

MINUTES
DRINKING WATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
July 15, 2004

MEMBERS PRESENT: Delores Coffing, Ray Hadley, Lyle Hendrickson, Gale Holbrook, Perry Rahn, Foster Sawyer, Ed Yelick

STAFF PRESENT: Scott Anderson, Marcia Elkins, Van Lindquist, Sharlene Mitchell, Ted Vore, Sig Zvejnieks

Call to Order

Yelick called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. noting that a quorum was not present at this time.

Rapid City On-Site Wastewater System Ordinance

In response to a question from Yelick, Vore advised the Committee that the City Council has requested that the Committee review the proposed ordinance to determine if there is interest in moving forward with its implementation and the proposed fee structure. Discussion followed regarding the status of the Pennington County On-Site Wastewater System ordinance.

Holbrook briefly reviewed the County's current process for inspection and approval of new septic systems. Anderson addressed the complaint process noting the recent system failures and the reasons for those failures. Discussion followed regarding the inspection and permitting process for new systems.

Anderson indicated that the County Planning Department has a geological engineer on staff handling the inspection and permitting process for new systems. He addressed the issues associated with a recent installation in the Copper Oaks subdivision. Anderson indicated that it is their policy to accommodate the applicant noting their willingness to assist with identification of an appropriate site for installation of the system.

Lindquist reviewed the West Dakota Water project to provide geotechnical, digitizing, contaminate and vulnerability mapping by quadrangles. He indicated that this information will provide the City and County with the necessary tools to address such issues as location of on-site septic systems and ground water contamination.

In response to a question from Elkins, Anderson addressed the process utilized in distribution of the "Homeowners Septic Tank Information" educational packets.

Coffing entered the meeting at this time (1:25 p.m.) constituting a quorum.

In response to a question from Holbrook, Vore indicated that the City Council supported the motion to refer the ordinance to this Committee for their review and recommendation. Hadley clarified that Alderperson Kooiker presented the request to refer the ordinance to this Committee. Hadley indicated that he was not certain of Kooiker's impetus for the request.

Vore requested that the Committee review and comment on the final draft of the Rapid City On-Site Waste Water System Ordinance.

Hendrickson identified his concerns with the permitting of graywater systems. Sawyer addressed the bacteria found in kitchen sink water and express concern with permitting those

waters to access a graywater system. Discussion followed regarding the elimination of graywater systems. Elkins indicated that in times of drought, graywater systems provide a valuable resource for landscape watering. She encouraged retention of the graywater systems noting the need to more clearly define the term and acceptable sources. Zvejnieks addressed the impact eliminating graywater systems would have on the existing systems.

Discussion followed regarding the permitting and inspection process for the disposal of sludge pumped from septic systems.

Lindquist voiced support for the recommendation that graywater systems be retained noting their value as an alternative irrigation source. Hendrickson indicated that he would support retention of the graywater systems providing they posed no health hazard.

The Committee amended the Suitable Soil definition as follows: a soil that acts as an effective filter in the removal of organisms and suspended solids before the effluent reaches ~~any highly permeable earth formations such as joints in~~ **bedrock, gravels, or very coarse soils or ground water.**

In response to a question from Yelick, Vore indicated that upon failure of an on-site septic system the current City policy requires the system to be abandoned and the property connected to the City system. Elkins voiced support for continuing to require failed systems to be abandoned and the property connected to the City system.

Anderson addressed the new septic treatments systems being utilized in the County and questioned their allowance under Chapter 3, Section 4 of the ordinance. Discussion followed regarding the permitting process for non-standard on-site septic systems.

In response to a question from Yelick, Vore indicated that those documents identified as being in the Appendixes would be included in the City Council presentation.

Zvejnieks outlined his concerns with the individuals permitted to perform percolation test noting that the state regulations for this procedure are unclear and vague. Discussion followed regarding the percolation test and reporting process. The Committee supported the addition of a Procedures Sheet to be developed by staff that would identify the specific procedures required for performing percolation tests.

In response to a question, Vore clarified the process utilized by installers to certify that the system meets the required elevation above ground water. Discussion followed regarding the observation pit depth definition. The Committee amended the Wet Season Ground Water Determination as follows: In making this determination, it is necessary to bore or dig an adequate number of holes of convenient size in the proposed disposal area to a depth **of eight (8) feet below the surface** ~~at least 4 feet below the lowest point of the proposed absorption system.~~

Hendrickson proposed amending the minimum septic tank capacity to 1,500 gallons to eliminate the danger of overload should the residential structure be remodeled or expanded in the future. The Committee concurred with the recommendation and amended the minimum septic tank capacity to 1,500 gallons.

Due to time constraints, Yelick requested that the Committee address Chapter 12: Management and Administration. In response to a question, Zvejnieks clarified that the City currently issues on-site septic permits for properties inside City limits. Elkins indicated that the City could invoke police powers within the one mile of the City limits for protection of the public health and safety.

Zvejnieks commented on the staffing impact should the City's permitting responsibilities be expanded to include one-mile outside of City limits. Anderson addressed the impact the one-mile area would have on the County Ordinance, staffing, budgeting and revenues. In response to a question, Vore clarified that the monitoring program would also be effective in the one-mile area. Discussion followed regarding utilization of a Joint Agreement between the City and County to administer the on-site septic systems within the one-mile area.

In response to a question from Hadley, Zvejnieks indicated that the City currently does not assess a fee for on-site septic inspections.

The Committee then addressed the proposed fee structure for Existing systems and Renewals, New Systems, and Repaired or Modified Systems. Hendrickson indicated that a system must be pumped in order to facilitate a proper inspection. He stated that the total cost for the annual inspections would then include the inspection fee and pumping costs.

Hadley recommended that the Committee forward the ordinance with the changes identified today to the City Council for first reading. He requested that staff work with the Mayor's Office and the County Board of Commissioners to fill the current Committee vacancies. Hadley recommended that staff request that the Mayor establish five voting members as a quorum for the Committee to insure that a quorum can be secured should the City Council require additional review of the Ordinance.

Coffing moved to recommend approval of the Rapid City On-Site Waste Water System Ordinance as amended. Hadley seconded the motion.

Yelick offered a friendly amendment to the motion to allow upon further review of the ordinance that additional changes be forwarded to staff for inclusion to the document. Coffing and Hadley accepted the friendly amendment.

The motion to recommend approval of the Rapid City On-Site Waste Water System Ordinance as amended with the stipulation that upon further review of the ordinance by the Committee additional changes are to be forwarded to staff for inclusion into the document carried unanimously.

Other Business

Holbrook moved, Foster seconded and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2002 meeting.

Adjourn

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.