

NEW LONDON-SPRINGFIELD WATER SYSTEM PRECINCT

Commissioners Monthly Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2024, Whipple Hall

Chairman Jacques called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Jacques explained that the Commissioners will be conducting their regularly scheduled meeting and Twin Pines is on the agenda for 1:30.

Present: Chairman Jacques, Commissioner John MacKenna, Commissioner Rip Cross, Superintendent Rob Thorp, Office Manager Rhonda L Gauthier, Andrew Winter from Twin Pines Trust, Erin Lambert from Barton and Wilcox, Abby Fopiano from Edgewater Specialist, Peter Pitsas Underwood Engineers (Twin Pines requested) and Cynthia Klevens DES (Twin Pines requested)

Commissioner Cross made a motion to accept July 1, 2024, minutes as written, Commissioner MacKenna seconded the motion.

Review of the current income and expense report.

CD Closure at Bar Harbor and Reestablishment at Mascoma Bank was approved.

Review of the PFAS notification for large water systems. NLSWP had no issues.

Eversource Rate Increase was discussed. There will be an increase in August of 2024 and August of 2025.

SUR disbursement #2 check was signed.

The Commissioners approved the creation of a Deputy Treasurer position to be filled by John Ellis. John Ellis accepted the position and its responsibilities.

Review of water usage in July compared to the previous year.

Update on the progress of the Main Street Project – ahead of schedule.

Discussion on the backlog of backflow testing.

Update on the installation of the sensing line for the new chlorine analyzer.

Discussion on sampling and flushing to address bacteria issues.

Update on maintenance work at the pond.

Application for new water service at 406 Main Street was presented. John MacKenna recused himself from approving this and any new water hookups. Commissioners Jacques and Cross approved the application.

John MacKenna read a letter he wrote to put into the record. (Attached to these minutes).

1:30 Appointment – Twin Pines Housing Trust

Chairman Jacques explained that this is a commissioner's meeting and not a public hearing. The only people that will be speaking on the matter of Twin Pines will be their representatives.

Andrew Winter from Twin Pines Housing Trust presented the history and status of the Longmeadow Commons project, including water supply issues and the need for approval to connect to the precinct for water.

Winter gave details on the construction schedule for Longmeadow Commons, including the planned start in spring 2025 and completion by summer or fall 2026.

Andrew Winter stated that "the great thing about this project being designed to passive house standards is not only is it energy efficient but it is water efficient. So I recognize that we all have to plan for the 12,000 gallons per day, but the good news is a project like this will really use more on the magnitude of 3,000 to 5,000 gallons per day."

Erin Lambert -An engineer from Wilcox and Barton working with Twin Pines spoke on the energy and water efficiency units due to the passive design. Ms. Lambert stated that she understands using the DES gallons per day requirements of 12,000 per day is what the Precinct needs to plan on, but she believes Twin Pines units will use 3,000-5000 gallons per day. Ms. Lambert also said that there will only be one meter for the Precinct to read at each building even though there will be sub-metering at the cost to the owner.

Abby Fopiano a hydrologist with Edgewater Specialists working with Twin pines on permitting the wells spoke. She gave a brief history of the last few years; explaining that the Precinct's engineers approved water for Continuum then COVID hit, and the Precinct was not aware of the capacity issues until DES completed the Sanitary survey. The survey stated that the Precinct needs to find an additional water source for the already existing customers. Ms. Fopiano stated that the Precinct should have more water conservation measures put into place and educating the big water users that might have leaks within their own system that they have been paying for forever.

Chairman Jacques explained that most of the big users have already switched to conservation measures as much as possible when the sewer rates when up a few years back. The sewer rates are a lot higher so that is when they notice the increase in water usage.

Ms. Fopiano said "the application is for 12,000 gallons per day, 150 gallons per day per bedroom; but I think you know, and we all know that it is going to be a lot less than that. And I think the question here today is really will you allow them to use the water? Can you give them the water? So, its 6,000 gallons per day, let's say the high estimates of the lows."

Peter Pitsas was at the meeting at the request of Twin Pines. Pitsas said that the letter from DES dated 8/8/24 had good suggestions but with a lot of obstacles. Pitsas explained that nothing can be done that quickly and it is expensive. A replacement well is about 190,000 and no one can be sure that it is going to work. Pitsas explained that the Precinct has already been looking for another water supply, but it could cost 3-5 million dollars a mile to run the pipe. That does not include installation or treatments. Pitsas explained a few options but reiterated that everything takes time, and nothing is guaranteed.

Twin Pines asked representatives from DES to attend the meeting, but no questions were asked of them.

Chairman Jacques explained that there are only two Commissioners to vote on the application since Commissioner MacKenna recused himself due to conflicts of interest. Jacques said the commissioner's job is to look at what is in the best interest of the Precinct as it exists now. Chairman Jacques is not approving the application because the criteria they use are the engineer's review and information from the State. Commissioner Cross said he is not approving the application because the Precinct hires these professionals to guide us, and we have a fiduciary responsibility to the customers already in the Precinct

Commissioners' decision was to not approve the application based on engineering reviews and discussions with the state.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:38

Respectfully submitted

Rhonda L Gauthier