

Fish Hatchery Facility Upgrade Task Force

Monday, January 30, 2023

Charles Harrington, Chairperson

Chairman Gilliland called this Fish Hatchery Facility Upgrade Task Force to order at 11:45 am with the following in attendance: Shaun Gilliland, Tom Scozzafava, Mark Wright, Dan Manning and Jim Dougan. Charlie Harrington was absent.

Also present: Todd Hodgson, Holly Aquino and Dina Garvey

GILLILLAND: Call to order, today we have the Essex County Fish Hatchery SPDES Permit Compliance Report brought to us by Todd.

DOUGAN: So, I think everybody's aware and before Todd starts, you DEC, a few years back said, we needed to do something to treat our waste that was going back into Putnam Creek. A couple of years ago, we ended up signing an order on consent. An order on consent is technically a form of legation. So, I think some of this we may want to discuss. Todd, if you want to maybe present what you've got so far. I do think as everybody's thinking about this is, as we're making decision on what to do, I will say that in 2017, the Fish Hatchery, which was once its own department was put on DPW's plate and when it came, I just said sure, we'll do whatever you want. What you're used to me saying, but I never really asked what the goals were at the Fish Hatchery, to be quite honest with you. Why are we even running it? So, maybe we could think a little bit about that as we go through the decision on what's best to do here.

MASCARENAS: And maybe just for Mr. Wright's sake, probably Holly's sake, just a brief kind of history of the property and the ownership. Maybe you are aware, but I don't know that Mr. Wright is. So, the Essex County Fish Hatchery was owned and operated by New York State for a number of years. We took it over, when Todd, do you know?

HODGSON: It would have been in 1980.

MASCARENAS: Okay, so you've got it right there. So, 1984 we took it over. They were going to close it down. We continue to operate the site, currently. There is, I believe a restriction, Dan Manning can give you a better term. If we stopped operating, the hatchery that property reverts back to the State is my understanding.

MANNING: Yes, the real estate.

MASCARENAS: Yes, the real estate of that property. So, just to keep all those things in mind when we're looking at options and what we can do and not do and realize that the State maybe holding us to a level of operations that were unattainable by them when they owned and operated it. So, as you begin to get more angry about some of these things that you're about to hear, you'll know the reason why.

MANNING: Yeah, Todd's been dealing with them, since like 2017?

SCOZZAFAVA: Just to add to that history, prior Boards, I mean we've discussed, numerous times about closing that hatchery and there was such a protest from our constituency that we decided not. Now, does ROOST contribute towards the operation of that?

MASCARENAS: They do, \$50,000.00 a year, I believe is what we get.

DOUGAN: \$60,000.00

MASCARENAS: \$60,000.00 for that, \$50,000.00 for something else or \$40,000.00 for something else. But, I think here, I am going to let Todd do his presentation and get through it, but understand that no option is off the table. I get that our constituency doesn't like that, but when you see what it's going to cost and getting into what the mission is and perhaps what we're doing, that certainly has got to be an option that's concerned.

DOUGAN: We're doing a report like you would, Tom, if DEC asked you for a report based on your sewer system. They're formatted report requires us to give three options. So, Todd has created three options and then he's looking for this committee to make a recommendation of what we would put in the recommended option.

HODGSON: Because whatever is written in the report is what we have to do

MASCARENAS: Right

GILLILLAND: And actually, given that this deals with a legal action, my recommendation is that this goes into executive session.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, I agree.

GILLILLAND: Because we will be discussing a course of action, leading up to ratification of a legal action. So, I move to go into executive session.

DOUGAN: Second

THE TASK FORCE MOVED INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 11:53 AM.
Moved by Chairman Gilliland, seconded by Task Force Member Dougan

THE TASK FORCE RETURNED TO REGULAR SESSION AT 12:43 PM, WITH NO DECISIONS WERE MADE DURING EXECUTIVE SESSION.

GILLILLAND: We have returned to regular session and we are adjourned.

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS FISH HATCHERY FACILITY UPGRADE TASK FORCE IT WAS ADJOURNED AT 12:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy
Clerk of the Board