

HB 495 Seacoast Drinking Water Commission
Minutes
October 25, 2019
NHDES Portsmouth Office

Members present: Renny Cushing (Chair), Tim Roache (Clerk), Deb Hobson, Mindi Messmer, Mike Edgar, Debra Seiken, Patricia Bickford, Brandon Kernen, Cameron Wake, John Storer, David Moore, Pat Bushway (Vice Chair), Brain Goetz, Jen Czysz, Dana Truslow, Tom Sheman

Chairman Cushing opened the meeting at 2:04 PM. He reviewed House Bill 495 and explained that his commission will build on the past work completed the House Bill 431 Commission. He reviewed the discussion held at the organizational meeting held in September at the Legislative Office Building in Concord.

Introductions:

Chairman Cushing reviewed the committee membership and appointed Bushway as Vice Chair and Roache as Clerk. Members present then introduced themselves.

Discussion of the Charge:

Cushing reviewed the commission charge that was carried forward from HB 431 in the previous legislative session and asked if it were applicable.

- a. Utilize and expand upon existing studies to plan for seasonal or drought supply issues.
- b. Prepare and discuss mutual aid between seacoast towns for firefighting.
- c. Prepare and discuss mutual aid agreements for emergency or replacement drinking water supply where contaminated.
- d. Create a centralized planning group to encourage coordination and support between towns.
- e. Evaluate threats to groundwater quality due to environmental issues.
- f. Monitor possible new emerging contaminant threats to groundwater and drinking water quality

Roache mentioned that item d, "Create a centralized planning group to encourage coordination and support between towns" is very much redundant with the role of the RPC's and cited several examples of work where the RPC's play this role.

Messmer suggested that the Commission be responsive to new legislative initiatives as they arise.

Wake suggested that the UNH research on ground water rise and saltwater contamination of wells be considered.

Storer added that overall capacity to meet demand be reviewed and added to the charge.

RPC upcoming meeting on Monday evening:

Cushing asked Roache to provide a summary of the RPC upcoming meeting on Monday evening, October 28. Roache stated that meeting is part of a source water protection grant through NHDES to proactively support community efforts to protect existing groundwater resources. Roache stated that the meeting will be held at Stratham Town Hall and is open to the public.

PFAS and Arsenic:

Cushing introduced the latest developments related to PFAS and Arsenic limits and the law suits that have been filed by various business and industry professionals. Discussion followed.

Messmer added that the Airforce claims no need to comply with newest standards even though Newington Residents need bottled water. Discussion regarding cost cleanup ensued. Messmer added the need to quantify the cost of inaction.

Review of Former Commission Report

Cushing asked who was familiar with the report of the previous Commission under HB431. Several members had worked on or contributed to that report. Roache provided a summary of how the last report was developed.

Edgar volunteered to summarize recommendation into a spreadsheet for review. Wake suggested Box software product for ease of collaboration and sharing of information. More research is need on public records requirements for file sharing.

It was suggested we expand opportunity for public input and education on the subject of drinking water.

Cushing suggested members review the report from HB 431 and provide feedback at the next meeting.

Future tasks and meeting topics:

Members offered several suggestions for future meeting topics including:

Projected impacts of climate including changes in precipitation, salt water intrusion, projected flood zones. Discussion of home owner wells and what can be done to expand education of individual well owners. There is interest in the concept of artificial recharge of aquifers. Southern Tier Water Pipeline presentation should be considered for a presentation. Invite the State Toxicologist and/or EHPT (NHDHHS) re: PFAS and Arsenic Health-based information.

Next meeting

November 22, 2019 2:00PM NHDES Pease office.