



Municipality of Anchorage

Dan Sullivan, Mayor



ON-SITE SYSTEMS TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: January 13, 2010

Members Present: Joel Neimeyer
Linda Kovac
Lori Davey
Matt Edge
Scott Hattenburg

Absent: Tim Pampusch (Excused)

Staff Present: Ron Thompson
Ross Noffsinger
Jay Crewdson
Debbie Wockenfuss
Vicki Gonzalez

Guests: Mark Spafford, P.E.

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 a.m. by Matt Edge. All participants introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the December 9, 2009 meeting were approved.

Staff Report:

Ron Thompson attended today's meeting. Mr. Thompson explained that he understood there were concerns about the recent On Site Water and Wastewater section reorganization. He explained the elimination of the On Site Supervisor position was a business decision and the functions of the section remain unchanged. He explained that he wanted to bring the wastewater code review process consistent with the process for building code review, which is to bring together a committee of community professionals, have them do the rewrites and changes, bring the finished product to the Tech Board for approval, and then submit through Legal and the Assembly for implementation. Mr. Thompson assured the board their participation in the code rewrite process has not diminished. The code review meetings should be attended by at least one tech board member, but no more than three (due to the fact that it would then be considered a public meeting and would need required legal notification to the community). He stated that the reason for documenting code change discussions on paper during the meetings was so that there would be a history of reasons behind changes. Mr. Thompson stated he did not like the "waiver" language in the code and hoped that during the review process, that would be addressed. The topic of after-hours meetings was raised and it was stated by Mr. Thompson that Municipal employees would have to be paid overtime for those meetings and the department is not in a position to do that right now.

Mr. Thompson discussed the Hillside District Plan and the desire for the MOA to take oversight of more than just single-family homes. Mr. Thompson stated if the State would defer that responsibility to the MOA, we would handle it. It is not an issue that in his position as Director he is able to pursue. He stated that maybe the Board should address a letter to the Mayor's office on this subject.

Ms. Davey asked if it would not be better to transfer oversight of On Site back to DHHS since it seems more of a health-related function rather than a building department issue and it is not a revenue-supported division. Mr. Thompson responded that funding for On Site comes from the 101 fund, not the 181 (building) fund and if oversight were transferred back to DHHS, funding would still come from the 101 fund. Mr. Thompson repeated that after the re-organization, there has not been a drop off in any enforcement of code. Mr. Thompson did not think DHHS would be able to add more staff for enforcement.

Mr. Poet stated that previously, the Mayor's office would receive complaints about citizens coming here for a building permit, then having to go downtown for the on site permit and then having to come back here to finish the process. This was part of why the oversight switch was made from DHHS to Building Safety.

Mr. Edge asked if additional monitoring was pursued, would that be okay with the department. Mr. Thompson responded yes; he has a well and septic system himself. He ended by saying that Building Safety works with DHHS. Development Services can do additional monitoring of existing systems if we have the funding, whether tax supported or revenue generated. Mr. Noffsinger stated that as a regulatory agency, we would not be able to sell a monitoring program. Mr. Thompson suggested the board write a letter to the mayor requesting this, because that decision would need to come from the mayor's office.

Mr. Neimeyer felt there were other issues that need to be addressed in the letter to the mayor: multi-family, cluster systems, well monitoring program, and COSAs. Mr. Thompson suggested Mr. Neimeyer set up the meeting with the mayor and present the issues. Mr. Thompson also reminded the board that no more than three members should attend the meeting, due to the public meeting and advertising requirements. Mr. Neimeyer will invite On-Site staff as well as State of Alaska staff to the meeting.

Jeff Poet, On Site staff, discussed an issue with regard to water testing requirements. MOA is the only jurisdiction that requires a test for "other bacteria" in addition to the E coli, coliform bacteria and nitrates. Mr. Poet spoke with the SOA biologist in Fairbanks, who suggested the MOA drop the requirement for "other bacteria" testing. Mr. Thompson stated that this could be written up in a policy for the board's review and then adopted during the next code cycle.

New Business:

Mr. Neimeyer stated that he will be resigning once the code rewrite is complete this year.

Ms. Kovac reminded the board that they still needed to fill the medical seat.

Ms. Kovac handed the board a section from the Title 21 rewrite concerning Water Pollution Control.

Other Business:

Code rewrite: Ms. Kovac will attend the January 14 meeting; Mr. Edge will attend the January 21 meeting. Mr. Edge will send an email to the board to determine who will attend the next meetings. Mr. Crewdson gave a report of progress.

Public Comments:

Mark Spafford, P.E. attended the meeting. Mr. Spafford is interested in filling the vacant seat on the board. Mr. Spafford stated he is a senior engineering project manager with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. He gave an overview of his experience in working with city governments and code issues.

Staff requested Mr. Spafford to submit his letter for request of appointment as well as his resume, to be forwarded to the Mayor's office.

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.