



# Gilmanton Conservation Commission

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## **Minutes of the Special Gilmanton Conservation Commission Meeting Held Thursday, July 8, 2010 at 7:00 p.m., Academy Building, Gilmanton**

Present: Laurie Churchill, Joe Derrick, Erin Hollingsworth, Nanci Mitchell, Sue Hale de Seve, Dick de Seve, Tracy Tarr (Chair)

Absent: Patrick Hackley

Nanci agreed to take minutes.

**A. Joint Meeting with the Planning Board – Presentation by Ned Beecher of North East Residuals and Biosolids.** This part of the meeting did not begin until 8:15 pm after the Planning Board held a public hearing on the CIP.

Ned Beecher, executive director of North East Residuals and Biosolids, gave a presentation on biosolids and their benefit to farmers. Sludge is what is left after the water is removed from sewerage at a wastewater treatment plant. Biosolids are treated sludge from a wastewater treatment plant. Manchester incinerates all of its sludge. DES operates the facility in Franklin as part of a plan to keep Lake Winnepesaukee clean.

Biosolids vary from 95% water to 5% water in heat dried pellets. Pellets are most often used in New England. The liquid form is more often used in arid areas. Organic matter makes up 20 – 70% by dry weight and nutrients 12% dry weight. Biosolids can also be used for energy. The material is similar to low grade coal.

There are Class A and Class B biosolids. Class A has no pathogens. Class B is 99% free of pathogens. Class A EQ is free of pathogens and has a lower metal content. EQ stands for exceptional quality.

49% of sludge goes to land application and 45% is disposed. Boston recycles 100% of its biosolids. Biosolids bind heavy metals in the soil and are effective on old mine sites in the west. Milorganite is bagged Class A EQ biosolid.

Ocean dumping was banned in the 80's. It promoted rapid growth of algae resulting in dead zones.

Nashua has an anaerobic digester which produces methane that is used to power the wastewater treatment plant.

There is a University of Washington study that shows improvement to the soil after biosolids application. Biosolids can not be used for growing USDA organic foods. The National Academy of Science (NAS) said in 1996 that use of biosolids in the production of crops for human consumption presented a negligible risk to the consumer, to crop production and to the environment.

Nancy Girard read four letters from local farmers who use biosolids into the record. The letters were from Frank Bosiak, Daniel Sanborn, Brian Forst (he lives in Gilmanton, but farms in Loudon) and Tim Towle (he lives in Loudon but farms in Gilmanton).

Questions:

- John Weston – What is odor like? Ned Beecher – It can be bad or very mild depending upon where it comes from. Class A will smell when it gets wet.
- Dan Hudson – How does DES regulate Class B? Ned Beecher – There are federal regulations regarding harvest restrictions and when you can graze livestock but no site permit. NH requires a site permit. A wastewater treatment plant must be certified by DES to provide biosolids. It is called “sludge quality certification” or “sqc”. A plant must test 4 times and submit results to DES in order to get the “sqc”. It is good for 5 years. RMI is the only company in NH that manages Class B sludge. NH requires setbacks from well and water bodies and this must be shown on the plan submitted to DES. Managing nutrients is a requirement of using biosolids. A permit is good for 5 years and then it can be renewed. Mary Macdonald from RMI – DES can only hear questions at public hearing as it is not a forum for debate.
- Rachel Hatch – what do the authors of the letters use? Brian Forst – Class B. Frank Bosiak – Class B. Tim Towle – Class A because of the lime which he needs. Daniel Sanborn was not present. Class A comes from Boston and Class B from Franklin. Mary Macdonald from RMI – A farmer must submit annual reports to DES. The big difference they find between A and B is that B has less odor. Class B is comparable to manure. You smell it for a day or two and then it is gone. There is no requirement to monitor groundwater or surface water. Soil testing is required. An abutter is any landowner within 500 feet.
- Erin Hollingsworth – Why would a farmer go from Class A to Class B? Ned Beecher – Class B helps balance the lime in Class A.
- Dick de Seve – What is safe depth to groundwater? Mary Macdonald from RMI – If the soil is okay you need a 2 foot separation between groundwater and where the biosolids are spread and a 4 foot separation if it is stockpiled. Ned Beecher – You can’t spread it on 15% slopes.
- Dick de Seve – Who monitors whether it gets to groundwater or surface water? Ned Beecher – There is no monitoring. Buffer distances are based on extensive research.
- Anne Sellin – Are there cases of harm to humans or livestock? Ned Beecher – There was a case in Georgia before the federal regulations. There was a case in NH of a death of a person in his 20’s who lived near a biosolid application. The state medical examiner did not find that biosolids caused that death.
- Anne Sellin – NAS has made a statement that biosolids are not safe. Ned Beecher – That is a question of interpretation.
- Nanci Mitchell – Is there any testing for pharmaceuticals? Ned Beecher – Heavy metals are the most heavily researched and regulated. NH has stricter regulations for heavy metals than the federal regs. Currently there is a huge amount of research on chemicals. Some personal care items such as shampoo evaporate and you only find them in minute quantities.
- David Chain (sp?) – Expressed concern about presenting the product in such a positive way. Many communities are banning A and B. He is concerned about things not being addressed. What will the chemicals do long term? What happens when it is inhaled?
- Joe Derrick – He referenced a table showing zinc increasing by 30%. Is that correct? Mary Macdonald from RMI – yes, it is correct. The intent was to show consistency.
- Tracy Tarr – She had attended the public hearing for the Downs application and found that abutters were not allowed to express their concerns. She suggested that the town have its own permitting process so that concerns could be expressed.
- Sheila McDermott – Can you use Class A without a permit? Yes.

Nancy Girard closed the discussion at 9:45 pm. The Conservation Commission moved its meeting to the Selectmen's office. Tracy Tarr appointed Joe Derrick to vote for Patrick Hackley and Sue Hale de Seve to vote for the vacant position.

**B. Trail Maps:** The trail maps for the Cogswell Mountain Conservation Area and the Thompson Town Forest are ready to be printed. Joe Derrick moved and Erin Hollingsworth seconded that 50 copies of each be printed for a cost not to exceed \$100. The motion was approved unanimously. There was discussion regarding what to do if more maps needed to be printed. Dick de Seve moved and Joe Derrick seconded that Erin Hollingsworth be able to spend up to \$100 for additional trail maps if needed so long as she checked with Nanci Mitchell to be sure there was an adequate amount of money in the account. Motion passed unanimously.

**C. Wetland/Shoreland Applications:** Tracy Tarr recused herself because of a conflict of interest and Dick de Seve assumed the chair. Stony Ridge Environmental (Tracy Tarr) has submitted an application for a beach on behalf of Doug Isleib on Crystal Lake. Dick will set up a site walk and the project will be described in more detail at that time.

**D. Upcoming Dates**

1. Next regular Conservation Commission Meeting – By consensus it was decided that the next Commission meeting would be changed from July 13 to July 20, 2010 at 7 pm.
2. Monitor Hurst and Zarta – Joe Derrick and Nanci Mitchell will do this on July 17 beginning at 9 am. Nanci will mail notification letters to the landowners.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nanci Mitchell for the secretary