

Meeting Minutes
Chatham County Environmental Review Advisory Committee (ERAC)
August 8, 2019 - 6:30 p.m. (6:33 start)
Performance Building Conference Room

Present:

Staff: Rachael Thorn, Watershed Protection Director

Members Present: Terry Schmidt, Terri Tyson, Madison Ponder, Ray Bode, Sarah Justice, Heather Holley, Jeannie Ambrose, Elaine Chiosso, Farrell Moose

Absent: Mary Beth Koza, Jeanette Ragland

Guests: Sharon Garbutt

1. Selection of the recording secretary for the meeting minutes – Madison Ponder

3. Introduction of new members

Jeannie Ambrose, Heather Holley, and Sarah Justice were introduced to ERAC for their first meeting as Committee members. Present members introduced themselves.

2. Approval of meeting minutes from June 13, 2019

Change: Jeannie Ambrose's name was corrected. Rachael's title as Watershed Protection Director was also corrected. Elaine Chiosso's name was corrected. These changes were made to minutes.

Approval: MP motioned to approve and EC seconded. Approved.

4. Public Input

SG: Asked about the Mountain Valley pipeline and related ordinances.

- RB discussed an easement requirement for the width of right away over a pipeline, depending on what that buried utility is.
- RT mentioned setbacks in zoning districts and that there may be situations in place, such as with RVs and trailers that aren't anchored. She also was going to look into this.

5. Siler City WWTP Update – Elaine Chiosso

EC: Updated ERAC on the Siler City WWTP. Reviewed what we know up to this point. Updated us on new changes including the Rocky River Watch filing a lawsuit against the state that the permit is not strict enough with allowable nitrogen levels at 667 pounds per day. RT also mentioned that Siler City is challenging the state that the permit is too strict.

- Key facts:
 - Mountaire does do some treatment to the wastewater, but it is Siler City's responsibility to treat the water before discharge because Siler City is the permit holder.
 - Siler City had an existing wastewater permit that the state opened

earlier than it was schedule for because the DEQ was expecting the plant to be an issue and had concerns for the Rocky River.

- The plant has not reached full production because of funding.
- Currently, the treatment plant in Siler City is inadequate, and they have submitted grant applications to upgrade this plant.
- The 2023 permit is still in place, but the permit has been changed at interim, and they should be operating under the modified permit.
- Steps we as a committee can take to monitor the Rocky River:
 - Look at existing data from the state. Refer to the Cape Fear Basin study, which had some samples from the Rocky River that were measured during storm events and times of low water levels.
 - Can use training programs like the Aquatic Data Hub to incorporate community members into the project who would be interested in volunteering and increase sampling of the Rocky River at low costs. The state does accept these results as valid.
 - We can also look at data collected from the Nora Deemer study.
 - As a committee, we also need to understand what the data means.

6. Updates from Country Staff County: See attachment from Rachael.

Highlights:

- UDO kickoff in September. ERAC will be involved with that.
- Coal ash recycling plant: 401 WQC issued, 404 pending
- Citizen complaints about water being transported for North Chatham Fire District training and entering local waterways

7. Announcements and updates from ERAC members

Briar Chapel Wastewater Leak

RB: Discussed the water breaks and wastewater leaks we learned of a few months ago at Briar Chapel.

- TT gave us the perspective of the community residents. She let us know that the HOA sends standard email updates and Next Door Neighbor is another resource residents use to share this information. We know that there have been at least 3 or 4 sewer leaks in Briar Chapel since April, but they have not received any updates directly from Envirolink (the private utility company for Briar Chapel).
- RT does not receive any updates from HOA or Envirolink. The expectation is that Envirolink will report incidents to the state, but we are not sure whether this has happened for each leak. RT has since reported the incidents she was aware of to the state.
- RT and RB encourage TT and residents to directly report any incidents to the state.

TT and RT also updated the group on the plans for Fearington to pump waste to Briar Chapel, which would be treated at Briar Chapel and pumped back to Fearington for discharge at Bush Creek.

8. Adjournment: FM motioned to adjourn, SJ seconded. Meeting concluded at 7:48 pm

Next meeting: October 10, 2019; 6:30 pm at Performance Building Conference Room

Staff Update 8/8/19

1. UDO kickoff is in September. Advisory Committee meetings are not yet scheduled.
2. Cape Fear Star Coal Ash Beneficiation- Haul road and basin excavation permitting pending for Floodplain Development. 401WQC issued, waiting on pending 404
3. Reports of additional wastewater leaks/spills from Briar Chapel forcemain but not reported to Watershed office, which is not required but has been requested.
4. North Chatham Fire District training event has been moved due to complaints and concerns of interference. Wilkinson Creek will still receive water on Tobacco Rd., but not on Mann's Chapel Rd. Water will be potable water and not pond water, according to Chief Riggsbee.