



Town of South Bethany Committee Report from February 20, 2023

The Canal Water Quality Committee met on February 20th at 10:00am online with all members attending except for Karin Gander.

Town Council Liaison Tim Shaw was present.

Guests: Carmen Holland, Journalist for WRDE

A Resident from 212 Bayshore Dr.

Minutes were approved and adopted for the 1/17/23 meeting.

TC Updates: Tim updated the Committee on the correspondence with DNREC on the approvals to continue disposal of the Algae spoils in the same manner and location as DNREC has done previously at the Fresh Ponds location just north of Fred Hudson Road. While there have been positive discussions, we don't yet have the final approval documentation. Concern remains that without this official approval, we will have to cancel our contract with our back-up contractor, Solitude, for harvesting Algae in April and an additional option in May, due to a required 30 day cancellation notice condition; otherwise, we will lose our deposit.

Solitude is scheduled for their "walk-through" of the entire SB Canal System on Monday March 13 at 11am, to fully assess the work as well as the ability to access for their equipment along with transferring collected algae on to a vehicle for transport to the Fresh Pond site. Again, assuming we get final approvals as noted above. From this onsite review, they will provide any additional requirements or issues they may have in completing the Algae harvesting. Chris reminded the Committee that the intent remains to have DNREC perform the Algae harvesting as they historically have. If they are unable to due to similar issues like last year's weather related demands of their limited staff that took precedence over the South Bethany algae harvesting, then we would have the Solitude as the back-up and/or additional support if algae proves to be significant like last year.

Tim updated the CWQC that the renovation work at Town Hall is progressing, with the plan that we may be able to resume in-person meetings in April.

Canal Maintenance Work Group: Discussed the Solitude visit and confirmed that Chris and Pete would attend the meeting along with the Town staff. Chris will be pulling together key questions related to the work to discuss that day, along with following up with Maureen on some of the access options that were being investigated. A special update meeting will be scheduled on March 14th at 4pm online with the CWQC to provide key updates and potential

recommendations and approval for any additional actions from the Solitude site visit along with any updates from DNREC on the approvals.

Code/Communications: Bob continues to work with Community Relations Committee on plans to collaborate on an Earth Day related project, as well as getting more information on keeping our Canals clean in SBPOA communications and other resident information.

Floating Wetlands (FW): Gary has made progress on getting additional input and guidance on the merits of continuing this program but has some additional research and discussions to complete. We will be scheduling a special meeting on this topic in the near future.

Grants: Chris provided update that the Town submitted a grant application with DEMA for one of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs for a flood safety feasibility study for the York Road area in the South section of the Town. We should be getting some feedback in March.

We discussed again the availability of staff at the University of Delaware to help with grant funding identification and grant writing (Grant Assistance Program or "GAP"). We need to schedule the call or meeting with the GAP team with selected Town staff and CWQC members.

On a related matter, Chris spoke with part time South Bethany resident June Groary who splits time here and in Long Boat Key, FL which has canals and similar nuisance and other more severe flooding and overall resiliency issues. She has volunteered to help this Committee with the knowledge and insights she has gained since Chairing the Drainage Committee in FL for many years and that is dealing with very similar issues as we have here in South Bethany. June will also be putting Chris in touch with the Engineering Firm they are using, and have been very helpful and knowledgeable on these related matters. Chris will follow-up and report back.

Water Quality: Dave provided updates on the condition of the canals, which are still being sampled 1x per month. He noted that Algae is already starting to appear in a couple of Canal ends. This is likely a result of the mild winter, resulting in the water being 10 degrees warmer than last year in January and 5 degrees warmer in February versus last year. This of course raised concerns from the Committee that it might suggest another challenging Algae season for the canals like last year.

Dave is still waiting on the final report from the nutrient analysis that were submitted to University of Delaware several months ago; expected any time now. We discussed seeing if Ed Whereat from this UD program might be willing to join one of our future meetings for a discussion of the results and overall water quality and related issues. Dave will inquire.

Finally, a suggestion was made to have a broader water quality seminar for South Bethany homeowners. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

New business: None presented.

The committee agreed to change the date of the next meeting from March 20th to March 27th, at 10:00am online. Members of the public are welcome.

Reported by Chris Vanuga – Chairman