

# WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS

## COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

**MINUTES: April 12, 2010**

**MEMBERS:** Chair: Harckham; Legislators: Abinanti, Kaplowitz, Maisano, Myers, Rogowsky, Testa.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** STAFF: C. Crane, L. Goldstein; GUESTS: WCDEF Comm'r. T. Lauro; M. Wallach (CCE) [list of other attendees on file]

Committee on Environment called to order at 3:40 pm.

**Item(s) Discussed: Sound Shore WWTP Upgrades**

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Chair Harckham opened the meeting with a discussion of the upgrades to the WWTPs associated with the NYSDEC consent order and welcomed WCDEF Commissioner Tom Lauro. Commissioner Lauro described the background in development of the 2008 consent order, which requires an upgrade to the Mamaroneck and New Rochelle WWTPs for nitrogen removal and treats nitrogen discharges from all four Sound Shore WWTPs under one limit ('bubble').

The Mamaroneck WWTP design was timely completed and received ARRA loan forgiveness of \$27.5 million. The estimated installation of construction is \$26.7 million, and the media pre-purchase is \$6.5 million. The total project cost is presently \$45 million, which is \$10 million less than previously estimated. As well, the project received about \$3 million in green infrastructure grants. Residents will likely see tax increases beginning in 2012. The contractor presently has a staging area adjacent to the WWTP, at Harbor Island Park. The construction at Mamaroneck WWTP must be complete by Dec. 31, 2012 and in compliance by June 30, 2013.

Commissioner Lauro explained that the New Rochelle WWTP upgrade is underway, with the upgrade being divided into a nitrogen removal (BNR) component and a non-BNR component. The non-BNR construction was bid and Yonker Contracting received the award. Although the non-BNR design was timely completed to be eligible for ARRA funding, there was no ARRA funds available for this project. The design for the BNR component must be completed by the end of this year. In response to Chair Harckham's question on achieving compliance, Commissioner Lauro replied

that it is difficult to know, as the systems are biological processes. However, some data indicate that higher treatment levels are being observed (< 3 mg/L effluent nitrogen).

Upon query by Leg. Maisano, Commissioner Lauro stated he has not yet seen major advances in BNR technology, only minor improvements. As well, possible nitrogen effluent trades with Nassau County do not appear likely because the Great Neck WWTP will be upgraded rather than diverted to the south shore of Long Island. However, the county's 2008 consent order has a similar timeline with New York City, which leaves some time (between 2014-2017) to see if potential nitrogen trades with New York City may be possible.

Leg. Rogowsky commented that the previous infiltration and inflow (I/I) work had been conducted to address excess flow, which is a significant impact to the WWTP, now requiring plant expansion. Commissioner Lauro stated that the previous county SSES work and I/I remediation helped to mitigate the problem at the time (1994), but conditions have deteriorated somewhat since then, such as increased inflow (sump pumps) from residences. Leg. Abinanti commented that the I/I problem is related to flooding problems. Chair Harckham stated that the committee would consider this subject at a future date.

In response to Leg. Rogowsky's questions, Commissioner Lauro stated that a consultant is conducting a computer model to estimate non-point source contributions to Long Island Sound. Leg. Myers noted the consultant would also be reporting to the Flood Action Task Force. In addition, Commissioner Lauro stated that NYSDEC has not yet revised the nitrogen TMDL for Long Island Sound, but some studies suggest a 3 mg/L total nitrogen limit. To meet the consent order requirements, the County is now installing the limits of technology, but this may result in a slightly higher effluent amount (range between 3-4 mg/L).

Matt Wallach, Citizens Campaign, stated that collaboration with some municipalities could be productive because these local governments are also looking at their stormwater runoff and infrastructure (e.g., Port Chester). Commissioner Lauro noted that they are sharing some data and staying in touch with communities. Chair Harckham inquired about the environmental benefit projects in the consent order. Commissioner Lauro responded that the automatic tidal gate at Manursing Lake has

been installed and the wetlands restoration there should be completed by June, pending NYS Department of State approval. In addition, a remediation project is in its design phase. Overall, the environmental benefit projects are on schedule.

Upon the motion of Leg. Abinanti, seconded by Leg. Kaplowitz, the Committee approved the meeting minutes of March 15, 2010 and April 5, 2010 (all in favor). Upon the motion of Leg. Myers, seconded by Leg. Testa, the Committee voted to adjourn (all in favor). The meeting ended at approximately 4:15 p.m.

[audio recording of the meeting is on file]