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

**December 14, 2023**

9:00 am – 11:00 am

 Bangor City Council Chambers, Bangor, ME

With Zoom participation alternative

**Attendees:** Rich May, Megan Hess, Rob Howard, Abe Chase, Cara Belanger, Brian Bernosky, Andrea Dickinson, Chris Thurston (List may be incomplete, add others during edits). Special Guest: Lindsay Pollard (Lowell Center for Sustainable Production). Facilitator: Brenda Zollitsch.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Rich M. welcomed everyone. Participants introduced themselves.

**Update on DEP Activities**

***DEP Chapter 500*** - Brenda Z. shared that the first DEP Stakeholder Engagement Steering Committee meeting was held on December 5, 2023, in Augusta. Brenda was asked by Kerem Gungor to be on the committee – she is representing not only BASWG but also USM as faculty. Cara B. also attended the meeting. The meeting focused on providing a review of the purpose of Chapter 500, introducing those who will be involved in the process, ground rules and meeting procedures, timelines and goals. The meeting began with a DEP Land Bureau Stormwater Program overview and time for questions. The goal of the process is to improve stormwater regulations via LED, climate change adaptation and resiliency, and improvement of the day-to-day program. They are looking to streamline Chapter 500 to increase compliance. They will be doing this work at the same time as they update the stormwater BMP manual. There are concerns that both processes be well coordinated with each other. The process is designed to develop a framework for the rules which will then be used in the rulemaking process. The next meeting will be held in February. There is an online participation option. Minutes will be available from DEP for the Steering Committee meetings. Chapter500.DEP@maine.gov email address will be used for all communication.

***LID Appeal Hearing*** - Board of Environmental Protection ordered that DEP figure out a new Model Ordinance. DEP will develop the minimum LID requirements for all MS4s. Requiring a minimum amount of open space is likely to be a requirement. May take up to 12 months for the public comment process. May be around two years until there is an approved LID ordinance. Want to make sure that the LID standards and Chapter 500 are coordinated, rather than two standards.

**Winter Maintenance Work**

Maine Local Roads (MLR) held a training for winter maintenance managers (Paul Brown). The training was very full. BASWG MS4s attended (Old Town and Milford were not in attendance, but Jeff (SEE) met with Old Town to train them. All BASWG MS4 WMMs received a handout on the Chloride Tracking Tool (CTT) and adopting new/increasing implementation of targeted WMM BMPs. BASWG will hold a Winter Maintenance Managers Roundtable as part of the BASWG April meeting. Megan H. will send out an early save the date to make sure they are able to attend. They will meet for the hour prior to the regular meeting.

**Maine Children’s Museum Exhibit Update**

Rich M. and Megan H. went to see the new display. The river and filtration are being developed but are not functioning yet. The graphics are all installed/ They are expected to open the water feature in January.

**Artificial Turf Presentation**

Lindsay Pollard from the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at UMass Lowell made a guest presentation on artificial turf and related potential for microplastic and chemical pollution. This presentation emerged from the learning from stakeholder engagement with the USM microplastics research team. The presentation highlighted some of the emerging research around chemicals of concern in the tire crumb element of the artificial turf installation, including metals, PAHs, 6PPD, PFAS, zinc, and microbials. Research has found there are no PFAS-free artificial turf installations (intentionally or unintentionally In the materials). Also, major disposal issues when removed – roll up in landfills. Continuing to look at runoff and how pollutant levels change over time. One of the primary reasons that artificial turf is often used is to ensure field is ready to play instead of muddy, but they are finding that artificial turf fields are not playable for periods of time due instead to extreme heat. A good example of using sustainable best practices for grass fields is Forest Spring in Springfield, MA. BASWG members would be pleased if UM graduate students or faculty would collect samples of runoff from the new artificial turf fields to understand the level of pollutants in runoff. ACTION: Brenda Z. will reach out to Dr. Apul to ask if they are interested in dong that sampling.

**Education and Outreach**

***Purchase of BASWG Pet Waste Bag Dispensers* for Outreach Events** - Rich M. was approached by Education & Outreach Company with some stormwater pollution outreach items. After reviewing options, the BASWG members decided to purchase a dog waste bag dispenser that can be attached to a leash, purse, backpack, etc. DECISION: The proposal was made to purchase 250 dispensers with the BASWG logo for handouts at public events. Megan made the motion, Andrea seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

***Pulse Proposal*** – Chris Thurston of Pulse provided an overview of the Pulse Proposal for services for the coming year. ACTION: The group provided some input but made the decision that there needed to be an additional meeting with Pulse to go over options in greater detail and bring information back to the full group. A couple of discussion items included reviewing proposed increases in the number of posts, hours etc. The group advocates for reducing new costs that exceed permit requirements. BASWG representatives will meet with Pulse after Christmas to review the contract. The additional meeting will focus on making sure that all plans meet compliance with requirements outlined in the regional SWMP and best utilize the funding available for the year.

**Upcoming Events** – BASWG will be sending out a sign-up sheet for volunteering at the Maine Science Festival. BASWG is also planning to participate with a demonstration exhibit at the Maine Children’s Water Festival in October.

**Organizational Business**

***Budget Review -*** Rich M. and Brain B. have been working diligently to review the finances of the BASWG over the last several months. They have resolved a processing disconnect between QuickBooks and the bank statements. This has required many hours of commitment from Brian, as well as support from Rich. BASWG members are appreciative of this major effort. It was identified that the system was not allowing the two data streams to reconcile with each other after transactions. To access some of the bank records, BASWG paid a small fee for reports from the bank. He has also been working to make procedural improvements to the expense tracking system. Brian expressed gratitude for the assistance of a UM campus colleague who provided assistance to him during this process. The group expressed its appreciation to Brian and the others for their work on this essential task. Brian sent out invoices for PY2. As of this week, the BASWG is on target for the year, with $49,624 in the account and its reserve fund of $30k. Brian is working on developing a standard operating procedures document for the treasurer position, as there are many tasks for which the treasurer is responsible that are not clearly identified as part of the position but are essential to its work for the group. The group offered the option of providing a consultant to assist with training, etc. but Brian reports that the work has been completed to fix the disconnect and he feels comfortable with the work and tasks at this time.

***Grant Funding Opportunities* -** The BASWG members may be interested in exploring external funding for outfall signs in watershed areas where assessments are being conducted by DOT. Could include BASWG logo and/or QR code for the public to learn more about stormwater in general/at that site. ACTION: Brenda Z. will come to the annual meeting with initial information about potential grant opportunities for discussion.

***Executive Committee Members and Nominations* –** The BASWG will hold election of officers at the upcoming February annual meeting. The group discussed positions and nominations. Megan will formally move into the chair position (she has been serving as Vice Chair and Education Committee Chair). The group is nominating Abe Chase (EMCC) to be Vice Chair. He will co-chair the Education and Outreach Committee this coming year with Megan. Megan is deeply involved with and committed to the E&O work of BASWG and will remain engaged in this work. Rob Howard will continue the second year of his term as secretary of BASWG this coming year. Brian will continue his second year as treasurer. ACTION: Brenda Z. will prepare a ballot for the election and circulate it in advance of the meeting. She will also remind MS4s to send a representative to the meeting to ensure there is a quorum to support a vote.

***Approval of Minutes*** – October meeting minutes were approved with edits provided by Cara B. Motion by Rob H., Second by Megan H. Passed unanimously.

***Annual Meeting Planning* –** The BASWG will hold its annual meeting on February 8, 2024. The meeting will be held at EMCC. Abe will host the meeting at Rangely Hall and provide a hot breakfast (Brenda will emphasize the breakfast in invitation). Abe will confirm the room reservation and make sure there is a microphone, projection and access to zoom, as well as breakfast.The agenda will include the normal “Year-in-Review”presentation, the Executive Committee election, a formal budget report, a vote on the 2024-2025 BASWG budget, Updates from DEP, E&O planning, and discussion about potential grant opportunities.