

South Bethany Canal Water Quality Committee (SBCWQC)

June 20, 2022

Meeting Conducted at Town Hall with Phone Dial Out to 1 member

Committee Members: Derek Abbott, Bob Fisher, Karin Gander (by phone), Gary Lessing, Brian Moroz, Chris Vanuga, Dave Wilson

Resident: Peter Trelenberg

Town Council Liaison: Tim Shaw

Town Manager: Maureen Hartman

Meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm.

1. Minutes from May 23, 2022 meeting were approved.
2. Town Council Update
 - a. Tim Shaw was introduced to the committee as our new Town Council Liaison. Our prior Liaison asked to stay on as a member of the committee for this fiscal year, which was approved.
3. Update on Canal Maintenance Program
 - a. Envirotech was selected to provide floating wetlands maintenance and general cleaning of the canals from the three companies that provided bids.
 - b. Maureen executed a contract with them, and a meeting is scheduled with Envirotech for June 21. Timing of their work will be decided in the next week.
4. Discussion on Algae Bloom and Special Remediation
 - a. The algae bloom is the worst since 2012. In some of the canals, the algae have started to decay and sink – significantly depleting the oxygen levels in our canals.
 - b. The Committee, Maureen and Tim reached a consensus that we need to look into becoming more self-reliant in dealing with the algae and other maintenance issues, since DNREC no longer appears to have the resources to help us in a timely manner. DNREC was originally scheduled to clean the canals in late May or early June. Their equipment broke down with no schedule for it to be available. Chris has attempted to find a third-party vendor to harvest the algae; however, most are not available until later in the summer when the Algae will likely no longer be on the surface. He will hear later this week if it may be possible to do the work in early July. If we can find a vendor, we will request Town Council approve using a portion of the \$15,000 contingency funds that have been budgeted.
 - c. We discussed buying a multipurpose amphibious vehicle to help clean the canals and Chris has started to get budgetary pricing. The cost of the equipment along with required options, trailer, etc. is estimated to be between \$100 - \$200K. Tim requested that the committee develop a proposal that will consider buying equipment and including all operating costs. Also need to

- include the cost option to hire a third party to do the annual cleaning services as well.
- d. The committee agreed to develop a plan to bring to Town Council asap, so that we have a solution in place by the new calendar year.
5. Discussion of the Draft Mission and Purpose
 - a. We agreed to delay this discussion until the next meeting because of time constraints.
 6. The Committee voted to approve the addition of Peter Trelenberg as a committee member and to present him to the Town Council for approval.
 7. Focus area updates and discussions
 - a. Code Review & Education. Bob is having discussions with CIB on model regulations for improving water quality. He will supply an update on ideas at the next meeting. Bob will send this Committee a draft letter to the community on recommendations that can help improve our water quality.
 - b. Wetlands. Gary is developing proposals for grant funding to expand the floating wetlands.
 - c. Oyster Gardens. Gary worked with CIB to remove the old street end oyster gardens. They were all removed by early June.
 - d. Grant Funding. Chris continues to discuss grant proposals with DEMA. We have had general support from the Town Council to fund a grant writer when we are ready.
 - e. Water Quality Monitoring and Analysis. Dave discussed the status of our ongoing sampling program. Brian shared that it's difficult to compare our data to other local communities because they do not have disciplined sampling programs like South Bethany.
 8. Meeting schedule for the new fiscal year - the Committee agreed to keep meetings on the third Monday of the month. However, the time will move to 10:00 am.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.