



**TOWN OF OAK RIDGE
WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 10, 2025 – 1:30 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Members present

Spencer Sullivan, Chair
Todd Hall
Paul Magnabosco
Stuart Mease, Alternate (Sitting)
Jim Harton, Council liaison (via Zoom, Non-voting member)

Staff present

Bill Bruce, Town Manager
Ashley Royal, Deputy Town Clerk

Members absent

Brian Hall, Vice Chair
Francis Disney

Others Present

John Greer, Envirolink

1. **WELCOME:** Chair Spencer Sullivan called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Stuart Mease moved to approve the meeting agenda, and Paul Magnabosco seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).
3. **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 8, 2025, MEETING MINUTES:** Minutes were not available for approval and will be considered at the next meeting.
4. **REVIEW/RECOMMEND REVISED COMMUNITY WELL AMENDMENT:** Sullivan stated that discussion of the community well threshold stemmed from the surge of new developments being approved under the 30-lot minimum requirement for a community well system. He explained that an ordinance adopted in 2017 required new developments with 30 or more lots to install a community well system which would be deeded to the Town. He pointed out that developers appeared to be deliberately planning for developments just under 30 lots to avoid the minimum lot requirement for community wells. He added that the ordinance managing the threshold was significant because it would help to establish a healthy customer base, support the development of infrastructure subject to robust state-required testing, lay the groundwork for seamless system connections, and incentivize more development. Jim Harton added that customers would realize cost savings by connecting to the municipal water system, and Sullivan pointed out that the break-even point for achieving those savings was approximately 30 connections.

Sullivan indicated that the installation of community wells would be an upfront cost to the developer, which would be recouped in the price of the lot the developer would charge to a builder. He introduced the notion of reducing the minimum required threshold while pointing out that data suggested that the cost to install a community well system was similar to, if not less than, the cost to drill individual wells, particularly if that well fails or is dry.

Paul Magnabosco pointed out that the Town's potential for population growth could be significantly impacted by staffing at two large corporations, JetZero and Boom Supersonic,

located near the airport approximately six miles from Town, which together were projected to employ more than 15,000 workers. Town Manager Bill Bruce noted that an estimated 100 developable 15-acre parcels remained within the Town, which could support approximately 1,000 to 1,500 homes, which would translate to roughly 1,000 to 1,500 potential water customers. Sullivan stressed the value of having water main infrastructure in place for future developments to connect to easily.

Sullivan suggested reducing the lot requirement to 20 or 15 from 30 lots for new subdivisions. He noted that the state determined that 15 lots was the point at which a community well would come under state regulation. Discussion focused on the cost and feasibility of constructing dry lines to allow for future connections, recognizing that the Town cannot require property owners with functioning private wells to connect to the municipal system. Participants also raised questions about who would bear the cost of building the infrastructure, and if incentives to encourage connection could be structured. Additional discussion addressed the implications of reducing the minimum number of lots to 15 or 20, including how such a change would affect developers' upfront costs for future development and the Town's level of investment.

Paul Magnabosco made a motion to reduce the minimum number of lots required for a community well system in a new subdivision from 30 to 20 lots, and Spencer Sullivan seconded.

Todd Hall stated that reducing the lot requirement to 20 was an acceptable compromise, and Paul Magnabosco noted that the upcoming public hearings before the Planning & Zoning Board and Town Council would provide opportunities for further discussion and reconsideration.

The motion passed unanimously (4-0).

5. WATER SYSTEM POLICY UPDATES

- a. **Dry Taps:** John Greer referred to the connection fees charged by Vance County, north of Raleigh, for discussion. He stated that the tap fee was \$125, connection fee was \$125 and the monthly availability fee was around \$20. He explained that the monthly availability fee preserved a customer's right to connect to the system, and that if the fee was not paid, the customer would have to pay the accumulated charges before being permitted to tap into the system later, and that there was no time limit imposed on the fee. Sullivan added that the availability charge was considered a base fee which the Town would set at \$24 per month and stated that the tap fee would be waived but that the meter fee would be approximately \$500. He stated that the rate charge would be \$7.50 per thousand gallons after connection. He commented that there would be a time limit imposed on the waiver to incentivize customers to connect early and thereby influence positive cash flow into the municipal water system. He explained that customer enrollment past the waiver period would incur a \$2000 connection fee on top of the cost to install a line from the main to the home which would fall upon the homeowner to pay. Town Manager Bill Bruce noted that the monthly revenue generated per household consuming an average of 4500 gallons per month was estimated at \$60. He added that connecting both the Commons Shopping Center and the elementary school as bulk users of water, estimated at 600,000 gallons monthly at the shopping center, would further enhance revenue into the system. Sullivan suggested drafting a policy regulating water system enrollment taking into consideration the waiver of tap fees and the inclusion of the base rate, leaving the meter fee aside until the customer is ready to physically connect. The committee agreed to use the policy set by Vance County as a model to craft the Town's policy at their next meeting.

- b. **Incentive and Payment Plan for Private Service Line Installation:** Bruce suggested subsidizing the cost of running a line from the meter to the home at a set fee with a contracted plumber which would be a pro-rated cost added to that customer's monthly bill. He agreed that the agreement would be made with the homeowner who would be responsible for payment of any balance upon sale of the home. Bruce noted that the policy would be drafted by staff and reviewed by the Committee for recommendation to Council.

Sullivan mentioned that several homeowners of Williard Oaks off of Hwy 150 had expressed interest in connecting to the municipal water system. Noting the difficulty of serving only some homes within the subdivision, he advised that the Town Attorney's input should be sought to oversee the legal requirements of extending lines into a subdivision already served by individual wells.

6. PROJECT UPDATES

- a. **Water Tank:** Bruce reported on the progress of the installation of the water tank noting that the base had been set and that the remainder of the tower would be erected in the following week. Greer advised that careful video documentation be put in place to capture the tower's erection to its final completion and encouraged media coverage for the moment. Bruce noted the date of final completion to be April 26, 2026.
- b. **Water Main:** Bruce added that the tank would likely be filled by water from the water main once it had been installed, leaving the well for irrigation of the park. He explained that doing so would avoid the need for and expense of chemical treatments of the water from the well if it were to be used to fill the water tank. He reported that a Notice to Proceed had been issued to Park Construction, contractor for building the water main, and that boring would begin the first week in January from Kernersville eastward and continue with laying of pipes in March and be completed in October. It was noted that land for the pump station site had been fully secured and all residual issues surrounding the development and use of the pump station would be addressed in due course.

7. STRATEGIES TO RECRUIT ADDITIONAL CUSTOMERS

- a. **Outreach to Neighborhoods:** Sullivan emphasized the need to establish subcommittees to support outreach efforts, while noting that additional members would be required to staff them, and moved the discussion into agenda item eight.

b. **Subcommittee(s)/Working Group(s):** Moved to agenda item eight.

- 8. **STRATEGIES TO EXPAND WAC MEMBERSHIP:** Sullivan suggested a subcommittee focused on community outreach, or marketing. Secondly, he noted that a committee centered on funding issues, grants or loans was advisable. Ann Schneider offered insight into potential funding sources at the state and county levels. Sullivan encouraged recruiting efforts for additional members to serve on subcommittees as non-voting members and noted that any adjustments to the membership makeup of the committee would require consideration and approval from Council. Schneider suggested adding a member from Planning & Zoning to sit on the committee who could contribute useful knowledge into issues regarding infrastructure and development. Sullivan indicated that additional discussion would continue at next month's meeting.

- 9. **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Bruce reported that projected revenues had largely been met within the first five months of the new fiscal year, attributing the revenue surplus to the rapid

development of the Honeycutt Reserve. He stated that total revenue to date was \$28,000 and expenses were on budget at \$11,000.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

11. ADJOURN: Paul Magnabosco made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:08 p.m., and Todd Hall seconded. The motion passed unanimously (4-0).

Spencer Sullivan
Chair