

WINNIPESAUKEE RIVER BASIN PROGRAM

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 16, 2017 – Belmont Corner Meeting House

Members Present: The meeting was called to order by Brian Sullivan (Franklin), chair, at 10:03 am. Sharon McMillin (NHDES), Gene Forbes (NHDES), Jeanne Beaudin (Belmont), Peter Nourse (Gilford), Wes Anderson (Laconia), Steve Dolloff (Meredith), Glen Brown (Northfield), Katie Ambrose (Sanbornton), and Johanna Ames (Tilton) were present at that time. Ron White (DAS) arrived at 10:25 am.

Minutes: Wes moved, seconded by Peter, to table the approval of the February 16, 2017, AB meeting minutes until the next meeting in order to discuss Ray's proposed amendments with Ray present. The motion passed.

Monthly Summary Report: Sharon provided the following updates based on the *Monthly Summary Report* for February 2017 as previously submitted to the ADVISORY BOARD members by email.

- Flow metering services – Review comments from the WRBP are being incorporated into a technical memo from W-P. The WRBP and EST are coordinating with the City of Franklin to provide some short term flow information from two meters as part of a Franklin I/I study.
- Asset Management/Collection System Evaluations Initiative – A preliminary scope of supply, cost, and schedule proposal has been received from the top vendor and is under review by the WRBP and W-P.
- WRBP infrastructure ownership –The final approvals of Laconia's MOA are pending. A schedule for meetings with the other member communities will be developed.
- Rate assessment formula – See the Rate Allocation Discussion section below.
- Governance Work Plan – Members are seeking a go/no-go decision from each member community based upon the memo prepared by Laconia in order to be able to vote at the May 4th AB meeting. See the Authority Go/No-Go Discussion section below.

Authority Go/No-Go Discussion: Katie asked for clarification regarding the go/no-go decision the Advisory Board members would be voting on at the May 4th Advisory Board meeting. She asked if a vote in the affirmative (to support a go decision) would be supporting a study or just moving to the next stage in the consideration of moving toward a transfer in ownership.

Brian said, as he saw it, there were two stages in the process. First, the piece Sharon has been working on with individual member communities with regard to the documentation of ownership. Second, the potential transfer of the ownership for the State system to the member communities. Some member communities will need to decide whether to move forward with a study, and there will be a no/no-go decision based on that as well. So in his mind, a go decision would ultimately be in support of a study.

Wes said the go/no-go decision on the table right now was actually with regard to what the member communities would like to do if a study was conducted; and, if the study results validated the Advisory Board's assumptions. He said if a study was to validate the Advisory Board's assumptions, the study

could be passed on to the legislature to help make a case for changing the State legislation in order to transfer the ownership at a \$0 cost. He stressed the importance of having the support of the member communities behind the Advisory Board's decision, especially before approaching the State legislature.

Peter asked if \$0 was a realistic transfer of ownership cost. Wes said the current State law stipulates property must be disposed of through the current system; and there would be a cost for that type of sale. At least that was the theory as everybody has been watching the sale of the State School property – which is why the State legislature should be approached. A study would allow the member communities to validate the assumptions to present to the State legislature, including why the ownership for the system should be transferred back to the member communities at a \$0 cost given how much the member communities have invested in the system.

Brian asked if Katie felt as though her question had been addressed. She said it had. Brian reiterated he felt that, one way or another, a study would have to be done. He said the Council would want to see actual numbers before making a go/no-go decision and a transfer of ownership will hinge on State legislative approval. Wes said from an engineering perspective, initially anyway, it would appear to be cost effective. A study would help prove this assumption. There is no point in doing anything though if the member communities were not in agreement about moving forward. If the Advisory Board agreed to move forward at the May 4th meeting, then the Advisory Board could begin to discuss a study.

Rate Allocation Discussion: Gene and Sharon handed out a document entitled *WRBP Flow Metering Program Preliminary Estimates/Information* to the Advisory Board members. Gene explained the DES has been taking a closer look at the rate allocation model – capacity specifically, and its confidence in the data collected so far that related to that. The DES has been monitoring flow and it is also beginning to take a closer look at strength as well.

Sharon explained the flows (by member community) are discussed on page one of the two-page document. Confidence in the data for the northern communities was the strongest. For Bay District, Meredith, Gilford, Sanbornton, and DAS the flow meters and calculations were appropriate for billing based upon the flow and low cumulative meter and math errors. In the southern service area, the math becomes more and more complex and the cumulative errors escalate. Initial estimates indicated Tilton was discharging approximately four to five times the flow capacity than its capacity allocation in the current assessment formula and Belmont's flow are about twice their current capacity allocation.

Sharon further explained DES will be evaluating improvement options to TNI, NF1 and BT1 locations. W-P and EST (the contract flow metering firm) are looking into options. She noted that a new A/V meter had already been installed downstream of the Winnisquam pump station in an effort to improve the accuracy of flow measurement at this location. Error is introduced by each meter or calculation used in the math and drought conditions exacerbated the low flow in large diameter pipes (low velocities and shallow depths), which in turn reducing the per meter accuracy (e.g. increasing the error).

Jeanne asked where water readings were being taken as Belmont has water only along a very short section of Route 140. Sharon explained the math for Belmont included BT1, Belmont PS, Winnisquam PS, Lower Bay PS, Soda Brook and Route 140 water meter readings. Steve asked if by capacity Sharon meant purchased capacity. Sharon confirmed she did. Steve then asked if it referred to the O&M assessment Belmont. Sharon said it was not the cumulative WWTP capacity included in the O&M assessment.

Sharon explained that the discussions in recent months included whether to include capacity allocation – and maybe strength – instead of transitioning to just a flow-based formula. Hopefully, this preliminary information will help the member communities make a determination about what parameters to consider in the rate assessment formula.

Gene suggested another way of looking at it may be to review some of the materials Sharon handed out during previous meetings such as the assessment of the cost of service, for example. There were three components associated with that cost – the infrastructure itself which was related to capacity; the flow; and strength. He reiterated what Sharon said about data confidence and some of the data for capacity being preliminary.

Sharon explained flow-based capacities make for easy formulas but do not account for how much of the infrastructure each member community uses. The buy-in capacity was based upon the 11.5 MGD treatment design capacity at the treatment plant. It did not take into account other factors such as pump stations, pipe sizes, sewer extensions, etc. There have been discussions in recent months about how these other factors should figure into the rate assessment.

Gene suggested capacity may become an issue if member communities who are under their allocations decide they may need more for development purposes and there was not enough capacity to serve growth. Jeanne expressed concern about Belmont's flow and asked for a copy of the data. She said Belmont has not experienced any growth lately. She planned to ask Belmont's engineer to take a look at the data and to validate it or have a third party do so. Gene said NHDES would be providing the data obtained so far to everyone, and suggested it could be used for multiple purposes – setting a formula, planning, etc. He said so far as allocations go, there may be winners and losers.

Sharon explained strength was discussed on page 2 of the handout. The NHDES performed preliminary monitoring at 17 locations for strength. It could be incorporated under the current EST contract because EST deployment for strength monitoring could occur concurrently with flow data gathering. One round of sampling and testing by EST and an independent lab for CBOD and TSS at the 17 locations in the metering program cost \$18,402.50. If this were to be continued using EST, monthly sampling/testing for one year would cost \$220,830 or quarterly sampling/testing would cost \$73,610.

Brian asked who would be doing the strength monitoring. Sharon said WRBP or EST staff would be doing it. Brian asked if EST was qualified to do it. Sharon affirmed they were and noted EST already had the equipment required for strength monitoring. WRBP would have buy equipment to be able to perform this level of sampling and testing.

Gene suggested that, if the member communities wanted to measure and bill on strength, a significant level of sampling data would be required to do so as it would be important to have data from more than just a single season or event. He noted in the past, individual member community's strengths were assumed to be pretty much the same with exception to Bay District's. Bay District rate reflected a discount because of their treatment lagoon. Sharon explained sampling and monitoring frequency would have to be adequate enough to provide confidence in the data collected.

Gene said he saw a lot of value moving forward in developing a formula with flow. DES needed to improve its confidence in measurements on a permanent basis. With regard to strength, DES planned to provide more information in the future about strength monitoring although it seemed unlikely to him a significant amount of dollars should be spent in order to measure for strength.

Gene suggested the member communities think about capacity allocation and how they would value and transfer capacity between members. For example, if a member community exceeded their allocation and needed to buy more capacity, where would it come from and how would such a transfer of capacity be accomplished?

Draft RFP for Solar Panels at the Franklin WWTP: Sharon announced NHDES received eight proposals which were under review. Technical and contractual questions have been forwarded to Karen Rantamaki (State Energy Manager) who is assisting the WRBP with vetting the responses. The RFP asked each firm for their “best idea” so there was a wide variety of approaches in the proposals. Preliminary review indicates some of them appear to be both technically feasible as well as cost effective. Interviews will be schedule with those firms.

Other Business: The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 am. The minutes were prepared by Pro-Temp Staffing. The next meeting will be held at the Corner Meeting House in Belmont on May 4th at 10:00 am.