



## Town of South Bethany Committee Report from July 17, 2023

The Canal Water Quality Committee met on July 17th at 10:00am at the Town Hall and online Zoom. All members were present except John Roberts.

Town Council Liaison Tim Shaw was present.

Minutes were approved and adopted for the 6/20/23 meeting.

TC Updates: Tim provided update that Town Council agreed to move forward to establish a new Flood Mitigation committee. More information will be forthcoming including applications to submit your interest. Tim also shared that the Town found out that Fenwick secured assistance by Solitude for algae harvesting this year, but that DNREC contracted for and paid for this. Town is going to follow-up on this to understand the situation, particularly relevant to our own efforts that we funded. He will report back.

Reorganizing Sub-Committees: Chris provided the sub-committee assignments based on the input provided by each member. There will be the same five sub-committees including making the Canal Maintenance an ongoing committee, and everyone will be on two sub-committees. Each group was instructed to self-organize and determine who will be the Chair, along with setting up any standing meeting times, etc.

Canal Maintenance: Discussion on the need to get new contract(s) in place to address the fall-clean-up of the canals and the pruning of the Floating Wetlands. Envirotech proposals previously shared with the Committee were discussed again. Chris was directed to contact Envirotech to get updated pricing to do the Fall clean-up inclusive of the canals and the floating wetlands versus separate contracts and pricing as they are now. The committee is looking for savings if the work is combined. This will be looked at further, along with the analysis of hiring seasonal staff versus contracting these services, in the new sub-committee. Also need to include this specific work in next year's budget process as well.

As to the Algae clean-up with Solitude, reconfirmed the overall positive feedback and impact; good and valuable lessons learned. A formal debrief and after-action-review is scheduled with Solitude on 8/1. Chris and Pete will join, along with Tim and the South Bethany Town Manager. Looking forward, for the next clean-up there needs to be additional involvement from the Town or Committee members on the verification of the work effort and completion per the terms of the contract. The Committee requested that the Town include this role and scope along with other specific performance requirements in any new contract.

Code/Communications: Bob had a call with the new leadership of the SBPOA about getting on their next meeting agenda to discuss a 'neighborhood watch' type of program for the canals. We are waiting to hear on the date for their next meeting.

Floating Wetlands (FW): Gary provided an update on continued discussions with various stakeholders he has had including finalizing the Town Council members meetings shortly. Discussion on the need for Town guidance on the acceptability of South Bethany homeowners being able to procure and maintain their own Floating Wetlands. This came from inquiries from residents. Gary will determine the next steps to explore this further. The committee continues to be in agreement that based on the condition of the current FW and their expected lives, we need to determine when this program should be officially shut down and deteriorated mats removed as this was a pilot program. Discussion was held on the importance of issuing a "final report" on this initial program along with a proposed transition plan for a replacement FW 2.0 program to bring forward to Town Council for consideration. This will all be discussed in the new FW sub-committee and specific next steps brought back to the full Committee at a future date for discussion and any other actions.

Grants: Still awaiting final word on our HMGP grant. Chris updated the Committee that the next HMGP workshop will be held on 8/1/23 and that we would have some representation from South Bethany Town staff and this Committee. Will report highlights at the next meeting.

Water Quality: Dave provided an update on the continued monitoring efforts and the general conditions of the Canals. Current volunteer squad of six residents take readings at 11 fixed sites every Tuesday morning during the season. Dave sends the summary report to University of Delaware and the Citizen Monitoring program. Current readings are consistent with mid-summer with high water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen (DO) levels.

Other Committee Business: Tim handed out copies of the final Resiliency Implementation Plan for South Bethany that was completed in March. While most of the information will be more relevant for the new to-be-formed Flood Mitigation Committee, we may find some of the information helpful for this Committee. Please review before the next meeting.

No public comment.

The next meeting will be on August 21st at 10:00am as a hybrid – in-person and Zoom. Members of the public are welcome. Reported by Chris Vanuga – Chairman