

**Approved 4/17/12**  
**MEETING NOTES**  
**Public Engagement Working Group**  
**Water Sustainability Commission**  
**April 9, 2012**

The meeting was held at the offices of Baldwin and Callen in Concord, NH.

Commission members present: Denise Hart, John Gilbert, Marcy Lyman

Regrets: Amy Manzelli

Guests: Paul Susca/DES staff, Molly Donovan and Michele Holt-Shannon/NH Listens by phone

**1) Update on May 8 Public Engagement Sessions with NH Listens:** Molly and Michele from NH Listens gave update on status of our public engagement sessions scheduled for May 8. Outreach has begun, PR is ready to go live this week (week of April 9) and registration is now open and up on the website. Registration takes place over the next three weeks. Both the NH Listens and WSC websites have been updated with the news release to go out 4/10 and electronic announcement will go out this week.

Discussion about distinction between “Stakeholder” session and “Listening” sessions. Point was made that everyone is a stakeholder but we want to distinguish between general public/lay/grassroots individuals/organizations and people who work with water as their job, professionals/professional associations. Further discussion about how to advise registrants about which session to register, NH Listens can/will provide technology so people can register for session on June 19 on WSC site. At a minimum, needs to be something on Commission website that gives direction. NH Listens will give list to WSC of those who they directed to June 19 meeting.

**ACTION:** Paul to check with DES staff to see whether there is capacity to field calls/handle registration for June 19 meeting.

NH Listens continues to work on outreach lists – asked that Commission members forward any/all lists to them even if there may be duplicates.

Facilitators: there will be 3 facilitators/site – planning for 36 participants/per site. Will adjust # of facilitators if one site has fewer participants and one has more. Also, have capacity to add facilitators up to a week before session if we raise additional money.

Looping slide presentation: There is capacity at all sites except New London for slide presentation BUT: someone from the Commission needs to help run and bring computer.

**ACTION:** NH Listens needs to know who from the Commission will be attending each session, who will run the slide show, who will bring computer. Denise will bring this up at the April 17 Commission meeting.

Role of Commission members: Commission members are encouraged to come. They will act as observers only. They are encouraged to sit together and not mingle among discussion tables.

Commission members are encouraged to assist with slide presentation, provide informational materials and see that they are set out and can provide sign-up sheet for people who may want more information from the Commission or want to be more involved.

**ACTION:** Ask Jenn to create sign-up sheet with name, address, email and telephone and make sure one is available at each session so that those who are interested in staying in touch with the Commission's work can be contacted.

Feedback to participants after NH Listens: There will be an electronic summary of session sent to each participant. Recommended that the summary include WSC web link.

Participants Guide: The Group then discussed the draft of the Participants' Guide. Molly gave an overview of how the guide is used:

- 1) Material sent to all registrants: either Chapter 1 of the DES Water Primer or this guide
- 2) When participants arrive – the guide is handed out to provide summary of data and preparation for discussion. Participants then asked what they notice about the information before them.

Reactions to the draft included the following:

- Issue of whether references to “climate change” should be revised to refer instead to “changing precipitation and recharge patterns...more frequent/intense storms...greater variation”.
- Question of how to handle value/cost/price issues – perhaps could be raised in conversation
- Question of what visuals/maps will be most valuable: comment that two: dams and contaminated groundwater may not be necessary in the guide; perhaps water cycle and state watersheds map?
- Question of whether the challenges listed in the guide are the ones the WSC want to engage the public on – are there 1 or 2 higher level challenges that we would like to put before the public?

**ACTION:** NH Listens will send draft guide in .doc format, working group members will review and suggest changes including recommendations on 2 maps and 2 graphics, as well as review challenges and make suggested revisions and send back to Molly, copying in other working group members.

**2) Stakeholder Session:** Michele offered that she and Bruce very much want to help design this session and potentially to help facilitate. What they need support for (WSC to do) is to manage the details for registration, getting the word out, book room, promotion etc. Recommended a large space with room for round tables of 8-10. WSC had already booked DES conference space and will work to see if any possibility of getting round tables in. All present expressed their appreciation for this generous offer of assistance.

Michele suggested that one approach to the session is to identify what kinds of issues/things in the world of water do the participants need to talk about with one another? And then to intentionally put in mixed groups to take advantage of the richness of their collective thinking focus on critical issues and collectively raise the discussion to the 30,000-foot level. Michele noted that we (WSC) need to identify what needs to be deliberated on and to use the time for that.

Format: large group work at the beginning and then break out into smaller groups.

Planning/design: First challenge is to identify what the Commission needs/wants to know. Suggested that we use some time at next Commission meeting to solicit thoughts from Commission members on:

- 1) What do we need to do to get where we want to be in 25 years?
- 2) What are the problems? Why haven't we solved them?
- 3) What are some solutions and what are the steps needed to move towards solution?
- 4) What is the ideal?
- 5) How do we engage the public/business etc in a collaborative nature?

Other suggestions included taking the recommendations of the other Water Commissions, synthesize and make recommendations on what WSC can do that adds value – which are unifying to Commission members, take example and flesh it out – what would it look like to implement?

**ACTION:** Plan time on the WSC Agenda for 4/17 for brainstorming with Commission members while Molly and Michele are there about Stakeholders' session. Schedule a meeting for the Public Engagement Working Group prior to the Commission meeting to go over challenges/ participants' guide. Denise will contact Allison to get her thoughts on challenges presented in draft participants' guide.

Other business: Suggestion made to invite Dick Ober to be an observer at one or more public engagement session May 8.

Devote the April 25 Public Engagement Working Group meeting to Stakeholders' session planning – Michele could be available by phone.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50pm. The Public Engagement group will meet again on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 1 p.m. at the offices of the Department of Environmental Services in Concord.