

Prudence Island Water District
Minutes of meeting: October 29, 2005

1. Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. Present were David Buffum, moderator; Patricia Richard, clerk; Phillip Brooks, and Robert Hanson. Absent was Richard Brooks.

2. Approval of minutes October 15, 2005. Motion to approve by Phillip Brooks, seconded by Robert Hanson, approved unanimously.

3a. Bylaws. Mr. Rob Garlick questioned the 48-hour notice for an emergency board meeting. He pointed out that in his capacity as facilities manager for PIUC, sometimes decisions needed to be taken more quickly. Ms. Richard said that emergency decisions could be taken without necessarily holding a board meeting. Mr. Garlick asked if any bylaws were under consideration to deal with unhappy customers who threatened or harmed a water system worker or director of the board for actions taken during the course of carrying out their duties on behalf of the district. Ms. Richard said that such actions were criminal acts and would be dealt with by the police. Mr. Garlick asked what would happen if someone vandalized the water system. Mr. Brooks said that is a federal offense and that the government considered it a homeland security issue. Ms. Richard said that the issue of vandalism was addressed in the charter as well. Ms. Richard said that if a customer had an issue about their water bill that they could bring their case directly to the board rather than taking it up with the facilities manager. Mr. Buffum said that an administrative structure would be in place regarding non-payment that would relieve the facilities manager from the duty of making collections. Mr. Hanson pointed out that Mr. Garlick was compelled to do collections in order for the PIUC to have the funds to pay him. Mr. Garlick said that bills should be paid only via US mail to avoid loss of checks. Ms. Richard said that a billing procedure would be put in place that would alleviate the problem. She suggested that a payment envelope should be included with the mailed invoices to avoid checks being turned over hand-to-hand.

3bI. Administrative goals.

Ms. Richard said that she had received an invoice for insurance from RI Interlocal Risk Management Trust in the amount of \$2000 through June 2006. David Buffum, acting as Treasurer, countersigned the check for payment.

Ms. Richard said she had finished gathering the information for the annual financial review and sent it to the accountant. She said that Mr. Muscatelli, CPA had expressed interest in visiting the island.

Ms. Richard said that she had not done any additional work on the draft 2006 budget. Mr. Buffum asked if there would be any advantage in having VoIP service for long distance. Ms. Richard said that she did not have a broadband connection but was considering the possibility.

3bII. Technical. Ms. Richard asked Phillip Brooks if the slow sand filtration parameters referred to in the NEWWA article were changing due to advances in technology. She said that she was concerned about the size of the footprint. Mr. Brooks said that since the quality of water in the Indian Spring dug well is so high and that the quantity to be used was low, he did not believe that

the footprint would be a particular problem. He said that pilot testing would be necessary to determine the size needed for a slow sand system.

Land use planning – Phillip Brooks said the next meeting was scheduled for Nov. 16, 2 p.m., Town Hall. Mr. Hanson said that he would attend the meeting with Mr. Brooks. Phil Brooks said that he had spoken to Richard Brooks and that Richard felt that it would be difficult to influence development on land that had already been subdivided, but that a requirement for 5-acre lots be made for the area between “Big Blue” and Bacon Farm. Ms. Richard said that she had made cd copies of plat maps and then had merged the plat maps to show the contiguous watershed and overlaid the critical watershed area over it. She said that she would make a list of critical properties and perhaps the district could then approach DEM about acquiring development rights to those lots. Philip Brooks said that in some areas the risk of saltwater intrusion was the main concern and that provision should be made to connect them to the community water system to discourage those landowners from sinking a private well. Harry Sterling said that the PIPC was in the process of completing a comprehensive plan and that he would like the board to consider “cluster zoning” as an alternative to 5-acre lots. Mr. Buffum asked if there were any tax advantages to a landowner who used cluster zoning. Mr. Sterling said that if the landowner chose to hold onto the land there was no tax incentive, but that cluster zoning was preferable for maintaining open space. He said that the next planning commission meeting would be the first Saturday in December and the first open forum on the issue would be at that meeting. Mr. Rob Garlick said that it was easy to develop properties on Prudence because there was no requirement in place to have roads put in. Mr. Sterling said that he had heard several anecdotes regarding houses that had been constructed outside of the parameters of existing zoning regulations, but that he did not know how to curb the practice. Mr. Sterling said that Mr. Driscoll, Town Administrator, said that the district could request a moratorium on development until water studies were completed. Mr. Buffum said that the district needed to have better information about critical watershed areas before making such a request. Mr. Sterling said that water studies needed to take into account the entire island and not just within the district boundaries. Ms. Richard said that while that might be so, that it would be inappropriate for the district board to speak to development issues outside the district. Mr. Hanson pointed out that the district did not yet own the water system. He also said that he was under the impression that the state wanted to promote the island as a recreational area, which is a type of development in itself. Mr. Sterling said that state plans for the island would be sensitive to environmental issues, but that he did not believe that their plans were moving forward. He said that the state was looking at acquisition of the Ballard property, which would be beneficial in terms of preservation of open space. Mr. Hanson said that the search for new water sources should take precedence over trying to curb development. Ms. Richard said that the district had the right to look for water on the island outside of the properties in the district. Mr. Sterling said some of the participants in planning were of the opinion that enough water studies had been done on the island. Mr. Brooks said that the Urish report recommended further study to determine if there were possible water resources on the south end of the island. Ms. Richard said that the district engineer said that the existing fracture trace analysis was more optimistic than he would be, but that the district board had the responsibility to seek out viable water sources on the island regardless of whether the chances of finding them were good. Mr. Sterling said that the south end of the island would not be viable because of contamination from the old navy base. Ms. Richard said that the fracture trace analysis identified some properties north of the base. Mr. Sterling asked why the reserve had not

been compelled to clean up the contamination on the base. Ms. Richard said that question was best answered by the principals involved. Mr. Garlick said that building a distribution system on that end of the island would be costly because there was a great deal of ledge in the area. Mr. Sterling said he hoped the any water studies could be completed quickly so that rational decisions could be made about future development. Ms. Richard said that there was already enough information about water resources on the island to draw some conclusions in terms of the rate of development. Mr. Sterling said that people said there wasn't enough water but that it was not well documented. Ms. Richard said that a moratorium had been granted to the PIUC by the PUC after a hearing in which a significant amount of documentation had been presented. She said that the people who were responsible for development were at the town and state levels and that if they did not recognize there is a problem there was little to be done about it. Mr. Sterling said that a proactive approach was needed to compel those with the power to affect the pace of development on the island.

3c. Funding. Ms. Richard said that an article appeared in the Sakonnet Times regarding the CDBG grant that had been pre-approved last year and that a large percentage of those funds had already been disbursed to the district through the Town of Portsmouth. She said that she had checked with Mr. Driscoll, Portsmouth Town Administrator to make sure the article referred to those funds. She said that Mr. Driscoll seemed unclear about the status of the additional \$7000 to come through the RI Rural Development Council and that he would be checking on that.

Mr. Hanson said that Mr. Garlick of PIUC had a request for funding for safety equipment if it were possible to access the monies offered to members of the RI Interlocal Risk Management Trust. Mr. Garlick said that street safety cones were always needed. He said that he was in need of fiberglass safety ladders that did not conduct electricity, including an extension ladder for use in accessing the Broadway tank. He said that high visibility clothing would be helpful. Ms. Richard said that the item was probably considered personal protection equipment. Mr. Brooks said that he might have some clothing available. Mr. Garlick said that high-intensity lanterns would be useful for night work. Mr. Garlick asked if hearing protection and eye protection would fit the grant parameters. Ms. Richard said it was considered personal equipment. Mr. Garlick said that a small portable generator would be very helpful. She said that she could not guarantee that she could secure funding for any of the items but that she could make the request.

Ms. Richard said that she had not yet heard anything from Rep. Gallison about state-level funding. She said that she must soon report to RIF about ADDD funding. She also said that she had touched base with USDA and that he had asked for the engineer's list of financial info needed to complete pre-development survey.

4a. Correspondence.

AWWA publications

4b – No other business

5. Mr. Buffum moved for adjournment to executive session, seconded by Ms Richard, approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Patricia Richard
Clerk