

PRESENT: First Selectman Roger Goodnow, Selectmen Robert Fish and Carl Von Dassel, Town Counsel Michael Cronin, Town Sanitarian Jack Milkofsky, Dick Roberts, of Hayden-Wegman, several interested citizens and members of the press.

- Sel. Goodnow explained the purpose of the meeting as follows:
- 1) To review results of exit poll taken at sewer referendum.
 - 2) To discuss methods of retrieving information from the community and come up with answers for community, placing less emphasis on being involved with addressing D.E.P. concerns or those of the neighboring communities.
 - 3) To discuss ways of disseminating information to public.

Mr. Milkofsky noted that the D.E.P. would like us to go to referendum as quickly as possible and that D.E.P. funding will not change before 1991; design grant at 20% will be available. If funding level does change in 1991, the D.E.P. will set time limit for it to go into effect; if the town moves promptly and gets design work done, it may qualify for a 20% grant for construction; the design grant is guaranteed until December 31st; if another town is ready before we are before next June, they could get our 20% grant. If we enter the program before June 30th, our ranking position will be the same, but if someone else with a lower rank is ready before we are, they will get it. The towns closest to being ready (1st come, 1st serve) will get it.

Mr. Milkofsky distributed information outlining the voter turnout at the sewer referendum. He noted that with the exception of Indiantown, voter turnout was low for those areas directly impacted by the proposed sewers. The largest numbers of voters were from non-sewered areas -- north of turnpike... 219; south of turnpike... 407.

Mr. Milkofsky also distributed information resulting from the exit poll. According to the summary a large majority of responders to the poll realize that the D.E.P. requires the three towns to implement the project. A majority are aware that problems do exist; no one is saying the problem doesn't exist. 55% of the people polled attended public hearings; 93% were informed through the newspapers; 17% picked up information from street; 36% opposed to sewers -- want more information on cost. Principal concerns: cost to taxpayers; need for better assessment information.

Discussion was held regarding consideration of a mandated maintenance program for all septic systems in Designation 2 and 3 areas (e.g., pumping 3000 houses once every four years -- 750 houses per year); septic tanks would have to be located; risers would have to be built for access. This program would be offered as a means for giving those who are not tied into the sewers some service (a means of giving something back for supporting sewers

financially for somebody else.

In response to Sel.Von Dassel's concern as to how development can be kept at a reasonable level by denying access to sewers except to those people designated to be in need, Mr. Milkofsky stated that a sewer ordinance would have to be adopted which would set up sewer service districts.

Discussion was held about the sewer avoidance program and costs thereof; Mr. Milkofsky explained that the program had been in effect for a number of years, an education program for septic system maintenance has been implemented, lagoons have been enlarged; additional personnel not necessary to monitor program.

Mr. Milkofsky indicated that the D.E.P. is willing to give us time to try to resolve our problems locally as long as the town is making progress.

Discussion was held regarding the concern the public has for polluting the Connecticut River and the fact that efforts should be made in detailing the treatment plant process and explaining in what ways it is fail-safe and in what ways it will affect the river. Also, the necessity of showing that water is clean before it is discharged to the point where we are not going to contaminate anything must be addressed; there will be a backup system to switch to if necessary at the proposed plant.

Sel. Goodnow outlined the following areas of concern:

1. The need to get profile of what local residents are saying about this project.
2. Cost factors and how going to be packaged.
3. Address environmental issues (odor, etc.).
4. Is this best alternative for our community?
5. Impact regarding development of community
6. Control Old Saybrook has over its own destiny.
7. That Old Saybrook's prospective is different from neighboring communities because the plant is here.
8. Are they going to limit and have consistent regulations?
9. Are we basically writing an open check? Are we committing to anything more than design and construction phase?
10. Assurance to townspeople that we are representing their concerns and are going to be their eyes and ears.

COMMENTS:

Mr. Stebbins:

Is this the only system of sewerage control? Mr. Stebbins also expressed concern about polluting the river and referred to the bill Sen. Lieberman has introduced in the senate regarding pollution of the Ct. River.

Mr. Roberts:

It has been approach of the town that we are concerned about protecting the environment. Mr. Roberts elaborated on several options which were studied that would eliminate the need for

sewers. Mr. Roberts suggested that a Citizen Concern Action Group be formulated to review information on file. Further, Mr. Roberts noted that the recommended process is a 40-50 yr. old process which is a proven method.

In response to Sel. Goodnow's question regarding possibility of any other kind of system that the D.E.P. would approve, Mr. Milkofsky said that the D.E.P. favored the regional plant because it is the most economical. Further discussion was held regarding the question of Old Saybrook's ability to exclude other towns and whether the D.E.P. can mandate that other towns have to pipe into the Saybrook plant.

Mr. Milkofsky gave background information on the origin of the two-town study and the engagement of Hayden-Wegman to do the present study. He said that the state indicated that if we were to form a two-town study, the state would take on 100% of the cost of the study with the understanding that if it was practical, at the end of the study period they could go their separate ways; if not, they could combine, and the town took the option. This, he said, would be a substantial saving to Old Saybrook, and having Clinton join ultimately lowered our cost.

Sel. Von Dassel:

Can a formula be developed for the percentages different people are paying in different areas of town?

Mrs. Neijadlik:

It has been reported that the 20% grant is not a correct figure; Mr. Roberts noted that the 20% grant would be on eligible costs; e.g., the grant money would not be used for land acquisition. Construction costs will be eligible.

Mr. Hunter:

The town needs to come up with some kind of an answer to taxpayer as to how it is going to be paid. What is it going to cost me as an individual? Ultimate costs?

Sel. Fish:

Even though the state commits today on how much the grant will be, they could change their minds on formula a year from now. The amount of federal funding available in the future is uncertain, he said.

Recommendation: calculate a cost per person based on one set of assumptions and do our best to set local conditions.

Mrs. Niejadlik:

There is a need for general information on construction of such an entity (building costs and process). How do you check for amounts of toxic things being illegally dumped in rental homes? Mr. Roberts explained that there are ways to control illegal dumping of toxic material which would be stipulated in the sewer ordinance.

Discussion was held regarding the operation of the facility once

it is functional. Is there an agreement in force that all three communities will share the expense? Atty. Cronin said that at present the agreement is limited to the construction phase. Discussion followed about creation of a sewer district, a separate legal entity, which would administer the operation of the facility, and expenses would be shared by the three towns; this would come out of operation and maintenance cost fees, which comes from the users only.

Sel. Goodnow:

If we are paying proportionately, does it change when usage within a community changes? Mr. Roberts indicated that the design phase does provide for an allocation after the initial design that each town would have in the plant based upon an engineering determination of the needs of each town; each town would be allocated a certain gallonage; each town would be allowed to use gallonage any way it wanted to; each town would have enough excess capacity. The allowance made in Old Saybrook is for very limited growth for the 20-50 year design period.

In response to Mrs. Neijadlik's concern about homes in beach areas, Mr. Milkofsky said the number of conversions would be increased; the flows are in the report; the system was designed for seasonal use; in summertime we run at capacity; other times at less than capacity.

Mr. Stebbins: If another referendum gets voted down, where do we stand? D.E.P. will allow three referendums, Atty. Cronin said.

Sel. Fish: It is to our economic advantage to move quickly. Now is a good time to go out for bids.

Atty. Cronin noted that the town has a contract for the land and that beginning May 1, 1990 the cost of the Ronca property goes up based on the increase in inflation on a daily basis. The town has a right-to-buy contract on the Ronca property through 7/1/90, Atty. Cronin said.

Mr. Milkofsky said that ideally the referendum should be held in early February.

Sel. Von Dassel noted that there may be some concerns that we have not addressed yet and that the committee should comprise of representatives of the different areas in town, both affected areas and non-affected areas and that it should be formed as soon as possible.

It was a concensus of those present that the exit poll was not really representative of the total voting population.

Mr. Roberts recommended formation of a Citizens Advisory Committee.

Mr. Stebbins suggested two or three open meetings.

Sel. Fish asked if Hayden-Wegman would be working with the town during this process, and a discussion followed regarding Hayden-Wegman's agreement with the town.

Selectmen requested that Mr. Milkofsky address areas of concern and come up with some known facts, addressing environmental issues, etc.

Mr. Fish said that an active campaign is necessary to get 800-900 positive voters at the next referendum.

It was a consensus of opinion that the Board of Selectmen, at its workshop meeting on Sat., Dec. 1st, consider appointment of an Ad Hoc Sewer Advisory Committee; the committee will be charged with special duties and asked to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and will include representatives of different areas of town, both affected and non-affected.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Carol Suits
Secretary/Clerk