

**Approved**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**NEW HAMPSHIRE WATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**  
**September 20, 2011**

**Commissioners in attendance:**

Dave Allen  
Virginia Battles-Raffa  
Robert Beaurivage  
Kris Blomback  
John Gilbert, Chair  
Denise Hart  
Martha Lyman, Vice Chair  
Amy Manzelli  
Glenn Normandeau  
Cliff Sinnott  
Alison Watts

**Public in attendance:**

John Boisvert  
Tim Fortier  
Robert Morency  
Sarah Pillsbury  
Jennifer Rowden  
Rep. Judith Spang  
Paul Susca

**Commissioners not in attendance:**

Thomas Burack  
Mike Licata  
John Palermo  
Chuck Souther

*Chairman John Gilbert called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm.*

**I. Welcome New Commissioner and Introductions**

Chairman Gilbert introduced and welcomed Virginia Battles-Raff, the newest member of the Commission. Virginia will be serving as the North Country representative for the Commission.

**II. August 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes and Budget Update**

Meeting Minutes: A motion to accept the August 16<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes was made by Glenn Normandeau and seconded by David Allen. The motion passed unanimously, with Cliff Sinnott, Virginia Battles-Raffa and Amy Manzelli abstaining.

Budget Update: The budget has not yet been finalized. John Gilbert and Marcy Lyman are continuing to work with the Switzer Foundation to look into other available funds through various charitable foundations.

**III. Implications of Governor's Announcement**

Following Governor Lynch's announcement that he will not be seeking re-election, John Gilbert sought the Commissioners' thoughts as to what this might mean for the Commission's work. The following thoughts and concerns were expressed by Commission members:

- Implementation of the recommendations this Commission develops may be more difficult with a change in leadership.
- This commission was intended to be non-partisan.
- Public involvement will be key no matter who is in office.
- It will be challenging dealing with Governor Lynch not seeking re-election to push any items through, but he still has time in office.
- Water commissions have been going on for years. No matter what this Commission proposed there was inevitably going to be leadership change over the 25-year period the Commission is charged with looking at.
- The issue of sustainability does not change; it is a bipartisan issue. There is risk in linking this Commission's work and/or report to any political administration or elections; the political landscape is irrelevant.
- The solutions to water issues are, however, political.
- Suggestions included inviting key members of the House and Senate to Commission meetings and surveying candidates (an approach used by Save Our Groundwater) in order to inform them and gage their stance on water issues.
- The Commission has a long way to go before Governor Lynch not seeking re-election is an issue.

## **VI. Working Group Session**

Chairman Gilbert requested each working group (Public Engagement, Information Needs and Implementation) identify a chair, note taker, and then identify what tasks must be accomplished by when to recommend to the full Commission. It is expected that the working groups to conduct most of their work in-between Commission meetings to then bring forward updates and recommendations at the full Commission meetings.

*See Appendix A for work group meeting notes.*

## **VII. Working Group Summary Reports**

### **A. Public Engagement**

Denise Hart will serve as chair for this subcommittee with Marcy Lyman serving as note taker. The subcommittee's first priority is to plan the 5 public meetings mandated by the Executive Order. The Committee has recommended that the Commission hold the meetings within major watershed areas as well as fulfilling the requirement that one meeting be held in each Executive Councilor district. The first two meetings will be held in the Seacoast region and the North Country, and are tentatively planned for late October/ early November. John, Denise and Marcy will be meeting with representatives from Leadership New Hampshire next week to discuss strategies for the meetings' content to best solicit input from the public. Use of a facilitator such as Judy Stokes (NH Fish & Game Department) may be a good approach. The full content of the forum will be discussed at the next subcommittee meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Denise passed out a preliminary list of organizations and groups the Commission may want to reach out to in order to solicit input; she will be asking Commissioners to add to this list.

### **B. Information Needs**

Dave Allen will serve as chair for this subcommittee with Alison Watts serving as note taker. A summary of the other recent, major water-related legislative commissions is needed and the subcommittee plans to organize a panel of the chairs of those commissions at an upcoming meeting. The two areas the subcommittee felt more information was specifically needed are demographic projections overlaid with information regarding existing water-related infrastructure, and the implications of climate change. The subcommittee will solicit experts in these areas to attend a Commission meeting or provide information.

### **C. Implementation**

Virginia Battles-Raffa will serve as chair for this subcommittee; Jennifer Rowden served as note taker for the subcommittee today. The subcommittee discussed that the first major task that needs to be accomplished is developing a framework for how recommendations will be implemented. The *Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework* will be used as template for the subcommittee. Major components of the template will include identifying the issue, current status, recommendation, cost/benefit, and measures. The subcommittee may try to test a few example issues to ensure the template can capture the needed information.

### **VIII. Public Comments and Next Meetings**

The following comments were offered by members of the public in attendance:

- The Commission should consider that some of the recommendations or implementation strategies that have been discussed already exist in legislation (both state and federal).
- The *New Hampshire Water Primer* was produced in 2008 identifies the stressor, but are the issues and stressors the same in 2011? What will they be in 25 years? This question could be used to engage the audience at the public meetings.
- If this Commission is going to collect information, i.e. public meetings, what is going to be done with it? Will it be used to foster political support for recommendations, legislation or funding? A lot of information has already been gathered on this topic, so the Commission should avoid collecting data just for the sake of collecting data. The question of “who should pay” is always important. It is important to know what communities have aquifer protection, prime wetlands, local river advisory committees, etc.

The next few Commission meetings are scheduled for the following dates from 2:00pm to 5:00 pm with locations to be determined.

- October 18, 2011
- November 15, 2011
- December 18, 2011

**Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.**

***The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 18, 2011 from 2:00 to 5:00pm at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, 7 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH.***

## Appendix A - Working Groups Session Notes

### *Public Engagement Subcommittee*

Commission Participants: Denise Hart (Subcommittee Chair), Amy Manzelli, and Marcy Lyman.  
Additional Participants: Paul Susca (DES) and Jim Ryan

- 1) Discussion about which group would handle finalizing language of vision statement and principles. Amy Manzelli wanted to be in whatever group was handling that. Determined that Public Engagement Working Group would handle that responsibility and Amy joined the group.
- 2) Denise Hart was asked if she would serve as chair and she agreed with caveats that she had a number of deadlines, but would serve if supported by other members of the Group. Marcy Lyman will serve as scribe.
- 3) Paul described outreach efforts for the *New Hampshire Water Resources Primer* (also described in the New Hampshire State Water Planning Process Outreach to Business Community and Rotary Clubs 2010 – 2011 Status Report prepared by DES on April 28, 2011 and updated on September 20, 2011).
- 4) The working group focused on two outreach efforts: the five public sessions directed by Governor's Executive Order and gathering lists and groups with which to engage. Jennifer Rowden will be asked to create a Google document from Denise's draft list of groups to engage and potential survey questions, so that all Commissioners can participate in expanding the list.

Required five Executive Council public sessions comments:

- Reinforced Commission's interest in holding them on watershed basis. Paul Susca will provide an overlay map with Executive Council districts and watersheds.
- Suggestions around opportunities to tap into distance learning/internet/New Hampshire Public Television/Community Colleges to provide greater public participation.
- Suggestion to have key pad polling as part of public session program and as way to engage all participants initially.
- Suggestion to employ the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and others to have one big day of sessions around the state.
- Discussed role of UNH: lay groundwork, provide facilities/solicit in-kind donations, etc.
- Need to contact Executive Councilors – how do they get in touch with their constituency? Initial one-on-one contact with each of the five Councilors suggested.
- Determined that we will plan two initial meetings (3<sup>rd</sup> week in October/2<sup>nd</sup> Week November): one on the Seacoast and one in the North Country.
- Connect with Steve Reno to organize relationship with Leadership New Hampshire (John Gilbert to schedule; Denise will attend and possibly Marcy). We envision Leadership New Hampshire as assisting in general with organizing the outreach meetings: arranging for the meeting place, conducting personal outreach to local Conservation Commissions, Zoning Board of Adjustments, Planning Boards, Board of Selectmen, Chamber of Commerce, etc., and helping with identifying community contacts, media outreach. We discussed options for professional facilitation, which all agreed would be essential to the success of the event.
- Identify people to invite and how to invite them.

- Identify and secure venue (White Mountain Community College in Berlin and Hugh Gregg facility at Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Greenland were offered as possibilities).
- Identify facilitator and determined need for facilitator for each session. Glenn Normandeau will see about availability of Judy Stokes (good town moderators were also recommended to tap for facilitators).
- Design meeting: Denise to meet/discuss with Bruce Mallory at UNH who headed up Critical Conversations project.

Outreach:

- Denise circulated early draft of list of organizations/constituencies for Commission members to add too.
- Opportunities for outreach beyond the five public sessions: annual meetings such as New Hampshire Municipal Association (November in Manchester), New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions (November), New Hampshire Water Works Association (March), and New Hampshire Water and Watershed Conference (March).
- Request Commission members identify organizations and events for Commission outreach/public engagement and add to list.

***Information Needs Subcommittee***

Commission Participants: John Gilbert, Alison Watts, and Dave Allen (Subcommittee Chair)  
Additional Participants: Sarah Pillsbury (DES) and John Boisvert

Issues that should be considered:

- Demographics: (Ken Johnson, University of New Hampshire) Has a full demographics analysis been done? Is there more information than we've seen in the presentation? Alison Watts will check with Ken to see what analyses have been done.
- Water infrastructure: Are there maps of existing water infrastructure (wastewater and water supply). Sarah Pillsbury thinks so, will look into.
- Dams: Can be used to control flow (low and high flows), and have been good and bad attributes. Many are well past their design life. Current basin analyses do not consider small dams; these may contribute to flood hazards, and human health risks. Floodplains should be considered as hazards; e.g. Suncook River change of course, and recent flood damage in Vermont.
- Existing local storm water controls: Massachusetts has a "keep it local" policy, several Seacoast towns have regulations, e.g. Portsmouth requires no increase in runoff.

Need to draw on the experience of other commissions: flood, groundwater, land use, storm water, infrastructure funding, shoreland protection. The subcommittee will invite representatives from each commission to speak at next meeting (October). Presentations in a panel format with a

brief summary from each speaker covering key recommendations and major challenges.

It would be helpful to identify resources that are already stressed: impaired water bodies, decreased flow in wells, flood hazard. A summary of existing problems should be developed, then overlay expected changes in demand (climate and demographics), and identify resources which will be stressed in the future.

Note that "enough water" is defined by expectations; how much water is need to sustain the expected quality of life.

Malcom Smith (UNH) works with behavior science and could be a resource.

Action items:

- Set up presentations from other commissions. Possible questions to address: what was your charge? What solutions did you propose, what challenges did you encounter, and what further recommendations do you have?
- Set up demographic/climate change presentations. Alison Watts to ask Ken Johnson and Cameron Wake to speak at the December meeting.
- Develop list of existing stresses resources.

Infrastructure considerations should include the true costs (e.g. replacement) not just operating costs. (Note: The Infrastructure Commission, SB47, is currently not staffed.) When considering costs, note that the design life of a distribution system is much longer (70ish years) than the life of a treatment plant (20 years).

### ***Implementation Subcommittee***

Commission Participants: Virginia Battles-Raffa (Subcommittee Chair), Robert Beaurivage, Glenn Normandeau, Cliff Sinnott, Kris Blomback

Additional Participants: Jennifer Rowden (DES) and Rep. Judith Spang

The subcommittee's tasks were identified as the following:

- Identify a framework for conveying how this Commission and other legislative commissions' recommendations.
- Determine how the recommendations could be implemented and prioritized.
- Identify what steps different stakeholder groups (municipalities, volunteer organizations, individuals, etc.) can do now to promote long-term sustainability.
- Determine how progress towards the vision and recommendations from this Commission should be measured.

The overarching needs for successfully implementing the recommendations the Commission develops requires identification of the following:

- What are the issues, what work has been done and who is implementing it? (This work will largely fall to the information needs subcommittee.)
- What are the costs if an issue is resolved or not resolved relative to social, economic and/or environmental factors? What are the risks involved?
- Who is responsible for implementing a recommendation and at what level (individual, local, state, federal)?
- What is the timeframe for implementation?
- What measures or indicators should be used to track progress of implementation?

The suggested hierarchy of information needed was identified as:

- Issue
- Responsible party/Impacted party
- Current status of existing efforts
- Desired outcome
- Recommendation
- Responsible party for implementation
- Required action for implementation
- Timeframe
- Level of benefit (economic, social, environmental)
- Cost
- Indicator for measuring progress
- Evaluation responsibility

Virginia will develop a draft implementation table based on the *Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework* example, but modified per the subcommittee's discussion and will circulate the draft prior to the next Commission meeting.