OF MEETING
July 14, 2014

Members Present: Chairman John Hallman, Ken Pysher, Hoot Sherman, Peter Grand, William Anderson, Town Liaison Supervisor Dougherty

Others Present: Howard Johansen

The meeting opened at 7:30 PM

Minutes of June 9, 2014 were approved.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, August 11, 2014 at 7:30PM.**

New Business:

Monitoring Well Information:

Member Pysher reported that 6 wells trended up and 7 wells trended down this month. He noted that all wells are within 10% of their June average heights except for Little Ram which is 20% below its June average but 10% above its lowest June reading.

Update on Irrigation Committee:

Chairman Hallman stated that he does not agree with the Hydro-geologist's statement in his final report, stating that Shelter Island uses only one percent of available water for irrigation. He said that there are so many places on the Island that are having problems with salted water, as much as 152 parts per million. He noted that the hydrologist states that there is only 40 parts per million. He noted that the hydrologist used stagnant monitoring wells to test the chloride levels. He opined that the wells that are being used for irrigation should have been tested for chloride levels. He noted that the Committee asked for the data that shows the procedure that was used to test the monitoring wells, but has not yet received any information from the Chairman.

Member Pysher stated that testing the stagnant wells twice, without knowing at what height they were tested, and knowing that these wells are not used, just didn't make a lot of sense to him. He also noted that the report showed the various salt water interface levels, but he challenged that label because the salt water interface levels were not determined because no modeling was done, to the best of his knowledge. He noted that this report does not consider changing weather patterns and changes in rising tide levels. He added that this report is very misleading from a scientific standpoint.

Chairman Hallman reported that tomorrow is the unveiling of the Irrigation Committee Final Report and recommendation to the Town Board. He stated that some of the members plan to speak at the work session tomorrow against some of the recommendations in the report. He said that sprinkling is very dubious just for the purpose of a green lawn. He noted that the Town is responsible for the water and this will be a challenge to the Town Board to figure it all out.

Member Pysher said that grandfathering in the existing irrigation systems located in the near shore fragile areas goes against everything they know. He said the fundamental fact is that we have areas that are sensitive.

Chairman Hallman stated that lots of good people did a lot of good work, but this is not an easy thing to grasp. He said the whole committee agreed that this is going to be a real challenge to the Town Board. He noted that we are limited to how much water we have and he can't really understand how this committee can say do whatever you want now, and if we encounter problems we will deal with them at that time.

He opined that the Town needs to hire a code enforcement officer who knows what they are doing. He noted that the Irrigation Committee talked about hiring an intern to do this job in the summer, but you really need a knowledgeable person. He stated that there are really too many ifs.

He stated that the Committee wants to allow the existing 109 systems to continue to operate and charge them permitting fees to cover the cost to hire a code enforcer. They also want the Town Board to consider differentiated laws rather than Island-wide laws because Chairman Milton feels that Hay Beach residents and the Heights residents should be able to do whatever they want.

Chairman Hallman reported that Robert Grosbard relayed his personal experience with an irrigation specialist, who is certified and appeared to be extremely knowledgeable, but when hired by Robert he turned out to be incompetent.

He noted that Chairman Milton promised to circulate the draft final report by this morning, but he has not done so.

He stated that the Town Board Work Session is scheduled for 1p.m. tomorrow and all members of the WAC are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Old Business:

Green Fair:

Chairman Hallman suggested that the WAC consider distributing a questionnaire to the attendees of the Fair asking if they use irrigation and if they feel irrigation should be banned.

New Business:

Swimming Pools:

Member Pysher reported that Bill Geraghty did some calculations on how much water a typical pool uses, and it is pretty startling when you look at evaporation and topping up pools. He noted that Bill requested he share this information with the WAC.

The WAC discussed the problem with leaks in pools and the automatic fill up mechanisms that could be running all day long. They also estimated that there are approximately 450 pools on Shelter Island at this time, with more being installed all the time.

Fresh Pond Study:

Member Grand asked for help in understanding the Fresh Pond Study and the WAC reviewed the report and discussed it briefly. Chairman Hallman said he didn't see anything out of line.

Quality Water Testing:

The WAC discussed the possibility of water quality testing of the monitoring wells.

Meeting adjourned 8:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Danielle LiCausi
Clerk to the Committees