

**Town of Westport
Infrastructure Oversight Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes – June 22, 2023
6:30 pm**

The in-person meeting of the Infrastructure Oversight Committee (IOC) was called to order at 6:30 pm in the Select Board room at Town Hall. Attending were Steve Ouellette (Chair), Bob Daylor (Vice Chair), Maury May (Clerk), Jerry Coutinho (At Large), Manny Soares (Planning Board), and Joe Amaral (B2B). Lawrence Holsworth (FinCom) was absent. Also attending were Jim Hartnett (ex-officio Town Administrator) and Roger Fernandes (Consultant).

Organizational business:

- **Minutes – approval.** The minutes of our last meeting held on May 10, 2023 were moved by Mr. Daylor and seconded by Mr. Coutinho and approved by a 6-0 vote.
- **Membership – reminder.** Send requests to BOS for re-appointment for FY (June) 2024, if you have not already done so.
- **Next meeting – scheduled.** We schedule our next meeting for September 6, 2023 at 6:30 pm in the Select Board Room. At this point we plan no meetings for July or August 2023 due to vacations; however, an emergency meeting could be called if necessary.

Presentation – by Board of Health Chair Tanja Ryden, assisted by Vice Chair Phil Weinberg, with member Donna Almeida in attendance.

Ms. Ryden first called a meeting of the Board of Health (BOH) to order because all three members were in attendance. She is appearing at the request of two IOC members, Manny Soares & Jerry Coutinho, to discuss the BOH letters recently sent to cesspool owners, which have caused concern among some affected property owners.

Ms. Ryden presented a slide show, which noted that current BOH septic regulations require cesspools be taken out of service by February 1, 2026. Reason: cesspools are old and provide no effluent treatment and have a disproportionate impact on nitrogen loading of the Westport River. Ms. Ryden also noted that the recent BOH regulation has a variance clause that could exempt property owners due to proximity to future sewer, site conditions, and costs.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Soares said that many seniors are distressed over the BOH letter and he would like to see them exempted from the cesspool regulation for life. Ms. Ryden said there are two problems with that, health and the Westport River. However, she also noted that we can continue the dialogue on the Route 6 corridor given the sewer initiative now underway. Mr. Soares also asked if installed denite systems are monitored for effectiveness. Ms. Ryden said the BOH does not have the manpower to monitor denite systems but noted that Barnstable County has a computer system whereby OEM providers forward post-installation testing information to them, and that we have joined the system.

Mr. Coutinho asked about septic requirements for house additions, such as a new deck or a new bedroom? Ms. Ryden says that a new bedroom would increase flow and perhaps require an expanded septic system. Mr. Coutinho also requested that the BOH work with this Committee on septic needs in light of our sewer plans. Ms. Ryden responded affirmatively, saying she would like to return to this Committee to continue our discussion in the Fall when funding sources come better into focus.

Both Mr. May and Mr. Daylor congratulated BOH efforts - especially those of Vice Chair Phil Weinberg - on their success in releasing Westport from the recent DEP regulation forcing communities to adopt denite systems. The DEP reg will focus on Cape Cod communities only, which was the original intention of the court suit that prompted the regulation.

Ms. Ryden made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the BOH, which was approved unanimously.

Roger Fernandes, Consultant - Route 6 W&S planning – update on key issues.

- **Sewer pump stations.** Negotiations continue with property owners to acquire property for sewer pump stations, but we have come to no agreements yet.
- **Interbasin Transfer Act.** Kleinfelder is working with the Mass. DCR and its Office of Water Resources to get a “determination of insignificance” for our project. They are working to resolve issues raised by the OWR but progress has been difficult as regulators keep coming back with more questions.
- **Grants & funding.** We currently have four funding initiatives underway. (1) In mid-March we requested a federal earmark of \$5.5 million through the offices of Sens. Markey & Warren. The project’s name is “Westport Trunk Sewer and Water” and it is confirmed by posting on Sen. Warren’s website. (2) In early June we filed for a \$1.8 million MassWorks grant. It has been initially reviewed without comment. (3) We are currently gathering information on a Mass DEP PFAS treatment grant to address emerging contaminants in drinking water for disadvantaged public water supply systems, of which we have nine on the Route 6 corridor. (4) In July-August of this year we will submit an application to the Mass DEP for a loan from the State Revolving Fund.

New business:

- **Town override – IOC support – possible vote.** Mr. Daylor supports the upcoming ballot override for the Town budget and would like the IOC to vote in favor of it. Mr. May stated that while he supports the override personally, he does not want the IOC to associate itself with the override because historically they have failed. Mr. Coutinho said such a vote would muddy the waters. No motion was made and no vote taken.
- **Title 5 Advisory Committee Meeting.** This item was placed on the agenda at the request of Mr. May. However, it was passed over due to the recent DEP regulation that focuses on Cape Cod.
- **Forum – planning.** Mr. Ouellette expressed his desire to hold a Route 6 Forum at a North Westport location to give the public a better idea of what we are planning. The best timing seems to be late October/early November after results of our federal and state funding requests become clearer.
- **Shorelines – Route 6 article.** We thank Ted Hayes for writing a front-page article on our Route 6 project that will help spread the word on our efforts. Mr. Soares said he would have liked a better picture.
- **Additional new business - not anticipated 48 hours in advance.** None.

Adjournment. Mr. Daylor moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Coutinho seconded the motion. It passed 6-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm.