

Town of Oriental  
Water Advisory Board Meeting  
May 27, 2014

The Town of Oriental Water Advisory Board held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 27, 2014 at 1:30 PM. Chairman Jim Barton determined a quorum to be present, and opened the meeting.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Barton, Vice Chairman Mahan, Members Rittenhouse and Johnson, Town Manager Miller, Prospective Public Works Director Cox, Deputy Town Clerk Beyer

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Summers and Member DeChesser

The Minutes from the April 28, 2014 were reviewed by Vice Chairman Mahan who highlighted the action list presented by Jason Collett during the Water Plant tour. A priority listing of needs signed by Jason was provided by Deputy Town Clerk Beyer and it was reviewed. Vice Chairman Mahan noted that there was a much larger list presented by Mr. Collett during the Water Plant tour and that these actions needed to be captured and recorded before Jason's departure. Public Water System training was discussed as a follow-up to a previous action item.

**MOTION:** Vice Chairman Mahan made a Motion to get periodic updates of approximately two minutes at WAB meetings from the Town Manager and/or Public Works Director concerning certifications and schools attended by the Public Works staff. Member Johnson seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

**MOTION:** Member Johnson made a Motion to approve the Minutes from the April 28, 2014 meeting as written modified by Chairman Barton that the signature line be modified to read to reflect Vice Chairman Mahan's role as "Acting Chairman". Vice Chairman Mahan seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Town Manager Miller briefed Water System issues. She opened with the Water Fund Budget stating that some minor adjustments affecting the WA fund were made in Town Board deliberations subsequent to the Town Board Budget Workshop of April 8<sup>th</sup> where the WAB recommendations were briefed. These changes included the addition of new WA fund budget lines for clarity. She noted that the depreciation line was debited by \$750 to account for Josh Gibson's new cell phone. Chairman Barton and Member Johnson disagreed with accounting for the phone on the depreciation line as it is a non-depreciable item and recommended that it be accounted for under GF to WA line or to add a new line. Town Manager Miller said that she planned to revise cell phone accounts for staff personnel as a cost savings issue in next year's budget. She announced that the Budget Public Hearing is scheduled for June 18<sup>th</sup>. She then informed the WAB that the Town Commissioners had decided, beginning with the new fiscal year, WAB Minutes would no longer be recorded by Town staff due to budget constraints. Chairman Barton noted that should this change be approved, an amendment must be made to Chapter K as it specifies that a member of the Town Staff *shall* be provided to the WAB as a Recorder. Further he added that Recorder time was built into the WA budget and those hours

should be shifted to the GF should the change be approved. A poll was taken of WAB members who unanimously disagreed with this change. Chairman Barton stated he would attend the Town Board agenda workshop and/or Town Board meeting to address this issue and highlight the WAB concern.

The Town Manager then announced that she had authorized repairs to Water Plant fencing and that an emergency alarm system has been ordered for the Plant which would alert staff via text message of system fails. A 2014 budget amendment will be presented for this purchase at the June 3, 2014 Town Board meeting.

Vice Chairman Mahan then led the discussion of proposed action list formatting changes to the original spreadsheet prepared by her in March 2014. She explained that the changes add pull-down menus and provide ease of use. Further, the Action Item List would be flagged with Red indicating Critical, Yellow In-Process and Green Completed.

**MOTION:** Chairman Barton made a Motion to implement the Action List format. Member Johnson seconded. Discussion followed. Member Rittenhouse suggested adding actual date that action or task was expected to be completed.

**MOTION:** Member Rittenhouse amended the Motion to add a column to the Action Item List entitled, "Expected Time Frame." Vice Chairman Mahan seconded. Discussion continued. Chairman Barton added that the list should only list those items requiring the attention of the WAB as other actions within the PWS fall under the direction of the Town Manager. Vice Chairman Mahan recommended the following language added to the Action Item List; if anything is related to Town employees the Town Manager will direct action with completion.

**MOTION:** Vice Chairman Mahan made a Motion to add the language concerning the Town Manager's direction if action items required Town employee involvement. Member Johnson seconded. Discussion continued. Member Rittenhouse recommended the above Motion be amended by deleting column four of the Action Item List entitled, 'Raised By'. Member Mahan seconded. Motion passed 3-1. Chairman Barton opposed.

A water rates discussion followed. Chairman Barton noted that the Board of Commissioners has decided that there will be no rate increase for the upcoming fiscal year. However, he stated it remains an important continuing task for the WAB to consider rates as part of its budget advisory role to the Town Manager and the Board of Commissioners.

**MOTION:** Chairman Barton made a Motion to do a complete analysis of water rates and budget processes and make recommendations to the Town Manager and Board of Commissioners to support the next budget cycle planning. Vice Chairman Mahan seconded. Discussion followed. Vice Chairman produced a copy of the NC Financial Rates Planning presentation which has been discussed at prior WAB meetings. Chairman Barton added that this series of worksheets and models is available through the DENR web site. Chairman Barton summarized the tools available on the DENR website that would assist the WAB in water rate analysis. Member Rittenhouse asked if elasticity of demand was part of the algorithm and Chairman Barton stated that it was. Mr. Rittenhouse agreed to review the models and their

usefulness. Vice Chairman Mahan suggested collecting sufficient data to give to the public prior a potential decision to raising rates. Motion passed 4-0.

The next agenda item for discussion was Maintenance Planning. Chairman Barton led the discussion. A draft O&M Manual approved by the WAC and briefed to the Board of Commissioners in August 2013 was discussed. Chairman Barton stated its format follows DENR recommendation. Implementation still requires maintenance actions input from the Town Staff. Town Manager Miller agreed a manual and maintenance is a necessary component of plant operations. Drew Cox stated his belief that the ORC, Terry Groome, should be responsible for maintenance planning and should assist in the compilation of the manual. A discussion followed. It was agreed that Mr. Groome's role and compensation do not include these responsibilities. Chairman Barton added that a document entitled "O&M Manual" was prepared by SRS during plant overhaul in 2003. Unfortunately, he explained that Manual never laid out maintenance actions. It was simply a compilation of a manufacturer equipment sheets. Mr. Barton explained that is why the existing draft was researched and prepared as a starting point. Drew stated that the State cannot dictate maintenance actions. Mr. Barton explained that they do not. Both agreed that maintenance actions should be compiled from manufactures' recommended guidelines and operator experience and practice. The Town Manager discussed that the Manual not be time intensive, and perhaps other municipalities' O&M manuals should be examined. Mr. Barton noted that was done last year as well as compiling inputs from the NCRWA outrider who attended a WAC meeting. An overview of our draft manual was provided last year to DENR. Member Rittenhouse suggested "jumping in", assigning responsibilities and completing work on the draft. It was agreed that the Town Manager will go through the existing draft with the Water System Staff to determine what inputs are required from the staff to produce a compliant manual and will brief at the June WAB meeting. All agreed we do not want to lose through lack of maintenance what we have gained through plant restoration efforts.

A personnel issue was raised by Chairman Barton. Member DeChesser tendered his WAB resignation A vacancy announcement should be made. Letters of interest should be submitted to the Town Board by prospective candidates. Deputy Town Clerk Beyer noted Mr. John Zieran and Joe Bliss, indicated prior interest in the WAB and she will contact them.

There being no further business to discuss, Vice Chairman Mahan made a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Johnson seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 PM. The next WAB meeting will be held on Monday, June, 30, 2014 at 1:30 PM.

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Jim Barton, Chairman

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Jayne Beyer, Deputy Town Clerk