

LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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MINUTES
LRPC COMMISSION MEETING

Pines Community Center
 Northfield, NH
 March 23, 2009

PRESIDING: Robert Snelling, Chairman **CALL TO ORDER:** 6:00 PM

QUORUM: Yes **COMMUNITIES PRESENT:** 22

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dan McLaughlin, Alexandria
 Maureen Criasia, Bristol
 Phylis Taylor, Danbury
 Richard Wait, Gilford
 Stan Bean, Gilmanton
 Martha Twombly, Hebron
 Robert Snelling, Holderness
 Bruce Whitmore, Holderness
 William Contardo, Laconia
 Warren Hutchins, Laconia
 William Bayard, Meredith
 Herbert Vadney, Meredith
 Herb Farnham, Moultonborough
 Wayne Crowley, Northfield
 Douglas Read, Northfield
 Patricia Jones, Ossipee
 Ralph Carter, Sanbornton
 Herb Cooper, Tamworth
 Dan Duffy, Tuftonboro
 Chuck Storm, Wolfeboro

Excused: Maggie LaBerge, Alexandria; Thomas Hoopes, Alton; Barbara Perry, Moultonborough

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Susca, Sarah Pillsbury, and Jacquie Colburn, NH-DES; Bill Dawson, Northfield; Roger terKnive, Ossipee; John Mersfelder, Tamworth; Ned Beecher, Tamworth; S. Sprague, Northern Shores; Rep. Leigh Webb, Franklin/Hill; Dean Anson, Laconia; Rick Ball, Belmont; Nancy Carr, Barnstead; Lisa Morin, NH Association of Conservation Districts; John Hodgdon, Meredith; Mary Hutchins, Laconia; Rep. Dianne Schuett, Pembroke/Chichester; Kimon Koulet and Marie Gelinis, LRPC; and other interested parties.

1 Welcome and Introduction

Chairman Robert Snelling called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. and welcomed all members. He asked for a motion for those present to constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting business, the motion was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Hutchins/Waite*

2 Minutes of February 23, 2009 Commission Meeting

Chairman Robert Snelling asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the February 23, 2009 meeting minutes. There being none, the minutes were unanimously approved. *M/S/P Waite/Hutchins*

R. Snelling said the commissioners should have received information regarding the annual Kim Ayers Award asking them to submit their nominations by May 1. He also reminded them about the commissioner questionnaire and to meet with their community to get input and town consensus on priorities they would like LRPC to focus on. The questionnaire deadline is April 30.

3 NH Water Resources Information

R. Snelling informed the committee, and other attendees, this meeting is to introduce the New Hampshire water resources primer and the foundation it lays for developing the plan. He introduced Sarah Pillsbury, Administrator, Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau, NH-DES.

S. Pillsbury said the purpose of this meeting is to inform the public of recently completed planning activities, listen to community concerns and ideas on water resource issues and needs, and to build a network of stakeholders for involvement in future planning efforts. Reasons for having a water resources plan are that water is essential to the quality of life and economic well-being. The value of water depends on water quality, and history shows that water's benefit and/or risk to society is dependent upon how water resources are managed. New Hampshire is rich in water resources with 17,000 miles of rivers and streams, and about 1,000 lakes and ponds. The New Hampshire Legislature established the Water Resources Committee in 2003 for the purpose of developing a comprehensive, statewide water resources plan. NH-DES obtained limited funding in 2004-2005 to begin the planning effort. NH-DES, partners, and stakeholders completed the first few steps from 2006-2008. Currently, NH-DES is holding public workshops to gather information to present a report to the Water Resources Committee. S. Pillsbury noted that the primer is not a plan, only an overview of preliminary issues and recommendations. The plan will contain a more detailed description of resources covering four key challenges: 1) land and water use, 2) climate change, 3) infrastructure, and 4) data needs. S. Pillsbury then introduced Jackie Colburn, Lakes Coordinator, Watershed Bureau, NH-DES.

4 Rivers and Steams

J. Colburn noted DES is required to submit a report on water quality assessments for rivers and streams every two years. Many rivers and streams fail to meet water quality standards. She discussed issues concerning lakes and ponds, especially the toxic algae blooms that pose public health risks to humans, pets, and wildlife. The

toxic algae blooms can occur by the temperature during the summer and from storm water. She pointed out that there are 74 water bodies in New Hampshire that have exotic species. J. Colburn covered issues from wetlands to coastal and estuarine waters to wastewater. She noted that New Hampshire's anticipated population growth will put even more demand on water resources. Wastewater treatment plants have an aging infrastructure and are rapidly approaching capacity. Shellfish harvesting has also been affected by wet weather bacterial contamination. There are 3,070 dams in New Hampshire, 75% privately owned, and 150 dams deemed deficient. She pointed out the hazards posed by dams are threats of failure and flooding on downstream communities. Ms. Colburn introduced Paul Susca, Supervisor, Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau, NH-DES.

5 Groundwater

P. Susca said 60% of New Hampshire population relies on groundwater and 20% are on public water systems. There are 720 community water systems that are required to meet the same standards as larger systems. On water conservation issues, there is a lack of public understanding. Development patterns and lawn watering practices stress water supplies. Climate change also has an effect on water availability. He commented on stakeholder recommendations, improvements needed in knowledge, data, and awareness of issues. Water use efficiency, land use patterns, and storm water management need to be improved. He also added the need to incorporate better protection efforts through federal, state, and municipal watersheds. He noted decision makers were surveyed and thirty-two issues arose: 87% regarding the impacts from development; 77% concerning potential contamination; 75% relating to loss of wetlands; and 74% pertaining to water quality. The water resources survey showed 17% concerned about too many boats on lakes; 11% pertained to closed public swimming areas; and 11% with regard to contaminated fish. S. Pillsbury commented on the next steps for the water plan process. She noted that NH-DES will be holding public information meetings in various communities to gather information to provide a report to the Water Resources Committee. They will also seek additional funding to complete and implement a plan.

After the presentation, S. Pillsbury asked the audience: If you have 15 minutes to talk to the Governor about water resources, what would you say? Some examples are as follows:

- Ken Knowlton, Belmont Conservation Commission, asked how to determine capacity of bedrock wells, and what are the limits of authority regarding aquifer protection and low impact development?
- Dean Anson, Lake Winnepesaukee Watershed Association, suggested the use of volunteers to address data gaps, and also about the relationship between wastewater infiltration and pharmaceuticals, and personal care products.
- Dan Duffy, Tuftonboro, expressed his concern regarding the wetland mitigation fund.
- Rep. Leigh Webb raised the question of conflict between DRED and DES; development depletes resources and the need for coordinated effort.

- Other issues expressed were concerns over the weakening of the comprehensive shoreland protection act, DES's ability to enforce laws and apply penalties, timber harvesting impacts on lake water quality, and a moratorium on large groundwater withdrawals.

6 Other Discussion

WENH Public Television (Channel 11) will feature story on Liquid Assets: The Story of Our Water Infrastructure to be aired on April 19 at 2 PM. *Liquid Assets* is a public media and outreach initiative that seeks to inform the nation about the critical role that our water infrastructure plays in protecting public health and promoting economic prosperity. It explores the history, engineering, and political and economic challenges of our water infrastructure, and engages communities in local discussion about public water and wastewater issues.

K. Koulet asked Sarah Pillsbury if there are any special actions that communities need to be aware of on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act list. S. Pillsbury pointed out that the funds being provided are fast tracked and must be under contract by February 15, 2010. There will be a public hearing on April 3 on proposed water infrastructure projects starting at 9 AM in the DES auditorium.

7 Other Business

Chairman Snelling reminded everyone the next commission meeting would be held on May 11, 2009, the location to be determined. The discussion will be on large water withdrawals doctrine of reasonable use. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 PM.