

**THE TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND**  
**SEWER SUMMIT WORKSHOP**

**Date:** Thursday, May 14, 2015

**Time:** 5:00 P.M.

**Present from Town Council:** David Bennett, *Mayor*; Bill Harkins, *Mayor Pro Tem*, Marc Grant, Tom Lennox, Kim Likins, John McCann, *Council Members*

**Absent from Town Council:** Lee Edwards, Council Member (due to a medical emergency)

**Present from Hilton Head Public Service District Board of Commissioners:** Bob Manne, *Chairman*, Bob Gentzler, *Vice-Chair*, Frank Drehwing, Herbert Ford, John Geisler, Gary Kratz, David McCoy

**Present from Town Staff:** Steve Riley, *Town Manager*; Greg DeLoach, *Assistant Town Manager*; Scott Liggett, *Director of Public Projects and Facilities/Chief Engineer*; Susan Simmons, *Director of Finance*; Brian Hulbert, *Staff Attorney*; Jeff Buckalew, *Town Engineer*; Shawn Colin, *Deputy Director of Community Development*; Vicki Pfannenschmidt, *Executive Assistant/Town Clerk*

**Present from HHPSD Staff:** Pete Nardi, *General Manager*; Richard Cyr

**Present from Media:** Dan Burley, *Island Packet*

---

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Bennett called the workshop to order at 5:00 p.m.

- 2. FOIA Compliance** – Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

**3. Introductions – Mayor Bennett**

Mayor Bennett welcomed all. He stated he was glad that Town Council established a Top Priority of making sanitary sewer access available to all residents who want it. He explained his difficulty in reconciling the fact there are many people in the community that do not have sewer access. Mayor Bennett shared a video from the Island Packet which depicted the poor conditions from faulty septic tanks on the Island.

**4. Overview and Background**

- a. Presentation “Limitations of Septic Systems in the Lowcountry” by Dr. Stephen Borgianini of USCB

Dr. Borgianini conducted a power point presentation explaining the systems and their limitations.

- b. Presentation “Sewer Update 2015” – Pete Nardi, Hilton Head PSD General Manager

Mr. Nardi presented a detailed power point explaining the history of the Hilton Head PSD, details concerning the water production and treatment, water distribution, sanitary sewer service, wastewater treatment and the recycled water distribution program. He also explained the cost distribution for the services and how they assist customers in connecting through long term/low interest loans and Project SAFE. He noted the neighborhoods that used the front-foot assessment method to receive sewer.

Mr. Nardi explained in detail the Master Sewer Plan Revision for 2015 and pointed out the remaining sewer project areas. He explained the barriers to providing sewer service to all which included customer ability to pay, owner disinterest, privately owned roads/easement, interior lots, SCDOT encroachment requirements, rental properties and obtaining land for future sewer pump stations.

## **5. Proposed PSD Action Plans**

Mr. Nardi reviewed the HHPSD action plan which would include completing the remaining sewer pump stations, the PSD serving as project manager for Town-funded sewer projects, providing long-term/low-interest financing for customers, assisting the Community Foundation in acquiring more funding for Project SAFE, and expanding the moderate income definition for Project SAFE. In addition he reviewed a proposed action plan for the Town which included directly funding sewer line installations in unserved areas, coordinating road/utility easements acquisition on private roads with sewer installation, providing sewer pump station sites on Town-owned property, assisting the Community Founding in acquiring more funding for Project SAFE and creating a program to eliminate septic tanks by encouraging connection to sewer.

In conclusion, Mr. Nardi proposed the next steps for the program which included a Town-PSD Staff sewer working group to recommend prioritization/implementation of the schedule of project and to recommend funding options for the projects. He added that the Town, HHPSD and the Community Foundation need to create a plan to increase SAFE funding and expand SAFE eligibility.

Town Council and HHPSD Commissioners participated in discussion regarding the proposed plans and moving forward.

## **6. Town Sewer Policy History**

Steve Riley reviewed the prior efforts of the Town in the areas of provision of water and sewer service including the Town’s direct and indirect investments for a total of \$6.86 million as well as a Federal grant funds received through the Town’s efforts.

**7. Open Discussion – Council and Commission**

Mr. Nardi answered various questions regarding installation. Council members and Commissioners participated in a lengthy discussion as to how to resolve the issue. They discussed the ten projects identified in order to provide sewer access to the remaining unserved areas and the estimated costs. Conversation took place concerning the development of a comprehensive program to address sanitary sewers within a reasonable time frame.

**8. Public Comment Period**

Eleven residents addressed Council regarding the need to move forward with installing sewer service in the unserved areas as soon as possible.

**9. Town Policy Review and Discussion**

Mr. Riley reviewed and Council and Commissioners held a discussion of the potential policy considerations.

**10. Direction on Next Steps – Council and Commission**

It was the unanimous position of Town Council and the Commission that a mutual goal be set to provide sanitary sewer service to every citizen of Hilton Head Island within 5 years. In order to achieve this goal, Town and PSD staff would meet in the coming weeks to develop a proposed build-out plan as well as suggest a means of financing the effort and report back to Town Council within 30 days. Town staff is to suggest policy recommendations that reflect this goal to Town Council

**11. Adjournment**

Mayor Bennett adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

---

Vicki L. Pfannenschmidt,  
Executive Assistant/Town Clerk

Approved: 06/02/2015

---

David Bennett, Mayor