

SEPTIC TO SEWER CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
JULY 15, 2019

Meeting of the Septic to Sewer Citizens' Advisory Committee of the Town of Ocean Ridge held on Monday, July 15, 2019 at 10:00 AM in the Town Hall Meeting Chambers.

**CALL TO ORDER (00:32)**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m., by Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens.

**ROLL CALL (00:49)**

Assistant Town Clerk Kathie Gatewood led the roll call which was answered by the following:

Neil Hennigan	Present
Ron Kirn	Present
John Lipscomb	Present
Roy Schijns	Present
Arthur Ziev	Present

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (01:05)**

Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS (01:25)**

Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens led the swearing of the following appointed members:

Neil Hennigan, Ron Kirn, John Lipscomb, Roy Schijns, and Arthur Ziev

Staff Present: Town Attorney Brian Shutt, Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens, Assistant Town Clerk Kathie Gatewood, Building Official Wayne Cameron, and Town Engineer Lisa Tropepe.

Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens welcomed the Committee Members and thanked members for giving the Town their time to spend on this very important initiative. She explained that the Town Commission had recently appointed the Committee Members by way of Resolution 2019-09. She said that the Committee Members will assist the Town Commission and Town Staff in studying various aspects of sewer conversion; and also, water utilities in the Town. Acting Town Manager Stevens said the Committee Member studies and the Town Staff studies will allow for recommendations to the Town Commission on the portable water contract, and also, possible septic to sewer conversion.

**DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

1. Committee Member Introductions/Bio (04:00)

**Neil Hennigan**

Member Hennigan thanked Commissioner Kristine de Haseth for appointing him and for her confidence in his abilities. He also thanked the rest of the Town Commission for their vote of confidence and the other Committee Members for all volunteering on this project.

Member Hennigan said he is a 17-year full-time of Ocean Ridge resident, is an Alternate Member on the Planning and Zoning Committee, and before being retired was a United Airlines Captain for 35 years. He came to Ocean Ridge to find a nice, small and quiet community in the aftermath of 9/11.

Member Hennigan has a Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Maryland and a Master's degree from the University of Southern California in Systems Management.

In addition to being an airline pilot, Member Hennigan was also in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam Era where he was an engineering test pilot. His experience with the United States Air Force also includes conducting intelligence gathering during the Cold War and project management of one-of-a-kind aircrafts. Member Hennigan also performed database work as a Research Scientist for the Battelle Memorial Institute at NASA Ames Research Center.

**Ron Kirn**

Member Kirn thanked Commissioner Susan Hurlburt for appointing him and said he was looking forward to a nice difference of opinions regarding the initiative.

Member Kirn said he is a retired Senior Manager from a medical electronics company that specialized in arthroscopic and laparoscopic surgery. His management projects, within the last ten years, included constructed or directly managed facilities in 32 countries specializing in international finance distribution and global customer service. He has lived in Parkdale Manor for the last eighteen years and has been married to his wife Carol for fifty years.

Member Kirn stated that he has worked on four condominium boards, and is currently serving on three of them. He is the Board Treasurer of Parkdale Manor House Condominium board as treasurer, at Crown Colony Club. He is also the Treasurer of Crown Colony Club. Two years ago, Member Kirn became President of the Colonial Crown Manor Disposal System, Inc., a wastewater treatment plant located in Ocean Ridge on the Crown Colony Club property.

Member Kirn served in the United States Air Force for four years, in the security services and in 1968 was deployed to a one-year tour in Vietnam. He is a 100% disabled veteran.

Member Kirn noted that he is educated in mathematics and business, and has been involved with many civic duties, such as Boy Scouts and spending 10 years as commissioner of youth and organizing coaches and teams and enjoys church. Member Kirn holds a Captain's license master's level in the United States Coast Guard and has taught coastal piloting and celestial navigation courses with the United States Coast Guard. He has been involved in a sewer conversion in the Town of Chelmsford, Massachusetts that affected thirty-five thousand people.

**John Lipscomb**

Member Lipscomb and his wife Adrienne of 25 years are originally from St. Louis, Missouri. They have lived permanently in Ocean Ridge for the last seven years and owned property in the town for nine years. Member Lipscomb has a Bachelor's degree from Columbia College.

Member Lipscomb is on the board of The Villas of Ocean Ridge and is also the property manager there. As the property manager, he is involved with the septic system and stock on a daily basis.

**Roy Schijns**

Member Schijns thanked Commission Besler for nominating him. Member Schijns lives on the south end of Ocean Ridge, on Dolphin Bend Road. He is originally from the Netherlands, and has lived in the United States for the last 30 years. Member Schijns earned a Bachelor's degree in Business from Europe and has a Master's degree from the University of South Carolina. He is married to his wife Janet, and has two adult children.

Member Schijns has worked in technology leadership positions and for large corporations such as AT&T and Cisco Systems. He has also started businesses and is currently a managing partner of a consulting company.

**Arthur Ziev**

Member Ziev thanked Mayor Coz for his appointment and stated that he hopes to bring value to this process. Member Ziev and his wife Meri have lived in Ocean Ridge for 17 years and have two adult children.

Member Ziev has a 40-year professional career, which includes 25 years as a public Finance Investment Banker working with many Florida cities and counties. He also served as a Financial Advisor to the State of Florida. In recent years, Member Ziev has worked in the real estate development industry. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics and American Studies, and a Graduate degree in Public Affairs.

**DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

2. Select Committee Chair & Vice-Chair (13:20)

Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens opened the floor for nominations for Committee Chair.

Town Attorney Shutt explained the nomination process for Committee Chair. He explained that someone will make a motion to nominate another person or themselves, if there's a second motion then there's a vote, and if at least three people vote in favor then that member becomes the Committee Chair. He noted the same process will be used for the Committee Vice-Chair position.

Member Lipscomb nominated Member Hennigan as Committee Chairman; seconded by Member Kirn. Motion carried 5-0. Member Schijns nominated Member Ziev as Vice Chairman; seconded by Member Lipscomb. Motion carried 5-0.

**DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

2. City of Boynton Beach Presentation (28:13)

Member Kirn read background and technical facts before the Boynton Beach presentation. He stated that approximately five years ago a Crown Colony resident approached the boards of Crown Colony, Colonial Ridge, the Ocean Ridge Yacht Club, and Turtle Beach with the possibility of connecting their wastewater treatment system to Boynton Beach's system via an underground force main at Briny Breezes, thus eliminating the need for three treatment plants servicing their communities. This potential infrastructure idea was also presented to Ocean Ridge. The five Ocean Ridge Commissioners and five Condominium Association Presidents signed an agreement to encourage Boynton Beach Utilities to formulate the plan.

Member Kirn said it was suggested that a representative be appointed to coordinate efforts and to report progress to the five communities and the Ocean Ridge Town Manager. The appointed representative, who began this idea, Don Bowden worked diligently with Boynton to communication the progress to all parties. Member Kirn said that two and a half years ago he became involved with Mr. Bowden as the Boynton plan gained more traction and changed to a new crossing of the Intracoastal Waterway. Member Kirn noted that he is the President of Colonial Crown Manor Disposal Systems, Inc., which controlled eighty percent of the units being affected by this change and Mr. Bowden required a board member for support. On October 4, 2018, Boynton Beach Utility conducted a workshop for the Town Commissioners detailing the initial plan. The Town asked Boynton Beach Utility to develop a plan that included all of Ocean Ridge save for the condos south of Woolbright. Member Kirn remarked that he took on the communication responsibilities that Mr. Bowden began after a tragic incident in the winter of 2018, he is no longer with us to continue the important work he began.

Member Kirn stated that Colonial Crown Manor Disposal System, Inc. is a private Statute 620 not-for-profit company that services 290 units for the three communities: Crown Colony Club, Colony Ridge, and Ocean Manor. Ownership of this company is 16

houses that make up the three condominium associations on a prorated basis in which the plant is self-funded. Crown Colony Club owns the property that the plant operates on. The Ocean Ridge Yacht Club and Turtle Beach have their own wastewater treatment plants that service only their communities and each plant is self funded.

The Ocean Ridge Yacht Club and Turtle Beach and other similar treatment plants deposited their treatment water out on the coral shelf the same way residential septic systems deposit their treated water. Colonial Crown Manor Disposal System, Inc. deposits are treated with water utilizing injection wells that go down 100 feet, this makes the plant environmentally friendly and the treated water is not subject to groundwater pollution. This plant is rated to treat a 100,000 gallons a day, and it averages 30,000 gallons a day with a peak of 65,000 gallons a day during the winter season. It's the largest volume of wastewater treatment plant in Ocean Ridge. The plant is operated and maintained by U.S. Water Corporation, which is the same company that operates and maintains the Ocean Park treatment plant. All plants are licensed, highly regulated, annually inspected, and are independently tested once or twice monthly depending upon volume for water purity testing. Results are sent to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Member Kirn stated that Colonial Crown Manor Disposal System, Inc. and the Ocean Ridge Yacht Club plants are operating within specifications with no short term issues or investment required to continue operation. Life expectancy for the Ocean Ridge Yacht Club is unknown. The Colonial Crown Manor Disposal System, Inc. life expectancy is greater than 25 years.

Member Kirn stated that Turtle Beach reports that their plant is operational; however, long term issues concerning the condition of the drain field lines. The plant steel components are rusting and its weak electrical system is nearing the end of the service life of the plant based on the overall opinion of the plant operator.

Colin Groff introduced himself to the Committee and Town Staff. He is the Assistant City Manager for the City of Boynton Beach. He stated that his responsibilities include Public Services, which also includes utilities. Mr. Groff noted that the Utilities Department serves approximately 115,000 customers, some of which are outside of Boynton Beach, in an approximate 30-square mile service area.

The City of Boynton Beach team of employees include:

Joe Paterniti, Utility Director  
Chris Roschek, Engineering Division Manager  
Michael Lowe, Deputy Director

Mr. Groff remarked that the team is really happy to be attend and talk about these issues and that they have been working on them for about two years. He said he understands that it sounds like a long time but these things move slowly because it takes a while to plan out and figure out the best way to handle a conversion of this kind.

Joe Paterniti, City of Boynton Beach Utility Director, presented a workshop presentation with the following slide information and discussion.

Mr. Paterniti said at the request of the Town in October 2018, they began moving forward with various analyses on how to provide sewer services to the Town. The team created three different options. The first option is to provide sewer services to the five condominium communities that Member Kirn discussed on the south part of the island, south of Woolbright Road. The second option was the remainder of the Town and then other requests being incorporated serving the Town Hall and Wellington Arms, which is north of Town Hall with Oceanfront Park wastewater facility. The presentation consists of concept designs for those options. There is an existing agreement with the Town to provide water services that expires in 2020, and the Town and the City of Boynton Beach need to sit down to develop an agreement. Mr. Paterniti stated that Boynton Beach hopes to take over the operations and maintenance of the water system lines within the Town.

Mr. Paterniti said Boynton Beach is hoping to take over operations and maintenance of the water system the lines. He clarified that currently, the town owns the pipes and while Boynton Beach owns the water. He further stated that they own the water meters, but they don't have control of the water quality as it goes through the town. The City of Boynton Beach would like to maintain that continuity. Having control of the water quality as it goes through the town is a best practice, and Boynton Beach wants to modify the agreement and present that to the Town. Boynton Beach is also trying to determine whether or not wastewater will be part of that agreement

Mr. Paterniti explained that Boynton Beach develops and treats water to regulatory standards, but once it leaves their distribution system and heads into the town distribution system, they no longer have control of that water until it reaches the meter which Boynton Beach owns.

Member Kirn asked if this was related to the chain of custody issue and could that be explained. Mr. Kirn also asked what problems the gap presents with the Environmental Protection Agency or regulations.

Assistant City Manager, Colin Groff replied that five years ago Boynton Beach started looking at the issues. He said one issue that comes with not having chain of custody is when there is a main break. The Town doesn't have a utility department and rely on a contractor to perform the work. Ultimately, Boynton Beach has to come into the Town and to perform the work. He stated there are some water system lines within the Town that need upgrades and they have been planned for. Mr. Groff explained that if there is a problem with a line and Boynton Beach doesn't control that line, they have a difficult time with their regulatory agents. Not controlling the water from the point of creation to the point of distribution to the customer is not a best practice. If there is an issue on either side it makes it difficult to navigate and know which party needs to take responsibility for problems that arise. He noted that the initial reason for the current situation was cost, which they have remedied by taking away the surcharge for the Town. Mr. Groff

expressed that Boynton Beach desires to rework the interlocal agreement, which is already needed, but to include gaining chain of custody.

Beginning of slide presentation.

Mr. Paterniti stated they developed concept plans and cost estimates for three categories with two options for each: a gravity or vacuum system for each of those. The three categories are the five condominium communities that Ocean Ridge asked them to look at, the remainder of the Town serving the residential homes and the HOAs through the entire Town, and utilizing their Beachfront plants (Oceanfront Park) to serve the Town Hall and Wellington Arms.

Member Kirn clarified that some of the data was incorrect and stated that Ocean Manor has 20 units, Turtle Beach has 26 units, and Crown Colony has 148 units for a total of 366.

Mr. Paterniti explained that for the five condominium communities, the gravity pumping system utilizes the existing collection system. This will remain in place. It collects the wastewater from the five condominium communities and from these areas and delivers it to the package plants or the pumping stations at that point Boynton Beach is looking at replacing the package plants with a refurbished or a new pumping station where that will collect the wastewater and send it to the master pumping station that was planned for Crown Colony. The existing layout of the proposed plan which shows in light blue abandoning the package plants as well as utilizing the pumping stations that are those package plants to lift it from the gravity system. The package plants and convert that into a pumping station refurbished send it to the Crown Colony. Boynton Beach currently has a contract with a contractor to do the intracoastal crossing so that's in the planning stages. This option is based on the actual cost that we are getting from the pumping station

Member Kirn asked if the gravity system leading to the existing package plants will remain in place and does that mean that the responsibility for the internal sewage pipes belong to the Associations or is it something that Boynton Beach would be willing to take over as part of the whole infrastructure change?

Mr. Paterniti replied yes, that the utility would take over those pipes as long as there's an easement and Boynton Beach can get to those mains. He stated that some of the internal ones that are really close to the condominiums may be too tight to get to. He noted Boynton Beach will have to delineate a certain portion where they would take over the gravity system leading to the package points.

Member Kirn asked if there was an alternative to the master pumping station at Crown Colony.

Mr. Paterniti said Boynton Beach has not evaluated alternatives for that location as of right now. They intend to remove and replace the current package plant leaving the

existing pumping station and have budgeted for a new package plant in their concept costs.

Member Kirn highly recommended to City of Boynton Beach that they meet with the board of Crown Colony because these changes are for private property and they will need to convince the board that this is in their best interest and tell them what is in it for them. Member Kirn estimates that between 80,000 and 160,000 gallons a day depending on the season, and noted that is a fairly large amount of sewage traveling across the intracoastal. He explained that the board and community will be sensitive to the size, expected easement rights, location, and any disruptions the construction and maintenance will cause.

Mr. Paterniti agreed that a meeting should occur with Crown Colony regarding removal of the package plant as part of this project.

Mr. Paterniti addressed concerns over the costs displayed on the slides stating they were just preliminary numbers, but ultimately, everybody pays their fair share. He stated that in utility, there's no extra money being made, everybody pays per gallon and put in their fair share one way or another.

Mr. Groff said Boynton Beach was still working with the cost numbers but that they do have a \$300,000 grant for Oceanfront Park from the state to upgrade the plant so that would offset these costs and they would use it toward the treatment facility which would lower the entire cost for everyone.

Mr. Paterniti showed various slides showing different concepts of systems. Presentation available to view at Town Hall.

#### **DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

##### **4. Sunshine Law Overview by the Town Attorney (02:03:58)**

Town Attorney Shutt gave each Committee Member informational Sunshine Law literature. He explained that the Sunshine Law prohibits the exchange of paper or electronic information outside of approved meetings. He asked that members that have any questions about the Sunshine Law to immediately reach out to himself or Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens for clarification.

#### **DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

##### **5. Discussion with Town Engineer (01:34:00)**

Town Engineer Lisa Tropepe welcomed and congratulated the newly appointed Committee Members. She remarked the importance of forming the Committee to work with Town Staff, but also noted the significance of educating the Town Commission and citizens regarding designs, how much concepts will cost, and what gravity and vacuum system do and how it affects different properties. Mrs. Tropepe recalled back in 1994, that the Town put in over 10,000 linear feet of water distribution line. She stated the

Town has had good intergovernmental cooperation with the City of Boynton Beach throughout the years. She said in past years, the Town created an Environmental Committee to start discussions about the same issues discussed today. In October 1999, the Town was affected by Hurricane Irene and the focus shifted to storm water systems.

Town Engineer Tropepe remarked that Florida has a new governor whose focus has been more on environmental issues with respect to more urban areas switching from septic to sewer. She continued that there has been a more proactive movement up in Florida, that some counties have a mandate that everyone must move to a wastewater collection system. She expressed that although we do not have that mandate in Palm Beach County, it is only a matter of time before it happens. Town Engineer Tropepe stated that the City of Boynton Beach surcharge waiver was standard, and something her residential barrier island town experienced with their septic to sewer conversion. She stressed that there is a somewhat urgent situation because the condominium units on the south end of Town and Oceanfront Park appear to have systems with a short life span.

#### **DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

##### 6. Discussion with Financial Consultant, Raftelis (01:24:09)

Tony Hairston introduced himself as the Vice President of Raftelis, a Financial Consultant Firm. Mr. Hairston and his colleague Rob Lurie stated that Raftelis is a firm that specializes in financial and management issues with public utilities. Mr. Hairston most recently has worked with septic to sewer in the Florida Keys. Mr. Lurie was involved in the one of the states first big septic to sewer conversions in Sarasota County.

Mr. Hairston told the Committee that their purpose for attending today was to gather information, hear from the Oversight Committee; and most importantly, learn what the important vision for the Town is.

Mr. Hairston said he looks forward to getting directions from the Committee and learning from Town Engineer Lisa Tropepe and Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens and Town Staff to ensure they understand all the parts from the utility perspective from but also a broader perspective from the town itself and what is its objectives are.

#### **DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

##### 7. Set Meeting Schedule (01:56:00)

Chair Hennigan moved to set up a meeting in August to decide how exploratory this idea is to and to decide the priority of needs and possibility of solutions of where and how in the Town these items are going to occur. Chair Hennigan further stated that each member comes from different locations in the town and have different perspectives. He suggested that those differences should be aired before they are in the position that to give direction or make choices. Chair Hennigan stressed the importance to educate the Commission and that is may be a process that will take some time.

SEPTIC TO SEWER CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES JULY 15, 2019

Committee Members and Town Staff coordinated and decided the next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 9AM. A regular day and time of the month will be decided on at the next meeting.

Chair Hennigan called for public comment.

Terry Brown, Harbor Drive South, commented that Member Kirn was the only person to mention recurring charges. He said the South Central Station, which is owned by both Boynton Beach and Delray Beach, is approaching 80% capacity in the winter months and in need of upgrading. Mr. Brown was concerned it would fail like many other plants in the state, and that customers of the plant would be stuck with recurring costs that are beyond their control.

Lisa Ritota, 4 Hudson Avenue, commented that there needs to be a conversation about residents who have failing septic tanks that need replacing, and the cost of replacement versus investing in this whole new system that is a few years away. Mrs. Ritota also wanted to know what happens to the old septic tanks and drain fields, if a new system is put into place.

Christine Schulte, 7 Adams Road, wanted to make a correction regarding the consulting study. She believes at a prior hearing that the consulting study fee was capped at 30,000, no longer \$45,000. Acting Town Manager Tracey Stevens stated that the Town budgeted \$30,000 for Fiscal Year 2020 for the consulting study.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 12:08 PM

Minutes prepared by Assistant Town Clerk Gatewood, and adopted by the Septic to Sewer Citizens' Advisory Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tracey L. Stevens, MMC, Town Clerk