**Bangor Area Stormwater Group Meeting Minutes (Approved)**

**October 12, 2023**

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Bangor City Council Chambers, Bangor, ME

With Zoom participation alternative

**Attendees:** Rich May, Rob Howard, Abe Chase (EMCC), Jon Clements, Brian Bernosky, Kerem Gungor, Ali Clift, Cindy Dionne, Mark Leonard, Megan Hess, Andrea Dickinson, Angela (Pulse). Special Guests: Dr. Onur Apul, Grace Johnson and Taylor Bailey, University of Maine. Facilitator: Brenda Zollitsch.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Rich M. welcomed everyone. Participants introduced themselves.

**DEP Updates**

* Holliday Keene was not in attendance.
* Kerem Gungor attended and provided several updates:
  + shared about the Chapter 500 rulemaking process. He is coordinating a stakeholder consensus-based approach to the rule making process. He shared the first bulletin the end of July. Hoping to kickoff the process in November and to complete the rulemaking process by June 2024. The focus will be LID, urban versus rural, MS4 versus Non-MS4, and climate resiliency.
  + The Maine construction general permit is almost ready with a new draft for public comment (run by Land Bureau).
  + Working on updates to the Erosion and Sediment Control manual (standards) and the Stormwater Manual – working on an RFP to update those two manuals currently.

**Bangor Update on Watershed Planning**

* Rich M. reported that Bangor is working on updating its 2008 watershed plan for Penjajawoc Stream corridor. Last time was rejected by DEP because of the lack of chloride focus.

**BASWG PY1 Report Submission**

* BASWG submitted the BASWG Regional PY1 plan on schedule. The plan was a complete rewrite due to the new SWMP. The annual report templates were not available from DEP, so the BASWG continued in PY1 to use a narrative format.

**BASWG PY2 Education and Outreach Priority Decisions**

* Decision: The BASWG will continue to use online marketing campaigns, social media, public events and educational materials at the Maine Discovery Museum. The BASWG also intends to have displays in public areas, but as one of these is optional, the displays would be the option to put on hold most likely.

**A Few BASWG MS4 Annual Fees Still Outstanding**

* BASWG still has not received annual fees from MEANG, EMCC or Milford. Actions: Consultants agreed to follow-up with their clients. Brian B. will resend invoices.

**Maine Children’s Museum Exhibit Update**

* The BASWG has received approval to have the MCM Exhibit meet compliance requirements.
* Full open of the exhibit is planned for November 2, 2023 at 5:30 pm.
* BASWG representatives planning to attend include: Rich, Andrea, Cara, and Rob. Pulse staff also plan to attend.
* Project update:
  + Vinyls have been created; issue with the wall; needed to be reprinted (museum took responsibility and paid for reprinting).
  + Water structure being developed.
  + QR code will be included to send museum visitors to BASWG website to learn more.

1. **Impact of New Census Data on Phase II Urbanized Areas**

* Ali Clift (ISWG) attended the meeting and shared information about the new U.S. Census data and the how the findings may impact who is regulated by MPDES stormwater regulations in Maine.
* EPA “Urbanized Areas” are based on U.S. Census data. However, NPDES is changing from urbanized areas to urban areas. This may change who is regulated in Maine.
* The Camden/Rockland/Belfast communities could be added, as well as the Brunswick/Topsham/Bath communities.
* BASWG MS4s would not be greatly impacted, but there are some questions around Bradley which appears to be a possible new regulatory area.
* Action: Ali C. will continue to monitor and communicate any known changes to BASWG.
* Action: A study of these changes might be of interest to the Maine Climate Change Institute at the University of Maine around analysis of the potential for new MS4s and what it would cost.

**PY2 Winter Maintenance Managers Training**

* Action: BASWG MS4 Winter Maintenance Managers should sign up for the upcoming WMM training at the Cross Insurance Center on November 21st from 8 am – 3 pm. All MS4s are required in the SWMP to have their WMM complete the training.
* Megan H. will speak with the trainers to ensure that there is an element training WMMs on the new BASWG Chloride Tracking Tool (CTT), which was piloted in PY1, but is now required (or an alternative tracking process) in PY2.

**Microplastics Research Presentation**

* Dr. Onur Apul shared a review of the project and update on project elements. Graduate student Grace Johnson provided a presentation on the microplastics research they conducted in Frenchmen’s Bay. She reviewed sampling design, results and findings. These results included some interesting findings around wastewater treatment plants, transfer stations and rural areas.
* gThe most microplastics were found at a culvert in a busy part of Bar Harbor and in WWTP effluent. Most the plastics in the samples are 0-0.5 mm in size, polypropylene, and blue/black plastic. There appear to be some seasonal differences, with more microplastic fibers found in summer than winter samples. There appears to be a relationship with the tide, with more microplastics found during floodtide than ebb tide. This leads to questions around whether the plastics are more associated with sources coming from the ocean, rather than off the land. Looking now at what type of plastics they are.

**Microplastics Research Stakeholder Session**

* Brenda Z. conducted a stakeholder input session on the microplastics research (see report attached). The findings from the last year of engagement with the research team has been documented in a report to the WRRI grants program through the Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions.

**Potential for Engagement on Artificial Turf as a Pollutant**

* The UM research team also shared about an additional area they are exploring. The UM campus is in the process of installing new artificial turf on some of its athletic fields. This may be a potential source of microplastics and other types of pollution.
* Several members indicated interest in using the new installations as an opportunity to collect data on the quantity of microplastics in the runoff on campus into the Stillwater River.
* Decision: BASWG is interested in learning more.
* Action: Brenda Z. will reach out to Dr. Lindsey Pollard, who is conducting research on this topic and invite her to come speak with at the December BASWG meeting.

**Organizational Business**

* Budget Update – Brian B. provided an abbreviated Treasurer’s report. Action: Brian is working on a review and reconciliation process for the banking statements.
* Approval of Minutes – The approval of meeting minutes was tabled until the December BASWG Meeting.
* Leadership Award – Action: Once co-signed by Megan Hess (participating virtually due to illness), Brenda Z. will forward the BASWG’s Regional SW Management Leadership Award document to Belle Ryder, who has taken a new job at the University of Maine. This award is in recognition of her many roles and efforts with the BASWG over the last decade.

**Upcoming Meetings**

* The next meeting of the BASWG will be on October 12, 2023 – Location TBD with Zoom Option.