

FEARRINGTON HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF OPEN BOARD MEETING
7 P.M. – 8:45 P.M.
VIRTUAL
February 21, 2022

PRESENT:

- *MEMBERS OF THE BOARD:* Rose Krasnow, President; Amy Ghiloni Vice-President; Tony Daniels, Treasurer; Judy Graham, Secretary; Zachary Traywick, Grounds; Warren Ort, Health Safety/Security; Pam Baily, Community Affairs; Tony Carroll, Communications; Mark Haslam, Facilities; Kathy Wood, Associa Community Manager. (Ric Frank, Covenants was absent.)
- *INVITED EXPERT SPEAKERS:* Lt. Philip Richard, Pittsboro Sheriff's Office, Special Operations-Community Service, and Francis DiGiano, Ph.D., Prof. Emeritus, Dept. of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, Gillings School of Global Public Health, UNC-CH.
- *RESIDENTS:* Over 200 residents registered.

PRESIDENT ROSE KRASNOW called the webinar to order at 7:00 pm, welcomed everyone, introduced the Board and invited speakers, and described several matters of community interest. A recording of the meeting will be available on-line until the end of March. https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/pZjID9q3T-HXKqRzFxrV50ZdnBINAsSe7u0vv-YynMp-LWOyZuZnzbGOWufoxtB0PR_xOGiVumG1YmR4.csxbaHiDaSXj1JiN?continueMode=true&xzm_rtaid=6o2ApaMsRYOWBV_V0qeBag.1647298038819.357e60c9b04606733e8d05070d5f8e74&xzm_rhtaid=99

- We welcome a new Assistant Community Manager, Taylor Futrell-McMillan, who will be present at the Associa office in the Gathering Place Feb 28.
- Creekwood Mail Kiosk. This kiosk has needed renovation for some time. More than a year ago, plans were approved by the Postmaster. However, we only received one bid, which was well above our budget. We have asked Hobbs Architects, P.A., to take a new look at this project and help us get it underway. A proposal is expected in a week.

- Beechmast Pond. We have examined all three options (restoring to a stream, converting to wetlands, or enlarging the forebay). We have the near-term cost estimates, but we need to carefully evaluate the long-term costs to see the full cost to the FHA. We expect to make a decision sometime this year.
- FHA annual dues. About 90% of the members have paid the 2022 HOA dues. Given the problems stemming from the error in the address on the payment envelope, we waived the late fee (\$20/month) for January, but not for February. If you aren't certain of your payment status, please check with Kathy Wood, Tony Daniels, or Rose Krasnow. You can also register on the HRW website, <https://app.townsq.io/login>, which will let you see your account.

LT. PHILIP RICHARD discussed tips for protecting ourselves.

- Identifying and avoiding phone scams.
 - Nobody from the Chatham County Sheriff's Office will ever call you with threats or requests for money.
 - A common scam is to call you and try to scare you with some story (e.g., excess charges on Amazon). They then provide a phone number or website for you to contact. *NEVER* provide credit card numbers, social security numbers, bank account information, Medicare number, etc. Even if it looks legitimate and you want to make contact, *NEVER* use their phone/website information. If you are inclined to make contact, independently seek out the phone number/website (e.g., Amazon) so you know whom you are truly dealing with.
- Protecting your home and its contents.
 - Houses with overflowing newspapers in the driveway or packages sitting on the porch are targets for thieves thinking that no one is home. If you are away, ask a friend or neighbor to make sure such things don't build up.
 - You can call the non-emergency number for the sheriff's office (919-542-2911) and ask for a "house check" for up to 14 days/year. Deputies will come by once in the day and once at night. The officers will walk around the house and check for risks/problems.
 - Where there is a high-density of houses, criminals can easily walk through the area looking for crimes of opportunity (e.g., open

garages, open doors/windows, unlocked cars). This can be prevented by keeping doors/windows and cars locked and the garage door closed.

- If you are a victim of theft, having a list of serial numbers is essential. A national database of serial numbers can be helpful. Today's technology (pictures of serial numbers with a cell phone) can create a list. Traditional technology (pen and paper) works too.
- <http://chathamsheriff.com/> has a lot of information, including activities, such as medication take back. They offer this in Fearington Village periodically and at the sheriff's office anytime.

Dr. FRAN DIGIANO discussed wide-ranging issues related to drinking water quality in Fearington Village.

- The three major elements to consider are:
 - EPA's regulatory system <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa/how-epa-regulates-drinking-water-contaminants>.
 - Human footprint on source water.
 - Human health risk informed by science.
- Sources of Fearington Village (FV) and Pittsboro drinking water
 - FV source is Jordan Lake with a water volume of 72-150 billion gallons.
 - Pittsboro source is the Haw River, with a much lower volume.
 - The Haw River flows into Jordan Lake about 6.5 miles *south* of the intake of FV source waters.
 - Under normal conditions, the status of the Haw River water has no significant influence on FV source water.
 - Under heavy rain conditions, the gates of the downstream dam are closed and a small quantity of the Haw River may back up and enter the intake of FV water.
- Chemicals and risks
 - EPA publishes health-related maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) of 90 chemicals. If exceeded, customers must be notified. Typically, their concentrations are expressed as ppb (parts per billion).
 - MCLs are intended to be protective. For example, acceptable risk is 1 cancer per 1 million people, assuming exposures for 70 years and consumption of 2 L of water/day (approximately 2 quarts/day). The MCLs are set as close to the level of no

known or expected risk to health, as feasible using best available treatment technology and taking cost into consideration.

- If information on a chemical is insufficient to develop an MCL, but still indicates concern, a Health Advisory Level is developed and provided to state agencies. Depending on the database, such a chemical may rise to an MCL.
- The case of PFAS (a group of several polyfluoro alkyl substances), have caused local concern recently.
 - EPA’s actions are described in detail [PFAS Strategic Roadmap: EPA's Commitments to Action 2021-2024 | US EPA](#)
 - At present, PFAS are on a contaminant candidate list, not as an MCL.
 - They are ubiquitous in the environment and in the blood of many Americans.
 - Most health risk knowledge comes from high-dose animal studies and population studies (epidemiology).
 - Some contaminants in the PFAS group have caused or been associated with cancers or adverse effects on cholesterol levels, the liver, thyroid, immune system, fertility, and development.
 - PFOS (e.g., used in previous Scotchgard formulations) and PFOA (e.g., used in previous Teflon formulations) are in the process of being phased out. Moreover, wherever these chemicals already exist in the water environment, they will persist because of extremely slow breakdown, i.e., the Forever Chemicals.
 - Currently, the North Chatham Water Treatment Plant does not have a process dedicated to removing PFAS, but is still capable of 50 percent or more reduction by addition of the adsorbent, powdered activated carbon, both at the water intake and within the plant. The material is added to reduce taste and odors, but does have this important side benefit. PFAS is lowered below what many experts think the MCL will be.
- Virtually everything in life carries a risk, making it essential to consider relative risk. The table below describes some order-of-magnitude comparisons for NC. Many of these are estimates only.

CATEGORY	ANNUAL DEATHS
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Cancers from <i>regulated</i> chemicals in drinking water (estimate)	54
All cancers	20,150
Covid-19	14,000
Car accidents	1600
Air pollution (estimate)	1500
Pedestrian accidents	268

- Ways to lower personal exposures to PFAS. Each option has different efficacies and costs.
 - Point-of-use granular activated carbon filters
 - Household or point-of-use reverse osmosis
 - Commercially available water (all such water is not necessarily safer than tap water).
- Summary.
 - Our water meets all current EPA regulations.
 - Few, if any, synthetic organic chemicals are above detection limit in our water supply.
 - PFAS in our tap water is below the likely future MCL.
 - EPA MCL for PFAS is likely to be forthcoming in 3-4 years.
 - Household treatment devices require maintenance.
 - Emerging contaminants not yet regulated still require vigilance.
 - One futuristic approach is to add treatment processes to remove emerging contaminants in vulnerable water supplies nationwide.
 - The annual cost of such improvements to consumer households is estimated to be an increase of \$300-\$400.

TONY CARROLL led the Question and Answer segments following each presentation. Written answers to the questions will be published on the FHA website as soon as possible.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:45.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE FHA OPEN MEETING 2-21-22

Q&A RELATIVE TO FHA (Represented by Rose Krasnow, President)

1. **QUESTION** from Adrienne Lallo. Many groups MIGHT benefit from the construction of a pavilion equipped with AV to reserve for meetings on a similar basis as the Gathering Place. Had this been explored?

ANSWER. No, this has not been explored. However, since the community continues to grow (note: Fitch Creations recently bought another 52 acres of land to the south of us that will be developed, once it has gone through the County's approval process, as part of Fearrington with larger lots), we are beginning to explore whether some land could be set aside for use as a recreation/gathering space on the other side of the community from the Historic District.

2. **QUESTION** from Matt Alexander. Thank you and the Board for your commitment to making our community a better place to live. I have made several written requests for copies of committee reports to the FHA Board. I believe that NC HOA law permits such requests. Also, committee reports were, at one time, published with Board minutes. Will you help me obtain the reports and, if not, why not. I will gladly pay any costs associated with reproducing the reports. I have also had much difficulty obtaining copies of the annual audited financial statements. It would certainly help Board transparency if these were published, in a timely manner, on the website.

ANSWER. Concerning committee reports, under state law there is no obligation that they be published. Although much of the information is intended for general consumption, some relates to internal Board discussions that may be subject to privacy or confidentiality considerations.

The substance of the reports will be reflected in the minutes, but the actual reports will not be posted (except the treasurer's report).

The transition audit is expected to be completed any day. We are in regular contact with our accountants, Petway, Mills and Pearson. They, like many companies, have been impacted by labor shortages due to the pandemic, working from home, early retirements, etc. The finished paperwork is very much on our minds, and we will share it with homeowners as soon as we can review it. The final 2021 budget will be posted on the FHA website (under FHA Board of Directors, Budgets, 2021) as soon as possible.

Q&A RELATIVE TO PITTSBORO SHERIFF'S OFFICE (Represented by Lt. Philip Richard)

1. **QUESTION** from Karen Isaccs. What is incidence of break-ins in FV?

ANSWER. Over the last year, Fearrington Village has had a low occurrence of break-ins. I believe the overall participation from the community with safety and awareness helps keep these numbers low. The most common issue is unlocked vehicles being rummaged through for valuables. Please remember to keep car doors locked.

2. **QUESTION** from Dan Fitzsimmons . As an active senior bicyclist that is new to the area, I generally ride solo However, the roads here and the speeds can be intimidating especially as there is seldom room to move to the right. What roads and times would you suggest using?

ANSWER. Chatham County has a beautiful landscape and offers a wide range of areas for cycling. However, safety is always a concern due to the increased population and higher volume of vehicles on the roads. With that being said, it is hard to give you a definitive answer. More bicycle paths are needed, and fortunately some of the new roads being built in Chatham Park have them.

3. **QUESTION** from Terry Glazier. Do you have the program where elderly living alone call in to your office in the morning to indicate they are fine? If

you don't receive a call by a designed time, you call them. This was done in my father's small community.

ANSWER. At present, we do not have such a program, but we are looking into it.

Q&A RELATIVE TO WHAT'S IN OUR WATER (Represented by Fran DiGiano, Ph.D.)

Note: Similar questions have been combined for ease in communication)

1. **QUESTIONS** from Miki Adams, Karen Ritter, Deb Bettis, and Linda Baggish. What are the dangerous elements in Fearington water? How prevalent are they? Do you personally amend Fearington water and how? What are other pollutants that have been detected that are above the MCL. Are there other pollutants of concern other than PFAS that are at the top of that list? How safe is FV water to drink? *If* not entirely safe, what is the best type of filtration system to have installed? What would be an approximate price range for installation (for kitchen, only--not the whole house)? Can you suggest any companies that do that type of system? We have been drinking only bottled water b/c I thought I read that our water was unsafe to drink (containing toxic chemicals). What about using bottled water? To drink and cook.

ANSWERS. In my professional opinion, no public drinking water in the US should be characterized as having "dangerous", "toxic", or "poisonous" elements in it. The Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 enabled development of nationwide regulations by the US EPA and so far, we have 90 MCLs. These are found online under [EPA Drinking Water Regulations](#) . Based on currently regulated chemicals, our water is safe to drink.

My presentation focused on what we call the “unregulated emerging contaminants of concern.” For these, we need to first quantify the risk and assess the cost of technology to control (risk-benefit analysis) before establishing an MCL.

EPA develops regulations for potential cancer-causing agents based on control of lifetime risk to between 1 excess cancer in 10,000 to 1 in 1 million population. Moreover, the risk is set very conservatively, assuming that you drink 2 quarts of water per day and are exposed for 70 years. Non

cancer risks are also controlled by another metric discussed in "Evolution of science-based uncertainty factors in noncancer risk assessment". ([Dourson, et.al. \(1996\)](#))

My next to last slide compared risks from drinking water against many other risks in daily life. It showed, at least for the currently regulated chemicals, that the risk from drinking water is miniscule. I mentioned as well that truly pristine water is impossible to maintain in urbanized, industrialized areas. Interestingly enough, even so-called pristine water contains harmless natural organic matter that we've discovered from disinfection byproducts by reacting with chlorine, the world-wide choice of a chemical used to protect us against water borne infectious diseases, which otherwise would present an enormous acute risk to health, far greater than long term, chronic risks from trace chemicals.

Of the regulated chemicals, only a handful have required attention in drinking water treatment to reduce below the MCL. The most notable of these would be the disinfection byproducts (DBPs) discovered in the late 1970s. It may seem ironic that while disinfection is the bedrock in our profession in defining what is "safe water" that DBPs would be presenting chronic health risks. These DBPs continue to be studied. Epidemiological evidence to implicate DBPs as cancer causing has been much debated over the last 30 years. Many epidemiological studies have only revealed a statically borderline elevation in bladder cancers, and these only account for less than 5% of all cancers. Many believe the MCLs are far too conservative. . Meanwhile, our profession is doing a balancing act to protect water consumers from the **ACUTE RISK** of infectious diseases, the most essential of "safe" water, while also protecting us against far less certain **CHRONIC RISKS** of cancer from DBPs for which we have MCLs. Researchers continue to study DBPs and their control, typically now in the US and elsewhere by the switch of disinfectants from free chlorine to combine chlorine (chloramine), the latter not reacting to form DBPs.

I acknowledged in my presentation that EPA has been criticized for its slowness in adding new MCLs over the last 18 year despite producing the [EPA Contaminant Candidate List](#) every 5 years that contains 5 chemicals being considered for regulation. The current List issued in July 2021 includes PFAS and the timetable is for an MCL in the next four years.

The perception of risks is unfortunately, in my opinion, too heavily influenced by the news media coverage, which is not always informed by facts nor are articles written by those with scientific credentials. Perception of risk may also understandably be influenced by the taste of the water though there is absolutely no connection to chemicals of possible health concern.

As a professional in this field, for some people to describe tap water as containing toxic chemicals is without evidence. But if you're not convinced about safety, you can install either granular activated carbon filter or reverse osmosis under the sink. However, you also must take responsibility for its proper maintenance. I discussed these devices and their maintenance in detail in my presentation.

Adding either treatment will remove objectionable taste, which is due either to free chlorine (usually only 1 month around Jan-Feb as a planned, temporary shift in disinfectant type from chloramine used the rest of the year) or to trace amounts of naturally produced metabolites from algal growth in lake during summer (our water treatment plant adds powdered activated carbon to remove these.)

There are many brands for under-the-sink treatment. It makes no sense to me to put such devices at entrance to your home, as I explained in talk (see later comment). Lowes carries this activated carbon block (ACB) type of filter Here is link to it at Lowes

<https://www.lowes.com/pd/A-O-Smith-Clean-Water-Main-Faucet-Filter-Single-Stage-Carbon-Block-Under-Sink-Water-Filtration-System/1000562061> This is newest type of filter, a big upgrade from my own unit. I don't have personal experience with this filter. I only know that the ACB type is recommended if you're concerned about such chemicals as PFAS, though I showed in my talk that the PFAS in our tap water is lower than the most conservative proposals for MCLs, but you can still get even lower by such a carbon filter. By the way, there is no such thing as zero concentration. Furthermore, advances in detection methods will continue to reveal lower concentrations, and society will judge whether there should be concerns.

Though requiring more of your time, you can use the dispenser at Weaver St. Market or at Whole Foods that starts with already excellent Chapel Hill water and retreats it by reverse osmosis at 40 cents per gallon. Personally, I would recommend this over under-the-sink

treatment to avoid your responsibility for changing a granular activated carbon filter cartridge every 6 months or worrying about the fouling of reverse osmosis units. The latter are being pushed by salesmen, but in my opinion, activated carbon is quite sufficient for our water and far less troublesome to maintain. I'm not all in favor of reverse osmosis for the whole house. This is unnecessary. Your concern is about a tiny fraction of water entering your house from the utility to use for human consumption. It makes no sense to be treating water for dishwashers, washing machines, toilet flushing or even bathing (skin absorption is minor exposure). I also discussed bottled water, some of which are reprocessed municipally treated water (such as Aquafina) or buying spring water. Neither of these is regulated by EPA, but instead by FDA.

In summary, I explained in my presentation that risk science is used in setting regulations, that very few water supplies in urbanized, industrialized areas are truly pristine because we've imposed a human footprint on them with all activities and our unquenchable desire for consumer products that are produced from synthetically made chemicals, the class called PFAS being ubiquitous. What we do by regulations is control the size of our footprint by setting maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) and its character, by choosing which contaminants must be controlled due to health concerns.

I included in my presentation a summary of results of measuring hundreds of chemicals in Jordan Lake by the US Geological Survey as part of the [Triangle Monitoring Project](#). It includes 100+ pesticides and similar number of other synthetic organic chemicals with only a few being above detection limit in nearly 30 years of monitoring.

2. **QUESTION** from Martha Martin. I am curious about the quality of our drinking water. I often detect a heavy smell of bleach or something like chlorine when I turn on the tap (from kitchen or the bathrooms). Does that ever subside or will it be a constant? I use a Brita water pitcher for drinking water but am wondering if this water is safe for cooking and what about bathing, etc.? Smells so strong sometimes, makes me wonder.

ANSWER. This question is asked on Nextdoor every Jan-Feb when the chlorinous taste/odor is noticed in our water. That's because the "free chlorine" form of disinfectant is being added at the treatment plant. The

rest of the year, most utilities in NC add a "combined chlorine," a different form of disinfectant that does not have objectionable taste and odor. Chloramine is added because it does not react with naturally present organic substances to form disinfection byproducts that have been regulated the EPA since the late 1970s. This allows utilities to meet the MCL, based mainly on slightly elevated risk of bladder cancer found in some but not all studies of populations. Chloramine is the simple cost-effective way for utilities to meet the regulation.

The State of North Carolina and perhaps only SC require that utilities switch to free chlorine form of disinfectant for 1 month every year. The reason for the switch is explained every year in a letter sent to each customer's residence by Chatham Water Utility. It's also explained at the Chatham County's Water Utility website. Free chlorine, which admittedly does have a strong taste and odor, kills bacteria that may grow on the pipe walls in the pipe system bringing water to your home from the water treatment plant. This is otherwise not possible to achieve with chloramine because it is a weaker disinfectant than free chlorine.

The maximum concentration of free chlorine and of chloramine are regulated by EPA. There is absolutely no concern over your health in drinking water containing either of these, though the taste and odor of free chlorine are surely not easy to tolerate. But NC has maintained that the temporary use for one month reduces bacteria living on pipe walls. Other states address the problem on an "as needed" basis.

You can easily remove the taste and odor by using a Brita filter, your refrigerator filter, or a granular activated carbon filter installed under the sink. To repeat, free chlorine is not harmful. It has been used to disinfect water for 100 years.

3. **QUESTION** from Donald Niedringhaus. ORSANCO has been dealing with chemical contamination in the Ohio River watershed for 60+ years. Is there anything similar in NC?

ANSWER. The Clean Water Act mandates EPA to issue permits for wastewater discharge via the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits by which each state has the authority to set the specific limits of pollutants in the discharge to

values less than or equal to those stated by EPA, making the Ohio River Valley Sanitary Commission (ORSANCO) redundant. Its role was to bring together 8 states. I suggest reading about Jordan Lake One Water, a new organization that brings together local governments (elected and staff), environmental advocacy groups, and environmental management professionals in the 1,700 sq mile watershed to push for more control of pollutant inputs to streams. What I see is lacking is better coordination among agencies of NC government responsible for safe drinking water and control of wastewater discharges. Historically, these two missions are not aligned closely enough in most states.

4. **QUESTION** from Karin Ritter. What are some of the add-on treatments being considered for public treatment plants?

ANSWER. The most likely add-on is granular activated carbon (GAC), as I discussed in my presentation. I said that it is currently being added on at the Sweeney Water Treatment Plant for the City of Wilmington at cost of \$60 million . Their water comes from the Cape Fear River below the point where the Chemours plant (making GenX, a type of PFAS) had added contaminants and is under a court order to remedy.

GAC has been in use for more than 50 years across the US on an "as needed" basis. The City of Cincinnati is the most often quoted example. The Town of Pittsboro is planning to add GAC very soon. The Town of Cary also has plans to add it.

Some experts argue that EPA should require this method of treatment at all water treatment plants vulnerable to contamination from upstream or uptake of wastewater discharges. This would eliminate the piecemeal regulation of each individual contaminant by an MCL. The cost to cities is passed on in water rates that may go up about \$400 per residence. Reverse osmosis is an alternative, but is even far more costly and unnecessary, in my opinion, except in very special circumstances. Keep in mind that less than 10% of the water coming to your house is used for drinking and cooking. The cost to remove contaminants must be measured against the benefit in risk reduction. Equity in raising costs to customers is an equally important consideration.

5. QUESTION from Donna Ross. Where can refrigerator filters be recycled?

ANSWER. Several refrigerator manufacturers offer recycling. Therefore, there is no one answer. If you do a computer search on how to recycle water filters, you will see many answers.