

# Meeting Minutes

## NH Lower Merrimack Valley Stormwater Coalition Meeting

Zoom

Thursday, October 12, 2023, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

### Present:

<i>Dawn Tuomala, Chair</i>	<i>Merrimack</i>	<i>Leo Laviolette</i>	<i>Merrimack</i>
<i>Jeanne Walker, Chair</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Nicole Crawford</i>	<i>Milford</i>
<i>Angela Wesson</i>	<i>Atkinson</i>	<i>Doug Starr</i>	<i>Nashua</i>
<i>Joe Jordan</i>	<i>Amherst</i>	<i>Sara Siskavich</i>	<i>NashuaRPC</i>
<i>Eric Slosek</i>	<i>Amherst</i>	<i>Emma Rearick</i>	<i>NashuaRPC</i>
<i>John Apple</i>	<i>Atkinson</i>	<i>Andrea Bejtlich</i>	<i>NHDES</i>
<i>Brian Desfosses</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Ted Diers</i>	<i>NHDES</i>
<i>Matt Monahan</i>	<i>CHNRPC</i>	<i>Erin Holmes</i>	<i>NHDES</i>
<i>Nick Cristofori</i>	<i>CEI</i>	<i>Steve Landry</i>	<i>NHDES</i>
<i>Craig Durrett</i>	<i>Derry</i>	<i>Deb Loiselle</i>	<i>NHDES</i>
<i>Scott Ozana</i>	<i>Goffstown</i>	<i>Tom Swenson</i>	<i>NHDES</i>
<i>Thomas Bartula</i>	<i>Hooksett</i>	<i>Dena Hoffman</i>	<i>Pelham</i>
<i>Ben Berthiaume</i>	<i>Hooksett</i>	<i>Victor (VJ) Ranfos</i>	<i>Pembroke</i>
<i>Heidi Marshall</i>	<i>Hoyle-Tanner</i>	<i>Todd Welch</i>	<i>Salem</i>
<i>Samantha Lewis</i>	<i>Hoyle-Tanner</i>	<i>Zach Swick</i>	<i>SNHRPC</i>
<i>Paul Elsholz</i>	<i>Laconia</i>	<i>Kaitlyn Allen</i>	<i>Verdantas</i>
<i>Kim Kleiner</i>	<i>Litchfield</i>	<i>Nick Germain</i>	<i>Wilton</i>
<i>Rebecca Balke</i>	<i>Manchester</i>	<i>Meaghan O'Dwyer</i>	<i>Windham</i>

### 1. Introductions

- Deb conducted roll call alphabetically by municipality or affiliation.

### 2. Approve meeting minutes

- The meeting minutes from the September 14, 2023 NHLMV meeting were approved.

### 3. Congratulations on Years 1 through 5 – Ted Diers, Erin Holmes, and Steve Landry (NHDES)

- While the New Hampshire MS4 Permit was administratively extended, we made it through the original permit term! This is cause for celebration, so Deb, Steve, Erin, and Ted shared a few thoughts about the last five years.
- Deb shared what an honor it has been for her to work alongside everyone for the last five years of the permit and how valuable the NH Stormwater Coalition has been for managing stormwater around New Hampshire. The past five years have not been easy with the immense workloads everyone has, but everyone made it through!
- Erin recognized the benefits of non-MS4 communities witnessing the effort every New Hampshire MS4 community has been making towards implementing BMPs and stormwater management throughout the permit. The past few years have been challenging with changes and turnover. Despite that, everyone has met their requirements and came together each month to collaborate. NHDES is excited to continue to work with the NH MS4 communities for the next permit and during continuance of the current permit. There are some exciting things coming up!
  - The Green SnowPro Municipal Rules are coming along. Aubrey Voelker will be presenting the rules to the Water Council on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Then, they will be in the rulemaking process. The goal is to have the Municipal Green SnowPro Program ready to go for the winter of 2024/2025.
  - The Stormwater Manual is still in the process of being drafted. NHDES, UNH Stormwater Center, CEI, and other stakeholders are working very hard on the updates. It will be a wonderful resource for NH MS4 communities. NH MS4

communities are represented on the expert panel by Dawn Tuomala, Rebecca Balke, and Ben Lundstead.

- Please reach out to Erin if you ever want to share feedback on anything stormwater related.
- Steve recognized that teamwork has been one of the biggest factors leading to the success of the NH MS4 communities in meeting their permit requirements. The NH MS4 Stormwater Coalitions are used as a bragging point for many NHDES Watershed Management Bureau staff at regional stormwater meetings. Often, New Hampshire is looked at in awe due to the unique MS4 communities' format and the New Hampshire Stormwater Coalitions. The collaboration between communities and the stormwater coalitions has been the most effective way to meet the NH MS4 Permit requirements. Steve acknowledged the work of individuals in the NH MS4 Stormwater Coalitions.
  - Jeanne and Dawn have been so instrumental, and we could not appreciate them more! The feedback they consistently provide is so helpful for NHDES.
  - Craig Durrett has been around since the inception of the NH MS4 permit and consistently has attended coalition meetings.
  - Deb, Tom, Andrea, and Katie have collectively spent 2.9 years of time working on NH MS4 related items during this permit.
  - Other NHDES staff have been invaluable assets to the NH Stormwater Coalitions. For instance, Aubrey Voelker with her clever outreach materials and Sally Soule with her technical support.
  - We have all largely benefitted from Jaime Houle and the technical support he consistently provides in understanding the more complex requirements.
  - Deb really did the legwork on bringing the NH Stormwater Coalitions to fruition during her time at NHDOT.
  - We are so fortunate to have the ability to assist the NH MS4 coalition members and collaborate with NH MS4 communities on these important matters.
- Ted gave a big congratulations on getting through this permit! NHDES staff is committed to continuing the excellent collaboration with NH MS4 communities. NHDES staff brag about how amazing the NH MS4 communities are doing in New Hampshire. NHDES largely benefits from the NH Stormwater Coalitions, it helps us gauge where you are, and what we should be focusing on as a section. NHDES has the ear of EPA. If you need to bring anything to EPA's attention, please let one of the NHDES staff know. The Commissioner meets monthly with EPA Region 1 staff.
- Q: Are there any anticipated changes to be made going into the new permit for the NHDES partnership and NH Stormwater Coalitions?  
A: NHDES staff are committed to helping and collaborating with the NH Stormwater Coalitions. NHDES benefits from the coalition and while materials may be created for the NH MS4 requirements, they are often used throughout the State. We look forward to working together in the same capacity for the next NH MS4 Permit as well!
- Q: Can you briefly explain the purpose of the Municipal Green SnowPro rules?  
A: It will have a similar setup to the commercial program and is completely voluntary. We want to know about the amount of the salt used in NH and recognize municipalities for the work they are already doing.

#### **4. Year 5 Annual Report Submissions**

- Jeanne presented.
- So far, Deb has received 31 submissions (66% of NH)! That's not to say that only 66% of NH MS4 communities submitted their Annual Reports, those are just the communities that chose to CC Deb on their submission emails.
- If you didn't CC Deb when you submitted your Year 5 Annual Report, please reach out and just let Deb know that you submitted it. It would be very helpful to send her your Annual Report as well. While this isn't a requirement, it is extremely helpful to see what we need to focus on for the upcoming year. If there are things that multiple

communities were struggling with, we want to make sure we address that and are adequately helping everyone.

## 5. Post-Construction Ordinance

- EPA correspondence
  - Deb presented.
  - When NHDES staff, the NH Stormwater Coalition chairs, and Jaime Houle met with Newt Tedder and Michelle Vuto from EPA, there were many communities that had reported that they had not completed the post-construction ordinance requirement.
  - We recently heard that EPA's Enforcement and Compliance section has reached out to a community in the NHLMV about their Year 4 Annual Report non-compliance. They will likely be emailing anyone that reported they did not complete the post-construction ordinance requirement. This was a Year 3 requirement.
  - Please let Deb know if you have been contacted by EPA. It will be confidential unless the community decides otherwise. Deb is happy to work with any community and help them navigate the situation.
  - Dawn shared her experience with being audited.
    - Dawn was audited and called Deb first to see what needed to be done. Typically, EPA will conduct an onsite review. However, since it was during COVID-19, the review was conducted remotely. There were many different resources and documents needed. EPA reviewed it and then met with Dawn, the Merrimack MS4 staff, and Deb. After that, Dawn received a 200+ page report on anything that needed to be addressed. Tonight, Merrimack is setting up a new town code to meet the IDDE requirements. Merrimack has not been fined for non-compliance. However, they have been providing updates to EPA in their Annual Reports.
  - Eric Slosek shared that his community was not able to complete the green infrastructure requirements for Year 4. He reached out to Tom and Deb for assistance. They provided Eric with a template for the Green Infrastructure requirements. Using this template, Eric was able to get it done. While it may not have been in time for the Year 5 Annual Report, Eric added narrative in the Year 5 Annual Report that stated they were working on completing the requirements. They had almost everything complete but not in the right format, so the template helped to put everything together.
  - Q: Have any other towns in NH been audited or has it just been Merrimack and Salem?  
A: There were two other communities that chose to remain anonymous. There has been a total of four NH MS4 communities audited.
  - While we do not know this for certain, there will likely be audits coming up soon. It has been 2-3 years since the last New Hampshire audits.
- Post-Construction Ordinance Checklist
  - Tom presented.
  - Jaime Houle and Gretchen Young created this checklist to assist with ensuring all requirements under 2.3.6.a.i are met. The ordinances must be no less stringent than [Section 4 Element C and Element D of the Southeast Watershed Alliance's Model Stormwater Standards for Coastal Watershed Communities](#). The checklist breaks down each requirement, you can go through each individual requirement and share the status and where it is located in the ordinances which will help you get organized. It will also help newer members to familiarize themselves with the ordinances.

- The checklist will be on the website as soon as it's finalized. We will be going over this in more detail at the November NHLMV meeting.
- Leo from Merrimack used the checklist and found it helpful for familiarizing himself with the ordinances. Once you download the spreadsheet, it is yours to customize. Leo added columns for requirement and noted where in Merrimack's ordinances each requirement was located.

## 6. MCM #1

- Tom presented.
- It is already time to start making progress on the Year 6 outreach requirements.
- Yard Waste
  - October and November are great times to do yard waste outreach. You can find outreach resources in the Yard Waste section on the [MCM #1 webpage](#).
- Septic Systems
  - Septic Smart week was last month. If you weren't able to do outreach then, there are social media posts under the Septic System section on the [MCM #1 webpage](#).
  - NHDES put out a Septic System [article](#) last year that you can send out.
- Winter Maintenance
  - The Green SnowPro Program Coordinator, Aubrey Voelker, created three fun outreach images reminding everyone to get ready for the winter season. The Winter Maintenance Postcards can be found on the [Winter Maintenance webpage](#).

## 7. Year 6 Requirements

- Tom presented.
- The requirements for Year 6 will be broken down in a table very similar to the Year 5 Annual Requirements table. There will be two separate documents, one for existing permittees and one for new permittees.
- The draft will be available in November.

## 8. 2023 Salt Symposium

- Deb presented.
- For the first time, there was an all-day municipal track during the Salt Symposium. There were 40 attendees and half were from NH MS4 communities. We've heard some great feedback from attendees. Attendees seemed to get a lot out of the peer-to-peer format.
- VJ Ranfos, who was a presenter during the panel session, shared his experience. There were some great conversations on what technology and techniques everyone uses. These conversations were beneficial because we all have the same goals, so it's nice not to have to reinvent the wheel.
- For anyone that attended, NHDES is working with Maralee to get Road Scholar credits. Tom will reach out once those are secured.
- We hope we can get even more MS4 attendees next year! Deb will be inquiring with you on what should be included.
- Next year, we will be offering both Continuing Education and Road Scholars Credits.

## 9. Holiday Meeting

- December 14<sup>th</sup> 12 – 2 PM
- Wasserman Park Function Hall  
116 Naticook Rd  
Merrimack, NH 03054
- [Eventbrite invitation](#) – RSVP Please!
- We need a headcount on who plans to attend so please sign up on the Eventbrite page and bring something to share.

## 10. Other Business

- Q: How have communities handle going on to private property to conduct inspections?
- A: Everyone handles these matters slightly differently.
- Bedford knocks on the door and lets the homeowner know why they are there. If the owner doesn't want them to go on to their property, they don't go. They regroup and negotiate through other means. Usually, it will be someone other than the folks in the field reaching out to the homeowners.
- In other towns, if there's a recorded easement, they just do it. If they are home, they let the homeowners know they are there.
- Q: If they aren't home, what do you do?
- A: Again, this varies from municipality to municipality. Some municipalities do not enter private property and will leave a business card with a note asking them to call for permission. If it's an emergency and they must enter the property, the field staff will leave a note with their business card that says they had to access their property due to an emergency. Other municipalities will enter the property when no one is home. They do wear a safety vest and ensure they are visible, so no neighbors think they're suspicious.
- Some helpful suggestions were to ensure the folks interacting with homeowners have business cards, are driving marked vehicles, and wearing attire with the town logo on it.
- Look at the town's regulations. There's often language that states staff can enter private property to conduct inspections and maintenance. Having these regulations handy to show homeowners is helpful. Craig mentioned that most of Derry's recorded easements state they can access the property anytime for maintenance or repair.
- It is helpful to explain what you're there for and tell the homeowner what you're doing. This often makes them feel better about it.

## 11. Updates and Upcoming Events

- **UNH T2 Snow Plowing 101**  
November 7<sup>th</sup>, November 13<sup>th</sup>, and November 14<sup>th</sup>  
8:00 AM-2:00 PM  
[Registration and Details](#)
- **UNH T2 Snowfighters Seminar**  
November 9<sup>th</sup>  
8:00 AM-2:30 PM  
[Registration and Details](#)
- **2024 Asset Management Conference for Water Infrastructure**
  - **More information to come soon! Same location**
- **[NHDES Infrastructure Funding Webpage](#)**  
Information on any available funding will be posted on this website.

Use the [email alerts page](#) to receive updates from NHDES pertaining to CWSRF/ARPA/Infrastructure funding opportunities.

All upcoming events and funding deadlines, that are currently known, can be found on the [important dates page](#).

- ## 12. Upcoming meeting dates for 2023 – Mark your calendars!
- Meetings occur on the 2nd Thursday of each month, unless otherwise noted. We will continue working on the elements necessary for Year 6 requirements of the permit and update the SWMP template as needed. Following are the topics that are planned for the monthly meetings. Please note that topics may change dependent on priorities identified during the year.

**2023 Meeting Dates**

**November 16<sup>th</sup>:** Year 6 Requirements, Year 6 Coalition Meeting Dates, Post Construction Ordinance Checklist, Lake Phosphorus Control Plan

**December 14<sup>th</sup>:**  Holiday Meeting

**Please email potential agenda items and/or presentations to Deb Loiselle at [deborah.s.loiselle@des.nh.gov](mailto:deborah.s.loiselle@des.nh.gov). These will be considered for upcoming meetings and very helpful in the development of the monthly agendas.**