

Bangor Area Stormwater Group Meeting Minutes

April 13, 2023

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Orono Town council Chambers, Orono, ME

With Zoom participation alternative

Attendees: Rich May, Andrea Dickinson, Rob Howard, Brian Bernosky, Christopher Green, Tyler, Cara Belanger, Victor Smith, Megan Hess, Rich May. Facilitator: Brenda Zollitsch.

Welcome and Introductions

Megan H. (Vice Chair) greeted everyone as Rich May (Chair) was sick and participating remotely. Participants introduced themselves.

Organizational Business

- **Budget Update** – Brian B. (new BASWG Treasurer) shared that they are in the process of switching authorizations from Kyle D. to Brian as the new treasurer. He needs the approved minutes in order to make that final transition. Brian shared that BASWG is in the black on our budget and he is working to get up to speed on the spreadsheets. **ACTION:** Brenda Z. will send Rich M., Brian B. and Kyle D. the revised minutes (based on April meeting vote).
- **Approval of Minutes** – Rob H. moved to approve the February BASWG Meeting Minutes with specific edits to be incorporated. Those edits were sent to Brenda Z. by Cara B. Megan seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Updates

- **BASWG E&O Compliance Activities Request Approved by DEP:** Gregg Wood (MDEP) has approved the BASWG request to include the Children's Museum outreach display etc. as elements to meet compliance with the requirements of the MPDES MS4 permit.
- **No DEP Response to Extension Request:** No one has heard a response to the BASWG's letter of request for an extension.
- **Letter re Chapter 500 to Kerem Gungor:** A draft letter was shared with the full membership for discussion. **ACTION:** Rich M. will email the letter to the full group. BASWG members were asked to send any feedback to Cara by the end of the following week.
- **Need for Better Communication from DEP:** The group discussed concerns about poor communications from Maine DEP in response to MS4 requests for information and/or assistance. This is an ongoing issue and has caused issues for many member MS4s (incl. non-response re concerns about an illicit discharge). This makes it difficult for MS4s and the BASWG to work efficiently and effectively. The group discussed writing a letter. **ACTION:** The group asked Brenda Z. to write a draft. Cara B. will reach out to the Southern Maine MS4s to connect on this issue and see if they would like to sign on to or write a letter.
- **FOCB Appeal Update:** While the FOCB's concerns are focused on addressing Southern Maine impacts, the appeal affects all of the MS4s. The Board sided with FOCB in response to ISWG's filing of a motion to appeal. However, the letter from EPA WILL be included in the appeal. ISWG will be meeting with a lawyer.

Education and Outreach Work

- **Maine Science Festival** – The Festival was a success with good attendance and interaction at the BASWG booth. There were more attendees last year and more engagements at the BASWG booth than 2022. BASWG volunteers were very busy with attendees throughout. Parents were listening and helping younger children. Volunteers shared that the interactions were “valuable” and participants were engaged. One teacher inquired if the demo could be done in their classroom; BASWG will follow-up with them. Megan is currently updating the painting on the model.
- **Maine Discovery Museum Stormwater Education Exhibit Elements** – As documented under the DEP updates, Gregg Wood (MDEP) has approved the BASWG request to include the Children’s Museum outreach display etc. as elements to meet compliance with the requirements of the MPDES MS4 permit. The Museum is working with BASWG on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) documenting agreement to utilize BASWG key educational elements in the new museum exhibit. The museum is currently working on designing concepts (a little behind schedule). BASWG will have an infographic on a wall in the exhibit in addition to other elements.
- **Street and Stream Clean-ups** – Hampden (May 20 or rain date June 3); Veazie doing cleanup with their 8th grade school students, ANG is doing their clean-up as an internal activity, Old Town (May 12). University of Maine will have their students doing a campus clean-up (no longer hold a specific Maine Day event), Brewer (May 6), Orono (May 20).
- **Stormdrain Marking** – Cara B. reported that stencils have been ordered. Orono school students will be stenciling, and the Brewer summer staff will also be stenciling.

BASWG Permit Year 1 Baseline Survey

- Pulse Marketing has been working to collect responses to the BASWG PY1 Baseline Survey. The survey collects data from the BASWG SWMP target audience on general stormwater pollution awareness, snow and ice control behaviors, recognition of BASWG activities and demographics. Currently, the survey has 186 responses. Pulse seeks 200 responses and is currently making a final push to get those last responses.
- Trevor went through a presentation of some of the initial results, which will be provided in the form of a final report for the June BASWG meeting.
- Some key takeaways:
 - While 77.6% know what stormwater is, 17.7% said they had heard of it, but didn’t know what it was, which provides an opportunity for outreach.
 - 94% share that they want clean water, continuing to support messaging focused on keeping regional waters clean and healthy.
 - Almost all respondents understood that oil and fertilizers were pollutants. Many knew that trash and cigarette butts contributed to stormwater pollution, but far fewer recognized that soap and sediment were pollutants. Again, this provides an outreach opportunity to focus on those that were less familiar to respondents and how to change behaviors that contribute those pollutants.
 - A key message needs to be “What they do matters” as while 69% thought their behaviors had a “high impact”, another 27% thought their behaviors had “only some impact.”

- This encouragement to act should capitalize on the 61% who said that they would be very willing to take actions to reduce stormwater pollution and the 37% who said they would be somewhat willing to do so.
- BASWG needs to continue to reinforce the message that stormwater does not go to treatment plants but flows untreated into local water bodies. There are still respondents who are unsure of what happens to stormwater.
- Reduction in lawncare chemicals was the most likely stormwater reducing behavior, as was the proper disposal of pet waste. The use of a rain barrel was the least likely action.
- 25% of respondents said that they do not use salt/chlorides.
- Respondents indicate that they care most about their own safety and the safety of others when making decisions about snow and ice control.
- Motivations for actions include helping the environment, protecting water quality, saving money and saving time. They would also choose to reduce use if there were safe alternatives.
- Respondents did not indicate that they know about salting before a storm, with only 13% indicating that they pretreat before a storm.
- 4% of respondents attended the Science Festival, of which 50% interacted with the BASWG booth.
- Pulse picked up some question error around picking up pet waste in a public area. This question should be fixed for future instruments.
- One BASWG member had a question about whether some of the salt questions had measurement error due to being leading questions. The group discussed. They decided that the questions were still valid and provided valuable insights.
- Pulse shared that they thought promoting the survey more on Facebook would have resulted in more of the target audience seeing and responding to the survey.
- Pulse will look at pulling out responses solely for those 25-55 in BASWG communities.

Winter Maintenance Behavior Change Work

- **Winter Maintenance Baseline Survey** – The PY1 Winter Maintenance Survey (completed by BASWG MS4 winter maintenance managers) has been completed. UMAB does not have this as a permit requirement, so did not participate in the survey. The final MS4 has made their entries. **ACTION:** Brenda Z. will compile a revised report with the final results and analysis for the June 2023 BASWG Winter Maintenance Roundtable meeting (scheduled for June 8th).

Upcoming Meetings

- The next meeting of the BASWG will be on June 6, 2023, at the Orono Town Office. The meeting will include a one-hour roundtable for BASWG MS4 Winter Maintenance Managers, per SW plan requirements. **ACTION:** Megan H. will take the lead on coordinating the roundtable and will invite WM managers to the meeting.

Optional Vendor Demonstration

- Vendor Zach LaCasse from EJ Prescott provided a post-meeting, optional demonstration of pre-cast stormwater products, along with a donated lunch for those who attended.