

Minutes
Town of Atlantic Beach, North Carolina
Advisory Committee on Wastewater and Stormwater
Tuesday, March 13, 2007

The meeting of the Atlantic Beach Advisory Committee on Wastewater and Stormwater (ABACOWS) was held Tuesday, March 13, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Meeting Room.

Members Present: Billy Brewer, Donald Clements, Thomas Lenweaver, John Lotspih, Bruce McFerren, George Richardson, Alan Shelor and Jim Willis III

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Larry Moolenaar, Facilitator; Mayor Tootsie Vinson; Council Members: Jim Bailey, Ruth Barnes, Mike Warren; Tommy Combs, Interim Town Manager; Marc Schulze, Public Services Director; Sabrina Simpson, Town Clerk; Kelly Nash, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Moolenaar called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. All committee members were present.

1. Minutes of March 8, 2007 Meeting:

Mr. Moolenaar began the meeting with a discussion of the minutes for the March 8, 2007 meeting. The committee members were in agreement to accept the minutes as written.

2. Public/Committee Comments:

Mr. Moolenaar verified that the main emphasis of tonight's meeting is the presentation given by the engineers of W. K. Dickson. He also suggested that any questions the committee members may have should be answered as the meeting progresses. Mr. Moolenaar then asked the committee if they have any comments to voice or handouts that may want to be distributed. Mr. Lotspih handed out to all members a list of questions and concerns he had. Mr. Lenweaver stated that Figure 8.1 was missing from the booklet regarding implementation of construction. Mr. Moolenaar advised that they would try to obtain the missing Figure 8.1 diagram and forward it to all when it was received. Mr. Moolenaar then offered the public in attendance a chance to speak on any comments or concerns they may have in regards to what would be taking place at the meeting. It was asked by a public citizen in attendance about receiving a copy of tonight's minutes. They were advised that the minutes will be available for public viewing on the town's website as soon as they were accepted by all committee members.

(Clerk's note: A copy of Mr. Lotspih's questions and concerns are attached and hereby made a part of these minutes.)

3. Wastewater Master Plan – Preliminary Engineering Report – W. K. Dickson

Mr. Moolenaar introduced the Director of Water and Wastewater from W.K. Dickson Engineering, Mr. Raymond Cordon. Mr. Cordon stated that the presentation that will be presented tonight is the same presentation that was shown to Council at their February 20, 2007 meeting. He also noted that tonight's presentation will be the preliminary report for wastewater only. They are doing master plans for both wastewater and stormwater and the Stormwater Master Plan will be presented at the March 19, 2007 Town Council meeting. Their task was to look at, regarding a wastewater site, if a wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system could be constructed for Atlantic Beach. He noted there were a couple of restraints they had to consider, one of which was keeping the site on the island. Mr. Cordon then presented the Wastewater Master Plan presentation, which included: (1) background information; (2) existing wastewater system; (3) wastewater flow projections; (4) several options for collection systems, treatments and disposal; and finally (5) cost and funding.

(Clerk's note: Copy of W. K. Dickson presentation is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. It also available for public viewing on the Town of Atlantic Beach website.)

4. Committee Discussion:

Mr. Shelor asked if we could sell the sludge. Mr. Cordon responded by saying that it would not be valuable enough to sell, but could contract someone to haul it away. Another option, Mr. Cordon stated was that it could be landfilled, but it would be just that, a sludge landfill. Mr. Cordon did advise that there is an avenue which may be an option where the town could contract a company that specializes in the composting of sludge. This is a fairly new option.

Mr. Cordon stated that once the water has been treated it needs to be disposed of. What he suggested was holding ponds of treated, reusable water for various uses (i.e. golf course, lawn, or playing field irrigation, street washing, marine boat washing, areas that have dual plumbing for toilet uses). He also suggested some possible viable uses for the land around the holding ponds such as: park concept or constructed for homes sold as lakefront lots. There are a lot of opportunities for the area which would be at the Town's discretion.

Mr. Lotspih felt that the survey that was mailed out to area citizens in regards to being in favor of or against this project should be recirculated due to the fact that, at the time of the survey, citizens were not aware of the costs attached. Now they are and that a new survey would show different results. He also wanted to know how the levels of the holding ponds would be kept at one level. Mr. Dawson & Mr. Cordon explained that the bulk of the pond would remain constant; it would be the side slopes that would fluctuate.

Mr. Lenweaver asked about the maintenance of the ponds and if it could be pumped into the sound. Mr. Cordon stated there will not be solids that get into this water. Mr. Dawson reiterated that the State will not allow discharge into the sound. Again, this is not an option. But the quality of the water will be to the point where it is highly treated and available for use, as mentioned earlier, for various types of uses.

Mr. Brewer asked how long a resident would have before it may be mandated that they would have to pay the cost and hookup (i.e. 4 or 5 year period, immediate hookup once operational). Mr. Cordon replied that those details have not been addressed yet.

Mr. Richardson wanted to know about the 40 year life of the water basins. Mr. Dawson addressed this issue by stating that the 40 year life span is considered a reasonable design life for the components and possibly that in 40 years it may have to be re-armored or repaired.

Mr. Willis asked whether the emissions from the vacuum pumps would be scrubbed. Mr. Cordon stated that they could install odor control at the vacuum stations, but it is really not an open air structure. Mr. Willis was also concerned about the underdrains – where are they and where the discharge is? Mr. Cordon explained that they are around the perimeter around the property and up through the middle.

Mr. Clements wanted to know if it would be a good idea for the Town to start mandating new low-flow toilets where there is a three gallon usage than five gallons and other water-using devices. Mr. Cordon replied that the Town Council could do that and that would make a major difference.

Mr. Richardson asked about a 1.5 percent impact fee for new construction and wondered if they were suggesting putting that into place for new construction immediately for future use. Mr. Dawson explained that you could not impose an impact fee without a system, but that the fee is in the plans.

Mr. Clements stated that the town is almost “built out”. So is this opening the door for Atlantic Beach to become another Myrtle Beach with high rises? Mr. Cordon’s response was no, the system is designed for marginal growth, not development.

Mr. Moolenaar stated that the engineers are in the area once a month and they can come back for additional meetings. Mr. Willis made a suggestion that all committee members attend the Tuesday, March 19, 2007 Council meeting when W.K. Dickson presents their stormwater presentation, so it will not have to be repeated to them and then at their next scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 22, 2007 they could discuss that presentation. All committee members were in agreement with this suggestion.

Mr. Moolenaar then offered the floor for public comment.

Tiffany Woodard and other audience members took the floor and held a discussion back and forth with Mr. Dawson. As none of the participants in these particular discussions were at a microphone, minutes for this discussion are unavailable.

Mr. Clements wondered if it was possible to bring in a higher ranking official from the Health Department sometime in the future to explain exactly what septic tank problems we have and how extensive they are.

Mr. Moolenaar stated that he has noted the issues that need to be addressed and went on to speak about the next scheduled meeting. His suggestions were: (1) if there are public comments to be heard, citizens will speak from the podium; (2) Mr. Willis would like an allotted time slot for underdrain discussion; and (3) discussion on the stormwater presentation that will be presented at the next Council meeting, March 19th, 2007.

He confirmed that the next scheduled meeting will be Thursday, March 22, 2007 @ 6:00 p.m. in the Council Board Room. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Submitted by:

Kelly L. Nash, Administrative Assistant

These minutes were accepted by the committee at the Thursday, March 22, 2007 meeting of the Atlantic Beach Advisory Committee on Wastewater and Stormwater.