TOWN OF BLUFFTON MAY RIVER WATERSHED ACTION PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Rotary Community Center, Oscar Frazier Park
Thursday, April 26, 2018

Present: Chris Burden, chair; Emmett McCracken; Eric Montie; Chris Shoemaker; Larry Toomer; Al Stokes

Absent: Wes Jones

Staff: Bryan McIlwee; Kim Jones; Beth Lewis

Guests: Eric Larson, Beaufort County Director Environmental Engineering & Land Management; Katie Herrera, Beaufort County MS4 Program Manager; Ekaterina Altman, University South Carolina PhD candidate.

Media: None

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL
1. Members introduced themselves.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
1. Mr. McCracken moved to adopt the Agenda as presented. Mr. Stokes seconded the motion. Unanimous ayes.

IV. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 22, 2018 MEETING MINUTES
1. Mr. McCracken moved to adopt the Minutes as presented. Mr. Shoemaker seconded the motion. Unanimous ayes.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT
1. None.

VI. NEW BUSINESS
1. None.

VII. OLD BUSINESS
1. Strategic Plan Priority – DRAFT Septic to Sewer Connection Program
   Ms. Jones provided an introduction and background information in regard to the Town’s Septic to Sewer Connection Program. Ms. Jones also provided a list of currently available funding sources and information regarding the Town’s current sanitary sewer extension program.

   Following the Committee’s feedback/input at the March 22, 2018 meeting, Ms. Jones reviewed staff’s DRAFT Septic to Sewer Conversion Program. Ms. Jones provided three different case studies to the Committee. Case studies detailed how point values would be awarded to a property owner to determine the level financial assistance the Town would provide for converting a property from a septic system to sanitary sewer. Point values were based upon criteria the Committee previously determined were critical in considering financial assistance to property owners. These criteria were as follows:
1. Household Income,
2. The age of the septic system,
3. The location of the property,
4. The commitment of the project area to connect to sewer within six months of notice, and
5. Ghost Road donation via quitclaim

Following Ms. Jones presentation, Committee members stated they felt the point value system was too complicated and wanted to see something simpler. The Committee felt something such as a lien on the property, a Town financing option, or neighborhood assistance income qualification would be more palatable to residents. Committee direction included:

1. Simplify the proposed Contribution in Aid Financial Incentive (Aid) Table;
2. Investigate the possibility of implementing a 25-year, forgiveable lien on properties that receive Financial Incentives (Aid);
3. Investigate if a portion of Town property taxes can be credited if a connection to sewer is made (essentially a Town tax forgiveness); and
4. Investigate if the Town can create a loan program to cover the construction costs to connect.

Additional input included:
1. Provide the amount of money available for connections.
2. Do not provide financial support to Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs)
3. Do not provide financial support to connect subdivisions.

Mr. McIlwee stated there is $311,000 currently available in support of sewer connections and that $250,000 will be budgeted annually. Additionally, he would provide the Committee with Planned Sanitary Sewer Extension and Connection Capital Improvement Project Budgets.

Ms. Jones stated she would speak with the Town’s Finance Department Director and that the Town already has a Neighborhood Assistance Program if the Committee only wanted to have income qualification for Town financial assistance.

2. Water Quality Monitoring (standing item)
Ms. Lewis provided an update on the following monitoring data:
   a. Weekly Sampling Update
   b. Microbial Source Tracking (MST) Update
   c. SCDHEC Shellfish Data

VIII. DISCUSSION
Ms. Burden stated that he had items to discuss following March’s Public Comment. Due to the length of the meeting it will be postponed until May.

IX. ADJOURNMENT
1. Unanimous decision to adjourn.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, May 24, 2018 @ 10:00 AM