



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Solid Waste Working Group

Karen Ebel, Chair

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Minutes of July 26, 2022 Solid Waste Working Group (SWWG) Room 208C 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03302

Members Present: Chair Karen Ebel, Reagan Bissonnette, Adam Clark, Matt Hughes, Greg Leahey, Jim Malley, Freda Paris, Benjamin Piche, Steve Poggi, Eric Steinhauser, Michael Wimsatt, Sen. James Gray

Members Present Remotely¹: Colin Kelly, Marc Morgan, Duncan Watson

Members Not Present: Brian Patnoe, Lynn Rubinstein, Rep. Howard Pearl

Call to Order:

Chair Ebel called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from the June 24, 2022, meeting were approved with a motion by Eric Steinhauser and a second by Steve Poggi.

Discussion – Draft NH Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP)

SWWG members reviewed the July 20, 2022 draft SWMP and provided feedback. Members were encouraged to email any small, grammatical edits to NHDES staff. The meeting recording will be used to capture all comments for consideration in subsequent revisions. Chair Ebel would like to include data from the Biennial Report (e.g., capacity info) when it is published. Mike Wimsatt confirmed that the Biennial Report should be published prior to the SWMP.

Jim Malley questioned how detailed the Plan should be. Director Michael Wimsatt noted that this is a 10-year, high level “living document” that is intended to provide a general framework. Following publication of the SWMP, NHDES will develop periodic implementation plans that detail short-term action priorities as new information and resources evolve.

Chair Ebel called attention to the questions from NHDES posted in the plans’ margins for the SWWG. The questions and input are summarized as follows:

- 1) *Should the Plan allocate tasks to specific entities? If so, how do we do that?*

Some entities are called out in specific actions. The Plan should have a section that lists all the key players in New Hampshire’s solid waste industry. Identifying partners in the

¹ Remote attendance necessary due to logistical considerations

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SWMP could help with writing competitive grant proposals. NHDES will have some level of involvement in each of the SWMP actions.

- 2) *At the previous meeting, the group indicated the language in Goal 5 was the weakest part of the plan. Does the SWWG have specific recommendations for strengthening that section?*

Members did not have any specific recommendations for the additional language or actions in Goal 5. It was suggested that the action to reestablish the NHDES Recycling Market Development Coordinator position be moved to the top of the list of actions under that goal.

- 3) *What metrics can be used to track process of the Plan? Who can provide data?*

The metrics listed in the draft SWMP cover quantitative and qualitative tracking methods. Questions were raised about what types of data we need to collect? The state waste characterization/generation studies will show us which waste types we need to focus on. NHDES plans to revise the annual facility and hauler report forms to collect data about diversion and disposal activities.

- 4) *Any thoughts on the list of top short-term priority actions? Should we create an estimated timeline for completing them?*

The short-term priority actions need to be concrete and measurable, like the state disposal reduction goal in RSA 149-M:2. The priorities need to be clearer and should tie back to the overarching themes and/or specific actions listed in the plan. The group suggested moving the short-term priorities to the beginning of the SWMP. Director Wimsatt commented that the wording needs to be adjusted since some actions require involvement from entities outside of NHDES. It is not feasible to fully accomplish them all “promptly after publication of the plan” (e.g., securing on-going funding through the legislature). Milestones may be a better option.

- 5) *What terms should be included in the glossary?*

Any key terms noted in the Plan should be defined in the glossary.

Other predominant comments from the SWWG included:

- Highlighting our dependency on landfills and public concerns about out-of-state waste,
- Strengthening the discussion about the importance of infrastructure investments from the private sector,
- Using the SMART goal setting framework to develop more measurable goals and identify key players to carry out each action,
- Adding an action to pursue upcoming funding through the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA),
- Adding an action to identify tasks that focus on specific waste types, following the completion of a state waste characterization study,

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- Expanding on Goal 2, to include the term “chemicals of emerging concern” in anticipation of other chemicals that may be identified as a public health risk.

The group discussed the topics of infrastructure, incentivizing public-private partnerships, regional efforts, and the importance of bold action to mitigate climate change. Duncan Watson questioned whether NHDES could assist with issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an in-state advanced materials recovery facility. Director Wimsatt pointed out that other steps may need to be completed before issuing an RFP, such as identifying a host site.

Mr. Steinhauser inquired about NHDES’ role in legislation. Director Wimsatt clarified that any state agency can choose to take a position on a proposed bill as well as draft legislation and seek support for it. Mr. Steinhauser and Sen. Gray requested stronger language about legislative actions in the Plan. Director Wimsatt commented that the SWWG interim report can include an in-depth legislative action plan and more context about waste management, to inform legislators about local industry challenges. Chair Ebel confirmed that the SWWG will be able to refine their legislative focus in the future.

Several SWWG members commented that the SWMP is an educational tool to share where we are with current technology/practices, goals we want to reach, and actions for moving forward. Chair Ebel stressed that the public is looking forward to the Plan and, in some ways, the draft lacks the “heart” people want to see. All SWWG members look forward to the final version with input of the public comments – recognizing that many people around the state are passionate about these issues. Chair Ebel thanked the NHDES staff for their hard work drafting the Plan.

Discussion of SWMP timeline/future meeting schedule

Senator James Gray questioned whether the SWWG will help NHDES incorporate the public comments and review the final draft for publication. Director Wimsatt stated that NHDES staff will complete those tasks internally, in part, due to the tight timeline but also clarified that the SWWG consults on the SWMP, per the statute, but does not have approval authority. The group decided to cancel the August and September meetings so NHDES can focus on finalizing the SWMP. Chair Ebel suggested rescheduling the October meeting, but a date was not set.

Public comment period

NHDES will accept public comments on the draft SWMP during the month of August. SWWG members can submit any additional comments during that time. The final version will be issued by October 1st.

Updates

Chair Ebel reminded the group that the initial SWWG Report is due November 30, 2022.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 PM. A recording of this meeting is available at:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/595733416778225416>