

**JOINT WORKSHOP
ORONO AND VEAZIE TOWN COUNCILS**

REGARDING FLUORIDATION OF THE PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021

BEGINNING AT 6:00PM

IN-PERSON: Orono Town Council Chamber, 59 Main Street, Orono, Maine

ZOOM WEBINAR ON-LINE: <https://zoom.us/j/94027970178>

DIAL IN TO ZOOM WEBINAR: 1(312) 626-6799 ID: 940 2797 0178

MINUTES

1. Welcome & Introductions

Present: (In person) Council Chair Tom Perry, Geoffrey Wingard, Terry Greenier, Cheryl Robertson, Laura Mitchell, Town Manager Sophie Wilson, and (remote) Meghan Gardner.
Absent: Laurie Osher.

Present from Veazie: (In person) Councilors Paul Messer and Philip Bruins, and Town Manager Mark Leonard. Also present: (In person) Orono Veazie Water District Superintendent Boyd Smith.

2. Staff Overview of Legal Authorities and Responsibilities Regarding Fluoridation of the Public Water Supply *(Video record time 0:01:30 - 0:05:53)*

Town Manager Sophie Wilson provided the background information about an Orono resident's request to remove fluoride from the water supply (November 2019). She noted (by State Law) that changes to the water supply would be handled by referendum vote of the citizens in the communities. Ms. Wilson stated that a vote was held in March of 1961 to add fluoride to the water supply. The next time it could be taken up by referendum would be during the General Election, November 2022 for both communities.

3. Informational Presentations from Invited Guests both For and Against Fluoridation

(Video record time 0:05:54 - 0:24:20)

Mr. Paul Connett spoke against fluoridation of the water supply. He provided information with a Powerpoint presentation. He spoke of the fluoride ion as being toxic, and provided information that fluoride lowers IQ and increases ADHD symptoms. He noted more information can be found at FluorideALERT.org.

(Video record time 0:24:25 - 0:51:05)

Ms. Judy Winestein, Coordinator of the Maine Oral Health Coalition and Dentist Patrick Rowe spoke in favor of fluoridation of the water supply. They provided information with a Powerpoint presentation. They spoke of fluoridating the water supply as a safe and effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay. They noted the fluoride mineral naturally exists in lakes, rivers, groundwater, and oceans. They stated that oral health is the window to overall health and noted

the CDC called water fluoridation one of “10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.” They noted that research confirms fluoridation’s safety.

(Video record time 0:51:06) - 0:01:10:45)

Councilors asked questions and the speakers provided comments.

4. Council Discussion *(Video record time 01:10:46) - 01:15:18)*

Mr. Perry noted Council is not here to decide whether or not to leave, or take away fluoride, but whether to put it out for a public vote. Ms. Gardner stated she is not in favor of putting it out to a public vote and explained why. Ms. Robertson stated she reviewed the CDC recommendations and she was not in favor of putting it out to a vote.

5. Public Comment Period (As Time Allows)

No public comments were made.

6. Informal Identification of Next Steps for Councils *(Video record time 0:01:15:19 - 01:18:07)*

Mr. Perry noted the Council has received information and asked questions. He suggested Council think on this issue and discuss it further in Council Workshop. Ms. Wilson suggested discussing it in a workshop on November 8, 2021, after the Council Meeting.

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by Cheryl Robertson and seconded by Terry Greenier. All unanimously agreed. The Council Meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Minutes are not verbatim. A video-recorded version is available on the Town’s website at www.orono.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward
Executive Assistant