

# NEW HAMPSHIRE DRINKING WATER AND GROUNDWATER ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes of March 11, 2019 Meeting

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The meeting was convened at 10:03am.

Members present included: Sen. Chuck Morse, Chair; Sen. Tom Sherman; Rep. Deborah Hobson; Rep. Kevin Maes; Paul Sanderson; Bernard Rousseau; Former Senator Richard Russman; Marco Philippon; Clark Freise; William Boyd, III; Commissioner Robert Scott; Christopher Way; Rodney Bartlett; and Rachel Miller

Senator Morse opened the meeting and introduced Sen Tom Sherman, Rep. Deborah Hobson, and Rep. Kevin Maes who are replacing Sen. Dan Feltes, Rep. Chris Christensen and Rep. Suzanne Smith respectively.

Erin Holmes provided an administrative update. Rules for DES are undergoing their final reviews, with public comment planned for April and submission to JLCAR for final approval over the summer. Ms. Holmes also gave an update on previously approved projects funded by the Commission. A groundbreaking will be held in the near future for the Lee Traffic Circle project, while a ribbon cutting for the Atkinson Water Storage Tank will be held during the summer.

Susan Carlson provided an update on the financial position of the Trust Fund. The fund received \$4.8m in interest income, while the spend rate has been significantly lower than originally projected due to delays in getting the initial grants and loans disbursed due to the timing of the awards in relation to town meeting. However, Ms. Carlson expects with the spend rate to increase significantly in FY 20 and FY 21.

Senator Morse mentioned two pieces of legislation are currently moving through the Senate that impact the Trust Fund and he urged members, especially the legislative members of the Commission to support them.

Allen Brooks presented the Rules for Construction Projects and Rules for Source Water Protection Grants that were developed by the sub-committee. Attorney Brooks answered questions the Commission members had about the terms of the loans, useful life of the assets being funded, as well as interest rates.

Former Senator Russman moved to accept the rules as presented. William Boyd seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Hobson abstaining.

Erin Holmes discussed this year's application round, noting that the adopted rules do not address a specific timeline. Due to the issues with running the program at the same time as the existing SRF program, the Department is proposing deadlines later in the year to provide some separation between the two programs, while also ensuring that awards can be made in time for towns to draw up warrant articles for town meeting. The initial application would be due in June 28<sup>th</sup>, a funding application due September

13<sup>th</sup> for both Construction and Source Water program, with a final funding decision made by the Commission in the beginning of December. Senator Morse encouraged members to keep their ears to the ground for projects that would be good candidates for funding from the Commission.

Former Senator Russman moved to approve the schedule, seconded by Clark Freise. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Former Senator Russman presented the conceptual annual funding plan developed by the sub-committee. He stressed that this item and the rules previously adopted were written to give guidance to applicants, but not so narrow that the Commission could not act to fund a project that was within the mission of the Trust Fund, but not explicitly spelled out in rules or fit neatly within the established criteria. Former Senator Russman explained the plan, which was divided into four categories: Contamination, Annual Program, Source Water Protection, and Other. He then took questions from the Commission.

Erin Holmes provided an update on the Southern New Hampshire regional project, and gave a detailed background of the project to the new members of the Commission. The projection is for the water to be flowing through the pipe by the late spring of 2020.

Rodney Bartlett presented an update on the Jaffrey-Peterborough project and his continued efforts to flesh out the project, find and develop additional sources of funding, such as from the Northern Border Regional Commission, and Rural Development grant program through the USDA.

Commissioner Scott discussed the proposed statement of support for the project and expressed some concerns over whether the language was too committal. To rectify this, he offered a friendly amendment. William Boyd moved the language, with the amendment proposed by Commissioner Scott. Bernard Rousseau seconded the motion. The motion, as amended, was adopted unanimously, with Rodney Bartlett abstaining.

Motion - "I move that the Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund Commission issue a statement of support of this proposed project, encourage the interested parties to continue working on the engineering, intermunicipal agreements, and final financing package necessary to execute the project as this is the type of project that the Commission looks favorably upon."

William Boyd moved to approve the minutes of the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, seconded by Marco Philippon. Motion was adopted unanimously with Senator Sherman and Rep. Hobson abstaining.

William Boyd moved to adjourn, seconded by Rep. Hobson. Motion adopted unanimous.

The next meeting date was announced as April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Meeting was adjourned at 11:49 am.

JWE