

**TOWN OF EDGARTOWN  
BOARD OF WASTE WATER COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 2019**

**WASTE WATER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Glen S. Searle, Chairman  
Mr. Scott Ellis, Commissioner  
Mr. Sean E. Murphy, Commissioner

**EWWD STAFF PRESENT:**

Mr. William Meader, Junior Operator  
Mr. Joseph Rock, Plant Operator  
Mrs. Pia Webster, Administrative Assistant

**OTHER EDGARTOWN TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

Mr. James M. Hagerty, Town Administrator  
Ms. Margaret E. Serpa, Chairman, Board of Selectmen

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Chris Alley, Project Manager, Schofield, Barbini & Hoehn, Inc.  
Mr. Noah Asimow, Vineyard Gazette  
Ms. Paddy Moore, Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard  
Mr. Edward Olivier, CFO, Martha's Vineyard Hospital  
Ms. Denise Schepici, President and CEO, Martha's Vineyard Hospital  
Mr. S. Christopher Scott, Trustee, Martha's Vineyard Hospital

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

The Board of Waste Water Commissioners of the Town of Edgartown held a Special Meeting on Thursday, December 12, 2019, at 4:00 p.m. in a special location, the Fred B. Morgan, Jr. Selectmen's Meeting Room in the Edgartown Town Hall, 70 Main Street, Edgartown, Mass. At 4:01 p.m. Chairman Glen S. Searle called the meeting to order. Also present from the Board were Waste Water Commissioners Scott Ellis and Sean E. Murphy.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**AMENDED MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 29, 2018.**

Commissioner Murphy made a motion to approve the Amended Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 29, 2018, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. The minutes had been amended as follows: (a) in the third line on page 1, insertion of the word “*AMENDED*” before the word “MINUTES”; and (b) in the penultimate paragraph on page 10, second line, insertion of the words “or applications for two active functioning pumps” after the words “on the Kager-Clairmont line”. There being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 20, 2019.**

Commissioner Ellis made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 20, 2019 as written, seconded by Chairman Searle. Commissioner Murphy stated that he would abstain since he had not attended the meeting. There being no discussion, the motion to approve carried, with Chairman Searle and Commissioner Ellis voting aye and Commissioner Murphy abstaining.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH ROCK AS ACTING FACILITIES MANAGER.**

Commissioner Murphy pointed out that since the November 27 departure of David Thompson, and until a final decision was made by the Board, someone with a Grade 6 Certificate had to manage the Plant. Plant Operator Joseph Rock had recently passed his Grade 6 examination; so, said Commissioner Murphy, it made sense for him to serve in the interim. Commissioner Murphy made a motion to appoint Joseph Rock temporarily as Acting Facilities Manager, seconded by Commissioner Ellis.

Town Administrator James M. Hagerty remarked that it had become plain to him how much of the Facilities Manager’s job involved procurement issues. For the time being, in the absence of a Facilities Manager with that kind of experience, a lot of the onus had been on him to handle the intricacies of the procurement process for the Department. He wondered, he said, if the Board had considered Water Superintendent Bill Chapman – a person with extensive experience in that area – as a joint facilities manager for both Departments.

Commissioner Ellis, who also serves on the Water Commission, suggested that some sort of stipend could be offered to Superintendent Chapman, in addition to his usual salary, and recommended that both Boards meet in joint session to discuss the possibility of Superintendent Chapman overseeing both Departments.

Mr. Rock said that “obviously” Mr. Chapman was qualified to handle areas like procurement and contracts; but the Water Superintendent was only a Grade 4 license. As a Grade 7 Facility, continued Mr. Rock, the Edgartown Plant had to have permanently in charge a Grade 6 Operator granted a Grade 7 license. Administrative Assistant Pia Webster and Department Assistant Jennifer Smyth had been very helpful to him with regard to regulatory and procedural matters, he said.

Commissioner Murphy noted that the Waste Water Department had not had both a Facilities Manager and a Chief Operator; both positions had been handled by Mr. Thompson. Mr. Hagerty said that he was “burned out” and that the Department needed someone in the position who knew procurement. Chairman Searle clarified with Mr. Hagerty that as Facilities Manager, Mr. Chapman would be in a position to handle all the paperwork. The discussion continued. “I recommend combining the two Departments,” stated Mr. Hagerty.

Commissioner Murphy inquired about the financial structure of the Water Department, which he knew differed from Waste Water’s. It’s a Revolving Fund, answered Mr. Hagerty. Finances would be separate, said Admin Assistant Webster. The discussion wound down. It was agreed that members of the Water Commission and Department staff would meet with Waste Water Commissioners and staff at the next Waste Water Commission Regular Meeting on December 18. Chairman Searle conducted a voice vote on Commissioner Murphy’s motion, which carried unanimously.

**VOTE: AWARD OF REPLACEMENT OF TWO  
18-INCH BED VALVES AT THE FACILITY.**

Mr. Rock provided background on the Request For Quotes for the Bed Valve Replacement at the Facility, to which two contractors had responded: Farrissey Tele-Comm, Inc. of Oak Bluffs at \$22,000; and Fenner Construction, LLC of Chilmark at \$16,400. Mr. Rock related that the quotes had come in high so there was some question as to whether the work could be started in the current fiscal year. Admin Assistant Webster said that they were waiting to hear of the results of the Department’s Municipal Vulnerability Program Grant application.

Commissioner Ellis made a motion to award the job of replacing Two 18-inch Effluent Bed Valves at the Edgartown Waste Water Treatment Plant to Fenner Construction of Chilmark, Mass. at their quoted cost of Sixteen Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$16,400), provided adequate funds were secured for completion of the work. Commissioner Murphy offered a second, and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**VOTE: AWARD OF CHASE ROAD SUBSTATION MOTOR REPLACEMENT.**

Mr. Rock related that the windings on the motor in Pump No. 2 at the Chase Road Substation had failed on November 22 and that Department Operators had been doing emergency upkeep on Pump No. 1 ever since. The Thanksgiving holiday had delayed a response from the sales representative from Williamson New England Electric Motor Service Corp.; so the Department did not receive a quote – \$22,757.16 – until December 5. From there staff had needed to arrange with the Chief Procurement Officer to request a waiver from the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance of the advertising requirements of M.G.L. Ch. 30 39M; the waiver had been granted earlier that day.

Commissioner Murphy made a motion to award the Chase Road Substation Motor Replacement Project to Williamson New England Motor Service Corp. at a cost of Twenty-Two Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty-Seven Dollars and Sixteen Cents (\$22,757.16). Commissioner Ellis provided a second, and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

Chairman Searle stated that the Board would not be going into Executive Session. At this point – 4:17 p.m. – Commissioner Murphy, who has served as an attorney for Martha’s Vineyard Hospital and thus had a conflict with regard to the final item, left the Special Meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**CONTINUED PRESENT/DISCUSS: 490 EDGARTOWN-VH ROAD PROJECT.**

Chris Alley, Project Manager at Schofield, Barbini & Hoehn, Inc., passed out a site plan titled “Working Plan Edgartown, Mass. Prepared For Town of Edgartown & MV Hospital December 12, 2019,” which, he said, was slightly amended from the plan distributed at the previous meeting.<sup>1</sup> The hospital, said Mr. Alley, had the Norton property at 490 Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road under agreement. Chairman Searle asked Martha’s Vineyard Hospital CFO Edward Olivier if papers had been signed. On December third, replied Mr. Olivier.

There were other issues, continued Mr. Alley, one involving a transfer of the back portion of the property to satisfy the requirements of the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program-listed habitat for the endangered imperial moth on another Norton property being looked at for expansions of the Boys’ & Girls’ Club and the New Westside Cemetery.

Another hurdle, said Mr. Alley, was the wastewater flow the hospital’s project would produce and the Plant’s capacity to handle that flow. Still another was fact that this flow would originate from outside the Edgartown Great Pond Watershed (EGPW), in addition to involving an expansion of the sewer system outside the current development envelope. Mr. Alley related that he had had a discussion with MassDEP, leading him to increase the gallons-per-day wastewater influent production from 15,000 gallons to 17,100 gallons.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, there was some question about the connection to the Morgan Woods Substation, with a possible upgrade to the existing infrastructure there being necessary.

Mr. Alley pointed to an area on the plan labeled “Baron’s Land Trust,” a site in the area of Hallsgate, the property through which the hospital would have to obtain an easement in order to tie in to the Morgan Woods Substation. He said he had met with Ben Hall and that Mr. Hall seemed more amenable to an easement than he had expected. Mr. Hall had told him he could represent to the Board that the granting of an easement was possible. Mr. Alley had also spoken to Keith Fenner of Fenner Construction, LLC, who had assured him that the installation of 700 feet of directionally drilled four-inch pipe was do-able.

The final piece of the plan was up to the Waste Water Commission, indicated Mr. Olivier, who added that the Board members had to consider what was right for the Island as a whole. Denise Schepici, President and CEO of Martha’s Vineyard Hospital, then read a written statement to the Board, summarized as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> See page 2-4 of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 20, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, page 2. “They were looking at 70 beds in five buildings for the nursing area and 60 units of workforce housing, producing a wastewater output of 15,000 gallons per day.”

*The only Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) on the Vineyard was Windemere Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (WNR), and at 25 years old, its model was outdated. The prime payer for SNF services was Medicaid, and that left a gap in resident coverage of \$45,000 per resident per year. The hospital currently subsidized losses at WNR at upward of \$2 million per year.*

*The lack of affordable work-force housing meant that 60 percent of WNR workers were off-Island agency workers.*

*The current facility could not be renovated to attract self-pay clients; thus, the hospital was stuck with the 85 percent Medicaid census. There were options and open beds elsewhere, but these were off-Island.*

*The losses being covered by the hospital were not sustainable.*

*The Island community was aging, with the population of Dukes County over the age of 64 expected to double between 2020 and 2060; by 2030 one in three Island residents would be 65 or older. As the community aged, the need for a various services to assist older residents in maintaining their independence would increase. The hospital was offering one solution to caring for a segment of the elder population and was asking the Waste Water Commission's help in bringing that plan one step closer to reality.*

*The hospital had engaged with Navigator LLC to create a Green House Model alternative to the outdated institutionalized model for dependent elder care. An offer by the hospital had been made and accepted on December 3 to purchase the 26-acre lot at 490 Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road to build five 14-bed "homes" for 70 residents, as well as 60 bedrooms of affordable, year-round work-force housing.*

*Edgartown was the only Town with the wastewater treatment capacity and sewer infrastructure needed for a project this size. The Waste Water Commission needed to decide whether this project and the extension of the system outside the EGPW and the existing development envelope merited an exemption from the Department's policy.*

*Ms. Schepici understood from the "Mileposts" document dated November 15, 2019 that there were a number of requirements outside the purview of the Waste Water Commission that were the responsibility of the applicants.*

*This project also had the potential to assist the Boys' & Girls' Club project, as the hospital was committed to devising a solution to replace moth habitat that would be lost at the site of that project.*

*Ms. Schepici was of a mind that this project, which would benefit the many, outweighed "the wants of a few Sengekontacket watershed residents who have approached the Commission in the past seeking to connect to the sewer."*

With Ms. Schepici's statement finished, Chairman Searle inquired about the number of beds that Windemere was licensed for. One hundred six, answered Ms. Schepici, but we currently have 46 filled. "We've capped our census at 51," she added. Acting Facilities Manager Rock was asked if the Plant had the capacity for the additional 17,100 gallons per day that would be produced by the project. We do have the capacity for that, said Mr. Rock. Year-round, he explained, the

Plant was fine. But during the surge in the summer months, the Plant came dangerously close to the 80-percent-of-capacity mark.<sup>3</sup> “I think that’s why Dave was cautious,” said Mr. Rock, referring to former Facilities Manager David Thompson’s “Mileposts” memorandum.

Chairman of the Board of Selectman Margaret E. Serpa related that her aunt had resided in Windemere for 13 years and that she had been well cared for. When her family was running out of money toward the end of her aunt’s life, the Windemere staff had worked hard to help the family manage the payments and find solutions. Chairman Serpa’s own mother had been unable to get a bed in Windemere and had had to reside in a nursing home off-Island toward the end of her life. How much better it would have been, she said, to have had her living nearby.

Mr. Alley addressed the Board once more and asked the members to give the applicants “a sentence that you have the capacity” for their project. Admin Assistant Webster pointed out that the Plant had exceeded 600,000 gallons of influent on two days last August; that was well over the 80 percent level. Looking at Acting Facilities Manager Rock, she asked if it made sense to consult with engineer Ian Catlow of Tighe & Bond about accepting 17,100 gallons of wastewater per day from outside the EPGW or would he be comfortable just going ahead.

When Mr. Rock did not provide a yes-or-no answer, Mrs. Webster repeated the question. She also mentioned the blowback that could be expected from Edgartown residents outside the Great Pond Watershed who had been routinely turned down for sewer service. Town Administrator Hagerty interjected that the voters of Edgartown had always shown their support for the Town’s Waste Water Facility, with that support having boosted the tax rate even recently. The Admin Assistant responded that there was no question in her mind about the support of the Selectmen, the Financial Advisory Committee and the voters for the Plant. The question here was more immediate. “Yes, we can support the flow now,” said Mr. Rock.

The discussion wound down. Chairman Searle made a motion to continue to work with the applicants on the project, allocating 17,100 gallons per day of Plant capacity to the project. Commissioner Ellis provided a second, and the motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Olivier and Ms. Schepici thanked the Commissioners.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Searle made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting, which Commissioner Ellis seconded. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. The Regular Meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pia Webster  
Administrative Assistant

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<sup>3</sup> *In the Commonwealth, when a wastewater facility averages 80 percent of capacity within a given year, the Town is required to upgrade that facility.*

APPROVED:

BOARD OF WASTE WATER COMMISSIONERS  
TOWN OF EDGARTOWN

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Glen S. Searle, Chairman

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Scott Ellis, Commissioner

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Sean E. Murphy, Commissioner