

**MEETING MINUTES
NEW HAMPSHIRE WATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
November 7, 2012**

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

Commissioners in attendance:

Virginia Battles-Raffa
Kris Blomback
John Boisvert
Thomas Burack
John Gilbert, Chair
Denise Hart
Michael Licata
Glenn Normandeau
Cliff Sinnott
Chuck Souther
Alison Watts

Commissioners not in attendance:

Dave Allen
Marcy Lyman, Vice Chair
Amy Manzelli

Public in attendance:

Stephen Capizzano
Robert Godrick
Bill Hounsell
Sarah Pillsbury
Jennifer Rowden
Paul Susca

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 p.m.

I. September 27th Meeting Minutes

A motion to accept the October 16, 2012 meeting minutes was made by Tom and seconded by Michael. The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously with Chuck abstaining.

II. Final Deliverable Discussion

The roll-out of the report and coordinating with Governor Lynch and Governor-elect Hassan was discussed. Tom offered to contact the Governor's Office to arrange a meeting with John and other interested Commission members.

John explained that at this point, there is a need to not introduce new concepts into the report and the Commission should be focusing on refining the current contents. The consensus was that the report was nearly complete and there is an urgency to get it finished. Tom indicated that DES staff compiled suggestions for the Commission's consideration that focused on consistency, accuracy, and flow within the report.

The following are the agreed upon changes (minus minor editorial changes) discussed regarding the draft report sent to the Commission on November 1 and the DES suggestions offered by Tom.

A. Executive Summary

- Change bullet referencing water policies to read as follows, "Some of the state's water management laws, policies and regulations should be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that they reflect current scientific understanding and economic realities."
- Include the following bullet immediately following the first bullet on page 2, "Water infrastructure is part of New Hampshire's economic advantage and unless investments are made we will lose out competitive edge."
- Replace the language in the bullet titled "Infrastructure investments" with the following, "The natural and built systems that provide recreational opportunities, support ecosystems, deliver our drinking water, manage our storm water and clean out wastewater help to provide New Hampshire with a competitive advantage over other states. Without sustained and sustainable investments in our water infrastructure, we may lose this edge. We need to renew and perhaps reinvent partnerships between and among individuals, communities, state and federal government, and the private sector to provide the necessary levels of investment. "

- Change bullet titled “21st Century Management” to “Future Focused Management”.

B. Why Water?

- Add Chuck’s language regarding examples of how water serves different sectors.
- Replace the second bullet under “Why Now” to the following, “While there is no current expectation of a statewide water shortage, a look at where growth is expected to be concentrated (see figure) shows that some parts of the state are more likely than others to push the limits of available water resources. In the Seacoast region, domestic water demand is expected to grow by 54% between 2003 and 2020, and non-domestic water demand by 62 percent (Horn, et al., 2008).”
- Strike the last sentence of the second bullet on page 6.
- Under “Questions for Consideration”, the third bullet should be split in two as the second question concerns a separate question.
- In the second to last bullet concerning water value, reword the second question as follows, “Is the price I pay for the water I use enough to ensure that my water system is adequately maintained and its water sources protected?”

C. Vision of New Hampshire’s Water Future

- Add the following to the “Equity” bullet, “Ensuring that the ecological needs and human needs are both met so that all systems thrive *and, also, not impairing the ability of future generations to enjoy the same opportunities and benefits.*”
- For the “Stewardship” bullet use the following definition. “ Promote understanding of water by individuals, communities and businesses, and actively manage it in a manner that protects the quality and quantity resilience of our water for the long term.”
- For the graphics, it was requested that both the circular graphic (top-down sustainability view) and the pyramid graphic (cross-sectional view) used by Maureen Hart be included. The caption should reflect the idea that our environment is the foundation upon which society is built which in turn supports our economy. Having enough clean water is essential for all three areas.
- Under “Guiding Principles” reword the last bullet to the following, “ Recognize that there is often some degree of uncertainty involved when making decisions about resource management, as well as opportunities for innovation, we make every effort to protect the ability of our water systems to support our natural environment , human communities, and economic systems over the long term.”
- Reword the “Vision Statement” to the following, “New Hampshire’s water is essential for the people and ecosystems that draw their life from it. The vision of this Commission is a renewed commitment and partnership between and among the state, its municipalities, its residents, its businesses, other stakeholders and the federal government. The purpose of this partnership is to collaborate on investments, management policies, practices and tools that ensure clean, plentiful and affordable water that meets both societal and ecological needs while protecting water for future generations.”

D. Findings

- Drop the last three sentences of the first paragraph into a bullet, and then tie first and second paragraphs together.
- Use the replacement language offered by Tom regarding the compartmentalizing of water resource management.
- In the bullet referring to water quality and storm water the link modify the bullet, and captions under the two graphics to make the link to water quality and impervious surface coverage stronger. Delete the sentence about the best indicator for water quality is the number of people in the watershed. Call out the statement regarding the level of impervious surface coverage in the caption.
- Add the following to the end of the first paragraph to the well testing text box. “Both naturally occurring and human caused contaminants can be hazardous to your health.”
- Reword the last bullet on page 11 to the following, “Site specific interrelationships between water resources (e.g., groundwater streams, and lakes) are not always fully understood. Additional information is needed to understand and address demands and impacts upon these resources. “

- First bullet on page 12, questions were raised about whether the statement was a finding or more of a conclusion.
- The bullet concerning commercial investments on page 12 needs clarification. Elsewhere in the report innovated partnerships are encouraged, but the bullet as stated seems to discourage it. Suggestions made included removing the bullet or rephrased to indicate that if the public does not invest in water infrastructure private entities could potentially fill that gap. However, private investments may bring about other issues of concern. If the bullet is kept, it should fall after the bullet concerning water infrastructure investment needs.
- Under "Consequences", Tom suggested the following bullets to replace those listed:
 - Failure of water infrastructure and expensive repair lead to economic disruption.
 - In some places, not enough clean water will be available to meet local needs. This will have adverse effects on public health, the economy and the environment.
 - Human and ecological systems may no longer be available to fully tolerate disturbance, restore balance, and adapt to change. Full restoration of such systems is often extremely expensive and difficult, if not impossible.

E. Strategic Goals

a. Goal 1

- Reword goal to the following, "The people of New Hampshire will be knowledgeable, engaged and careful consumers *and stewards* of our water resources."
- Change the idea for action to include publicizing the economic impacts of water quality.

b. Goal 2

- Reword the last idea for action under recommendation 2 to the following, "Promote the conservation and management of New Hampshire's forests as a priority strategy for protecting water quality and quantity in the state."
- Throughout the report, replace the term "thresholds" with "indicators" as indicators need to be developed, but still encompass the concept of thresholds.

c. Goal 3

- Delete the fourth item under "area for additional inquiry" as concerns about international trade agreements are listed under Goal 1.

d. Goal 4

- Reword recommendation 4 to include the idea that the state commitment to provide funding mechanisms needs to be secured, developed and followed through.
- Strike second "idea for action" under recommendation 4 as it is duplicative of recommendation 2.
- Reword the fourth item under "areas for additional inquiry" to the following, "What are the implications for New Hampshire's residents and the economy of employing full cost pricing for water related services and systems?" And add a fifth item, "Since water infrastructure drives our economy, and benefits public health and the environment, how do we equitably share the cost?"

e. Goal 5

- Rephrase the recommendation 1 "idea for action" regarding impervious surface mapping to the following, "Expand mapping and analysis of existing impervious surface coverage throughout the state."

f. Goal 6

- Only minor wording changes made.

g. Goal 7

- Reword the goal to the following to be more visionary, "Ensure there will be adequate funding for managing water resources effectively and efficiently."

- Debate about whether to include an “idea for action” under recommendation one about trying to link funding mechanisms for water infrastructure along with funding for other water resource management needs. Concern that linking the two may result in the latter being brushed aside.

F. Where Do We Go From Here

- Reword number four under “multi-sector initiative” to the following, “Support initiatives to secure and provide for: infrastructure and other investments specified in Goals 4 and 7; technical support and assistance; cross-boundary planning and management; and policies, law, and programs that will ensure the availability of clean water where it is needed for future generations.”

G. What You Can Do

- Several suggestions for changes were offered by Tom to the section to provide consistency.
- A new section was added titled “everyone” with a listing of supporting of the two items outlined in the “Where do we go from here” section.

H. Conclusion

- Concern that the first paragraph may imply that the Commission is suggesting statewide water zoning is needed. The intention was actually just to convey that we need to be careful that how we are managing water to ensure we are not slowly compromising it for the future.

I. Appendices

- Appendix C: Tom suggested using a different wording than behavior change and did the public truly ask for more regulations or where they asking that existing regulations be enforced?
- Add in the list of recommendations from the water-related legislative commissions to Appendix K.

III. Next Steps and Upcoming Meetings

John G. will get a revised draft report out shortly that reflects the changes discussed at today’s meeting. If any Commission member has any issues or concerns with the draft, it was requested that they contact John to discuss the concern as soon as possible. John will then make any additional changes needed to the report and send out one last draft along with a list of concerns that require discussion. This final draft will be considered the version to be voted on at the next meeting on Wednesday, November 28 from 8:30 to 10:00 at New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.

IV. Public Comments

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

Bill Hounsell: This Commission has included under Goal 4, recommendation 4 that “the state should commit to and establish a stable funding source for water infrastructure”. It was requested that the Commission include a recommendation specifically included in the SB 60 Water Infrastructure Funding Commission Intern Report from 2010. The recommendation is that the state fulfills its funding obligations to communities who have projects with deferred payments through the state aid program.

The Commission debated whether to include specific recommendations from other commissions in its own report. It was decided to not include the requested recommendation (though the Commission acknowledged its importance) due to the long-term, strategic level the Commission is working at. However, a list of all the recommendations of the various water-related legislative commissions will be included an appendix of the Commission’s report.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m. The next Commission meeting is November 28, 2012 from 8:30 to 10:00 at the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department.