

**MEETING MINUTES  
NEW HAMPSHIRE WATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION  
September 18, 2012**

**New Hampshire Fish and Game Department  
Concord, NH**

**Commissioners in attendance:**

Kris Blomback  
John Boisvert  
Thomas Burack  
John Gilbert, Chair  
Denise Hart  
Michael Licata  
Marcy Lyman, Vice Chair  
Amy Manzelli  
Glenn Normandeau  
Cliff Sinnott

**Commissioners not in attendance:**

Dave Allen  
Virginia Battles-Raffa  
Chuck Souther  
Alison Watts

**Public in attendance:**

Henry DeBoer  
Rene Gringras  
Bill Hounsell  
Rosemary Landry  
Rob Morency  
Jennifer Rowden  
Jim Ryan  
Paul Susca

*The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.*

**I. August 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting Minutes**

A motion to accept the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes was made by Amy and seconded by Marcy. The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously with Denise abstaining.

**II. Updates**

**A. FOIA Request**

John G. update the Commission that the Attorney General's Office has received over 2,000 pages of documents related to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. They are reviewing the documents to ensure only applicable documents are sent to the individual requesting the information. This process is going to take longer than expected, and information will be released in batches as it is reviewed. The individual requesting the information was informed of the delay.

**B. Rollout Working Group**

Amy updated the Commission on the deliverable rollout working group's work to date. She emphasized that the group's focus is just the rollout of the Commission's report and recommendations; they are not developing a plan for implementing the Commission's recommendations.

The tentative schedule of event lined up or proposed for Commission members to speak at is as follows:

- New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commission's Annual meeting (11/3/2012)
  - Amy and John G. will be speaking.
- 2012 BIA/DES Water Symposium (11/9/2012)
  - Kris, Mike, John G. and Marcy are working on getting the Commission's work integrated into the event.
- Local Government Center Annual Conference (11/14-11/15/2012)
  - Cliff is seeking a spot for Commission on the agenda.
- Conservation New Hampshire Green Eggs and Hamm Breakfast (January 2013)
  - John G. is working on getting Commission work on the agenda or to have the report presented at a Conservation NH policy meeting.
- New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning Spring Conference (Spring 2013)

- The event is tentative; Paul Susca is working with conference organizers about have tin a Commission presentation.
- New Hampshire Travel Council Annual Conference (Spring 2013)
  - Kris is working with Travel Council and SkiNH members; planning for event begins in November.

Possible media outlets to be contacted about the report are:

- New Hampshire Public Radio- Laura Knoy.
  - John G., Marcy and Mike will be following up.
- New Hampshire Chronicle or WMUR Sunday morning talk show
  - Glenn will work with the Fish and Game Department public relations staff to contact WMUR.
- Manchester local station.
  - Denise to contact.

The Commission discussed who should be speaking at these events with the reality that the actual Commission will be ending in a few weeks. The consensus was when possible John G. or Marcy should be speaking for consistency. However, there is a benefit to having other Commission members speak to audiences they represented on the Commission. Amy mentioned that DES is developing a generic presentation based on the final report for the Commission's use for speaking events. A one-page handout could also be developed for such events; it would have a brief overview of the report and the links to the full report and Commission information. Prior to the Commission ending, the location where the website information will reside and how it will be organized needs to be determined.

Timing of the report publication was discussed; specifically the pros and cons of publishing it before or after the elections. The group discussed trying to schedule meetings with the gubernatorial candidates to discussion the Commission's work and to have it be part of the election conversation. There was discussion about issuing the report in October, but then having some type of rollout event after Election Day.

Additional items to be completed related to rollout at the last Commission meeting:

- Review and approval of the generic report presentation.
- Review and approval of the press release regarding the report.
- Updated contact list for the Commission members.
- Commitment to the list of events mentioned prior and any additional engagements.

Marcy provided an update on the development of a New Hampshire Water Prize; this is intended to be an easy, positive activity related to the Commission's work. There will be a meeting soon of a few parties interested in sponsoring or coordinating such a prize. Mike and Denise volunteered to assist Marcy in the pursuit of this effort.

### **III. Final Deliverable Discussion**

John G. provided an overview of the draft report sent to the Commission prior to the meeting. The language and layout of the report have evolved; however, the goal was not to stray from the conclusions and discussions the Commission has had. The following questions were posed to Commission members as the basis of their review of the draft and the today's discussion:

1. Does the organization and story this report has to tell flow from section to section and page to page? If not, please note where you wanted to know more.
2. Do you see something missing from the report that we have discussed and that should be included? Please let us know what it is and if possible, reference supporting documents.
3. Do we have a fact incorrectly or have we missed the nuance of a term? Please be specific and let us know what this is and how it can be improved.
4. Is the language readable for a general audience?
5. Is the report redundant or repetitive in parts? If so, please tell us where.
6. Does the report provide the focus and emphasis where it is needed?
7. Is the public input accurately reflected?

8. Is there sufficient specificity in the report – if so what stands out – if not where is more work needed and offer ideas.

The Commission discussed each draft report section and provided the listed comments.

#### **A. Chairman's Overview**

Comments:

- The overview largely captures the bigger picture of the Commission's discussions.
- There should not be both a chairman's overview and an executive summary. The current overview is an executive summary that does not include the recommendations.
- Retool the current overview to be the executive summary. Then create a "note from the chairman" that includes information about the process of the commission's work.
- The verbiage used is emphasizing water quantity and supply over water quality
- Only mention the lack of time the Commission had to address certain topics once: perhaps in the executive summary or in the section about the Commission process.
- Other areas that need to be addressed list needs to mention the tension between ownership rights and protection of a public resources.
- Page 2, third bullet: Concern about the wording being a departure from current policies and the lack of mention about the right to use water. Agreement that the idea of having flexible policies and regulations that utilize the best sciences as it becomes available should be noted. The idea should be rephrased to encourage long-term thinking as decisions are being made.
- Need to make sure that the economic/ business component of sustainability is clear throughout the report. Example: page 2, fourth bullet, mentions communities, but readers may not realize it intends to capture the economic component of a healthy community.
- Include a textbox about the age of some of the infrastructure in the state.

#### **B. Why Water**

Comments:

- Page 4, first paragraph: Eliminate second sentence and add one or two other questions that are more relevant to New Hampshire readers. Suggestion: Do you know how much water you use?
- Include textbox about how much water the average person in the state uses per day.
- Tone of the section shifts between first and second paragraph (page 4). The overall report needs to use the same voice and a decision about how much explanation is going to be given to the concepts and terms used.
- Page 5, first sentence: Rephrase the funding shift language. There needs to be a comment about how the demand for funding greatly exceeds the availability.
- Page 5, first bullet set: Add in regions experiencing different issues. All three bullets need further explanation.

#### **C. Public Input/ Questions for Consideration**

Comments:

- List all the various public input sources: listening sessions, online questionnaire, mailed/e-mailed comments and comments at meetings.
- Note that many of the concepts the Commission discussed were the same as what the public brought up at the listening sessions.
- List the concern about private property ownership separately from the idea of ensuring protection of a common resource. Point out the linkage between the two, but they are separate concerns.
- Insert how the Commission solicited comments into the "process" section. Suggestion: The "process" section should come after "why water".
- Include a note in the questions section regarding readers keep the following in mind whether they are reading the report as an individual, business owner, legislator, government official, etc.
- Rephrase the question about hazardous waste to state potential sources of contamination.

#### **D. Water Sustainability**

Comments:

- Explain the graphic and turn it to show how each level holds up the others.
- Page 8, first paragraph: change term principles (this is confusing with the guiding principles)
- Page 8, second bullet: Separate into two bullets; equity and affordability are separate concepts.

- Page 8, third bullet: Change bold text to stewardship.

### **E. Vision Statement**

Comments:

- Strike the opening sentences; just list the vision.
- Go with the shorter version of the vision.
- Strike the language about managing water at the state level.
- Add municipalities into the list of partners.
- Add the last two sentences of the longer vision statement to the guiding principles in some way so the concept does not get lost.

### **F. Guiding Principles**

Comments:

- Page 1, last paragraph: Rephrase the paragraph based on discussion on the third bullet in the chair's overview. The sections need to be consistent with one another.
- Move these principles to be after the "what is water sustainability" section for better flow.

### **G. Findings**

Comments:

- The first sentence needs a qualifier that *generally* water in the state is good, etc.
- Page 11, bullet 3: Either there needs to be a reference to the basis of the statement or rephrase the statement.
- Debate about if and how the findings section, specifically the trends, should be referenced. Discussed options included citing every fact, citing the list of references the Commission used or was given (presentations, legislative commission reports, etc.), or rewording the section to be observations versus facts.
- Page 11, bullet 6: Switch outside interests to commercial interest. Should the topic of the control of the water (physically and managerially) being outside the hands of New Hampshire citizens be included?
- Consequence that are missing: 1) The impact a lack of clean, plentiful water has on economic activity and the quality of life, 2) Managing water on a watershed basis and scale is difficult, and 3) Historically, inter-municipal cooperation has not occurred.
- Include a statement that there is no entity that looks at water sustainability currently.

## **IV. Upcoming Meetings**

The following dates were scheduled for upcoming Commission meetings and the general timeline for work:

- Tuesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting is cancelled.
- **Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 to 11:30** at Fish and Game. *Full Commission meeting focused on the goals and recommendations section of the draft report sent on 9/14.*
- **Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 5:00** at DES. *Report content working group meeting.*
- **Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 5:00** at Fish and Game. *Tentative final meeting. The draft report for discussion and possible final approval at this meeting will be sent by Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup>.*

## **V. Public Comments**

The public in attendance of the meeting provided the following comments to the Commission:

- Henry DeBoer: He commended the Commission on its work. He suggested including an image of the hydrologic cycle in the report and really emphasizing the notion that we take our water for granted in the state. He also hoped the Commission would include the notion that outside interests are becoming an increased pressure on our water resources. In addition, there is the Public Utility Commission and DES who do regulate water system sustainability regarding capacity, but not in the holistic manner suggested.

- Bill Hounsell: If you want inter-municipal cooperation then it needs to be encouraged by funding. An example is the Southeast Watershed Alliance that is operating without any funding. Asking municipalities to tackle problems associated with federal water laws needs to go with the state having a discussion with what its funding role is.
- Rob Morency: Commended the Commission and echoed the notion that the PUC does look at water sustainability. He also wanted the Commission to really note the regional differences in issues and solutions in the state; the north is seeking more development while the south is dealing with water supply issues.

***Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.***

***The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for September 27, 2012 from 8:30 to 11:30 at the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.***

DRAFT