

China planners focus on septic compliance

by Mary Grow

China Planning Board members spent most of their January 10 meeting planning an amended shoreland septic system compliance program. The current program requires shoreland property owners who lack paperwork to prove their septic system meets current standards either to have it replaced, or to have it inspected by the end of 2014 and every four years thereafter.

In response to a petition that Codes Enforcement Officer Scott Pierz said had about 225 signatures, selectmen have put a question on the June 2012 ballot asking voters if they want to repeal the program, which they approved in 2009.

Pierz said a state study found that malfunctioning septic systems account for up to four percent of China Lake's water quality problems. The normal life for a system built to current standards is 15 to 20 years, he said. Officials suspect there are systems around the lake much older than that.

Pierz, planning board members and a majority of the selectmen believe some kind of control over septic systems close to lakes is valuable. Board members therefore intend to draft a modified program to offer as an alternative to repeal.

The main idea discussed January 10 was a pumping requirement instead of an inspection requirement. Regular pumping is part of system maintenance, and the pumper could spot obvious problems that would warrant further inspection.

Board members did not get as far as considering specific wording. They intend more discussion

at future meetings, and also intend to educate themselves and interested residents by inviting experts in the field, like local people certified to design septic systems and the person responsible for enforcing state regulations, to talk to them.

Pierz said the absolute deadline for submitting ballot questions is April 28.

Also briefly discussed was the proposed revised ordinance on home occupations, which board members are asking selectmen to put on the June local ballot. They made minor revisions in response to specific comments from selectmen and voted unanimously to resubmit the draft to selectmen.

The next planning board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday evening, January 24.

Gas pipeline, asphalt plant considering Windsor

by Beth Choate

At their January 3 meeting the Windsor selectmen heard from two different companies wanting to move into the town of Windsor.

The first was Kennebec Valley Gas Company. KVGC is looking at Windsor as an option to run a natural gas pipeline in to Augusta and on up to Madison. Their original plan was to run the pipeline from Richmond up the western side of the Kennebec River to Madison. However, they are looking for a fifteen-year property tax break (TIFs) from the towns they will be going through. In Richmond they received "negative feedback" from the selectmen and they were turned down in Farmingdale for the TIF.

Therefore they are looking at an alternate route running from Maxy Mills in Windsor over to

Route 105. The pipeline would then run down Route 105, buried three feet under the shoulder of the road to Augusta. When crossing rivers they have to option to directionally drill or strap the pipeline underneath the bridge. KVGC asked the Windsor selectmen to set up a town meeting for late February or early March to see if the townspeople will approve tax relief for their project. The town of Windsor will not be hooked up to the natural gas pipeline as it is not cost effective for KVGC to do so. Their potential customers include the state, the new hospital to be built in Augusta, and SAPPI.

KVGC says that their project will cost them 85 million dollars, causing them to need property tax relief initially. The project is not finalized as they still need financing and a rate plan before their final approval from the Public

Utilities Commission.

The selectmen then heard from RC Sons Paving. They are looking into moving their asphalt plant into Pete Kelley's gravel pit off Route 105. They are also considering two locations in Vassalboro. Clarence Smith pointed out that in the Kelley pit, the paving plant would impact the whole village. The selectmen asked to see the noise and smell testing done on their plant when it was located in Augusta. Planning Committee Chairperson Carol Chavarie pointed out that there is no ordinance against such a plant. When asked they said their basic hours of operation were from 6 a.m. - 5 p.m. The estimated value of the plant is \$440,000 and they would like to be operational May 1.

Keith Hall gave a public works update saying they have been going through a lot of sand and salt. Truck #4, the international, has a cracked transmission and a bent frame. It will take over six weeks just to receive the parts to fix the truck. The truck will be out for two months. They are looking into getting another contractor to help with the winter plowing. They changed the bed chain on truck #2 and put a new tire and rim on it. They also ordered a couple more loads of salt as the freezing and thawing has been difficult.

The transfer station committee will be meeting to discuss the transfer station project and confirm the traffic flow. The food bank is officially out of the town hall and is now located in the town garage beside the town hall.

495-2321; Atwood Elementary School, Wednesday, April 4, 465-3411; and China Primary School, Friday, April 6, 445-1550.

Albion library to host Husson professor

Albion Public Library will host a book discussion series, Let's Talk About It, on books by Maine authors. It will be facilitated by Troy resident, Greg Winston, associate professor of English at Husson University in Bangor.

Professor Winston has been active with Maine Humanities Council programs since 2007, serving as scholar-facilitator for the Let's Talk About It series in Pittsfield and the Literature and Medicine group in Dover-Foxcroft. He earned his PhD in English from the University of Delaware in 2001 and BA in English from Colgate University in 1993. His research focuses on modern Irish and British literatures, and he has published articles in numerous journals and collections, James Joyce Quarterly, Etudes Irlandaises, and

Blackwell's Companion to the British and Irish Short Story. His book *Joyce and Militarism* will be published in 2012 by the University Press of Florida. He has also worked as a journalist in New York City and Alaska, and taught English-as-a-second-language in Brazil.

Let's Talk About It meets on Tuesdays, beginning January 24, at 6:30 p.m., at the library. The book for January is *A Maine Hamlet*, by Lura Beam. Other books are as follows: Richard Russo's *Empire Falls* on February 21; Wesley McNair's *12 Journeys in Maine*, on March 20; Joyce Butler's *Wildfire Loose*, on April 17; and Stephen King's *Salem's Lot* on May 15.

Call Roberta Morin at 437-2019 if you are interested in joining the group.

RSU 18 Kindergarten registration to open

Pre-K registration packets will be available at the RSU 18 elementary schools on Wednesday, February 1. Any parent who is interested in sending their child (must be four years old by October 15, 2012) to Pre-K in the fall of 2012, please pick up registration packets at your local school office.

Any parent who intends to send their school age child (must be five years old by October 15, 2012) to kindergarten in the fall of 2012, please call your local school office to make an appointment. Kindergarten screening will be held in the RSU 18 elementary schools on the following dates for each school: James Bean School, Monday, March 26, 547-3395; Belgrade Central School, Wednesday, March 28,



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