

MEETING MINUTES

GROUNDWATER WASTEWATER DISCHARGE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, April 28, 2025

ROPEWALK ROOM

26 COURT ST • PLYMOUTH, MA 02360

Meeting Called to Order: 5:00 PM

Members Present: Josh Bows, Mark Champagne, Bill Doyle, Martin Enos, Rose Forbes (Clerk), Hampton Watkins (Vice Chair)

Members Absent: David Golden (Chair).

Others in Attendance: Kendra Martin (Town of Plymouth Water and Wastewater Engineer), Doug Pinard (Department of Public Works [DPW]), Neal Price (Horsley Witten), and members of the public including Tom Fugazzi, Mary Gatslick, Mark Withington and others.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No initial public comments.

MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Hampton Watkins asked the CAC if there were any comments on the February 24, 2025 meeting minutes. Hearing no comments, Mr. Watkins asked for a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Bill Doyle made a motion to accept the minutes and Mr. Marty Enos seconded the motion. The motion passed five in favor, none against, one abstention, and one not present. Mr. Josh Bows abstained since he was not present at the February 24, 2025 meeting.

Substance		Approve February 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes				
Last Name	First Name	Yes	No	Abstain	No Vote	Not Present
Bows	Josh			X		
Champagne	Mark	X				
Doyle	Bill	X				
Enos	Martin	X				
Forbes	Rose	X				
Watkins	Hampton	X				
Golden	David					X
TOTALS		5	0	1	0	1

HORSLEY WITTEN GROUP PRESENTATION – MR. NEAL PRICE

Mr. Neal Price updated the CAC on the status of the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). His presentation, entitled “Plymouth Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) Effluent Discharge Reprioritization” is posted on the Town of Plymouth website under “Groundwater Discharge EIR Status Update Presentation 2025-04-28 (PDF)” at <https://www.plymouth-ma.gov/1262/Wastewater-Treatment-Plant-Groundwater-D>.

Mr. Price noted that nitrogen concentrations in the plant effluent have decreased because of treatment plant operation optimizations. He stated the sampling results are reported in the Nutrient Management Plan for surface water and in monitoring well data for groundwater. He showed a map of the existing monitoring locations for surface water and groundwater and a map showing the proposed monitoring wells.

Mr. Marty Enos asked about the monitoring wells near Milton Rental in the Camelot Industrial Park. Neither Mr. Price nor the Town staff knew what the monitoring wells are used for.

Ms. Rose Forbes asked if there will be an analysis in the EIR regarding the influent vs effluent water quality. Ms. Kendra Martin said that is beyond the scope of the EIR and that only the effluent is part of the permit.

Mr. Enos asked why he is seeing more treated wastewater being discharged into the infiltration beds. Mr. Doug Pinard responded that operations and maintenance (O&M) changes necessitate treated wastewater discharge to the beds rather than the ocean outfall. Mr. Enos asked how effective the beds are in draining the water. Mr. Pinard stated the water recedes very quickly and short-term ponding may be a result of more volume discharging in a shorter period. Mr. Price commented that when he simulated a 1.5 million gallon per day (MGD) loading test, approximately 1-2 feet of water developed in the deeper parts of the infiltration beds but didn’t cover the entire bed and seemed to drain quickly.

Mr. Enos asked how the option to extend the outfall pipe was being evaluated in the EIR. Mr. Price responded he is looking at that but doesn’t believe it is feasible to obtain a permit to extend the outfall pipe and explained his thoughts on the complexity associated with installing an outfall pipe as deep as the one at Deer Island. Mr. Enos asked why it isn’t possible to bury the discharge pipe outside the harbor beyond Bug Light. Mr. Pinard stated he didn’t think the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) would permit it. Ms. Forbes asked Mr. Price if he knew what the Town of Falmouth’s plans are to discharge treated wastewater into the ocean. Mr. Price stated he was not aware of this and would reach out to Ms. Amy Lowell at the Town of Falmouth Wastewater Department. Mr. Bows stated he doesn’t see how the Town of Plymouth could financially support extending the outfall. Ms. Forbes stated it needs to be evaluated as an alternative.

Mr. Price continued explaining the items on the “to do” list for the draft EIR and stated there will be a public meeting for the Environmental Justice evaluation. Ms. Martin stated it will be part of the public listening session prior to finalizing the draft EIR. The CAC will review the draft EIR prior to the public meeting.

Mr. Mark Champagne asked if Site 101 would be included in the alternatives analysis. Ms. Martin stated Site 101 cannot handle the full flow from the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Pinard stated they could retain Site 101 potentially for future additional flow. Mr. Bows agreed and said the Town may need the land someday.

Mr. Enos asked about the County Farm property and if it can be considered as an alternative site for treated wastewater discharge. Mr. Price stated the property is not owned by the Town and the Town may not be able to purchase the property. Mr. Enos asked what changed with the property? It was agricultural and is now just fields. He asked what would need to be done to assess/analyze the property? Mr. Price stated the Town of Plymouth would need to acquire the land and there are other issues such as a lower attenuation rate and less benefit for the harbor. Mr. Enos stated the treated wastewater is going to end up in the harbor anyway just like the water that is discharged to the infiltration beds. Mr. Doyle stated the water quality is different. Mr. Enos stated eventually it is all the same water.

Mr. Enos stated no one has collected a baseline of Eel River water quality. Mr. Price stated a detailed evaluation was conducted in the 1990s and additional sampling has been done as part of the Nutrient Management Plan.

Ms. Forbes asked what impact income has on the Environmental Justice evaluation. Mr. Price stated individual houses are not included in the evaluation.

Ms. Forbes asked where the private wells are downgradient of the wastewater treatment plant infiltration beds. Ms. Martin responded with five addresses that have private wells.

Mr. Watkins asked when the draft EIR will be submitted for CAC review. Mr. Price responded that, best case, a draft EIR will be provided within one month.

Mr. Watkins asked if the CAC members had any additional questions or comments. There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Watkins asked if there were any questions from the public.

Mr. Mark Withington asked if any of the alternatives were going to include tertiary treatment. Mr. Price responded that tertiary treatment can be discussed in the EIR but the sensitivity of phosphorus for freshwater resources no longer applies if discharge to the infiltration beds is off the table. However, tertiary treatment for nitrogen will need to be analyzed if the effluent continues to discharge to the ocean.

Ms. Mary Gatslick asked if the draft EIR will include updated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) numbers. Mr. Price stated he has the updated TMDL numbers and will include those in the assessment in the draft EIR.

OLD BUSINESS

There was not enough time to discuss the action items. This will be postponed until a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Watkins asked if there was any new business to discuss. There was none.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The next meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2025 in the Rope Walk Room.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. Watkins asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Doyle made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Enos seconded the motion. The motion passed six in favor, none against, and one not present.

Substance	Adjourn Meeting					
Last Name	First Name	Yes	No	Abstain	No Vote	Not Present
Bows	Josh	X				
Champagne	Mark	X				
Doyle	Bill	X				
Enos	Martin	X				
Forbes	Rose	X				
Watkins	Hampton	X				
Golden	David					X
TOTALS		6	0	0	0	1

Adjourned: 6:28 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Rose Forbes, Clerk