

North Shore Water Resilience Task Force
August 2, 2022
MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose:

- Seek consensus to finalize the Task Force charter
- Seek consensus on the subcommittee's proposed scope for \$100,000 in state earmarked funds to advance the work of the Task Force
- If consensus is not reached on the Charter and/or the earmark scope during the meeting, establish next steps for pursuing consensus

Attendees

Convenors - State Legislators and legislative aids/staff: Senator Bruce Tarr, Senator Joan Lovely, Representative Jamie Belsito, Representative Peter Capano, Representative Sally Kerans, Victoria Mori (Office of Sen. Tarr), Rosa Alvarado (Office of Rep. Tucker), Tom Baranowski (Office of Rep. Minicucci), , Shaina Cruel-Reynoso (Office of Sen. Crighton), Sezan McDaniel (Office of Rep. Capano), Katherine McGee (Office of Rep. Kerans), Michele Pacillo (Office of Rep. Jones), Michael Searles (Office of Rep. Walsh), Fatou Sidibe (Office of Sen. Friedman), Dru Tarr (Office of Rep. Ferrante), Johana Wakelin (Chief of Staff, Office of Senator Lovely)

Participants: Steve Bartha, Kelly Bovio (Office of Rep. Moulton), Mark Clark, Chris Cole, Jeff Crane, Charles Dam, Nathan Desrosiers, Paul Dumas, Jim Engel, Mary Gallivan, Paul Goodwin, Vicki Halmen, Kevin Harutunian, Dan Heiter, Curtis Johnson, John Keeley, David Lane, Duane LeVangie, Joe Lobao, Kerry Mackin, Erik Mansfield, Tim Olson, Jennifer Pederson, Brad Perron, Peter Phippen, Ross Povenmire, Alan Taubert, Valerie Vong, Rebecca Weidman

Facilitators: Sara Cohen, Martin Pillsbury

Introduction

Senator Tarr welcomed all participants. He emphasized the very hard work and dedication that went into bringing the charter to its near-final state and believes this form of regional collaboration is precedent-setting in the Commonwealth. He also updated the group on the completion of the Water Management Act grant to Hamilton in which water sharing potential among several lower Ipswich watershed communities was evaluated. The conclusions of that project will be built upon and expanded with the current earmarked funds for the Task Force, which have been rolled over into the current fiscal year. Finally, he reminded participants that the initial Task Force members had determined that membership opportunity should be extended to all communities that rely on Ipswich ground or surface waters for public or private drinking water sources, and that he has been meeting with these additional communities throughout the spring to invite their participation, and the facilitation team has been following up with them to review the draft charter and learn what issues are important to them.

Senator Lovely, Representative Kerans, and Representative Belsito also spoke to the group, expressing support for and the urgency of the Task Force's work.

Facilitators then reviewed the meeting purpose and agenda.

Charter Discussion

The facilitation team shared the draft charter for final review. Participants proposed several new additions to the list of “Additional State and Regional Stakeholders” and agreed to add the following, noting that the list could be further expanded in the future:

- Appropriate regional chambers of commerce
- Salem Sound Coastwatch
- Salem Alliance for the Environment
- Middleton Stream Team
- Northeast Seafood Coalition

It was also noted that unlike the membership list, which defines which entities can vote on Task Force decisions, the Additional Stakeholders list is more informational than functional. Meetings are generally open to all interested parties and participation from any attendee is welcome.

Based on an additional proposal, the group agreed to add the following short-term (first 3 years) benchmark under Measures of Success:

- The consensus decisions are used to develop an implementation plan for action.

Members agreed that more detail on the nature of an implementation plan could be developed at a later date. A request was also made by a Task Force member that the “metrics of sustainability” the Task Force intends to develop, as described in the charter, be used to guide and evaluate consensus actions.

Among those present, ten charter members voted to accept the charter with the above amendments, with no members dissenting. The group agreed that the facilitators should reach out to any charter members who were not present or not able to issue a formal vote at the meeting and determine if they are in consensus with the amended charter.

If consensus is determined among all members, a signing event will be scheduled.

Discussion on Scope for Earmarked Funding

To ground the conversation, the facilitators reviewed the elements of the scope for the \$100,000 earmark that the Task Force agreed to at the December 3, 2021 meeting. The group then reviewed and discussed the more detailed draft scope developed by a Task Force subcommittee over this past spring. Points of discussion and outcomes were as follows:

- The budget might be too small for the proposed scope. Initially there was thought of prioritizing the scope elements as part of the bid documents but then the group agreed that bidders should be asked to price all the elements individually, and if the budget is insufficient for all the elements, the Task Force could hone down the scope using the itemized budget(s) submitted. The latter approach seemed preferable since there may end up being additional earmarked funds that could be added to the contract.
- Initially the scope directed the consultant to characterize ecosystem health with a focus on how low flows are affected by water withdrawals. A proposal was made and accepted by the group to expand this to focus on all the factors that contribute to low flows.

- An additional USGS study involving the evaluation of the firm yield of three surface water reservoirs in the Ipswich River basin was proposed and accepted as an addition to the list of resources to be reviewed for relevance to the Task Force's goals and summarized by the consultant as appropriate.
- The group agreed to allow the subcommittee to move the scope, as amended above, forward into the bidding process and return to the Task Force with a recommended vendor and/or a discussion about task prioritization if items needed to be cut from the scope based on submitted budgets.

Next Steps

- ➔ Vicki Mori from Senator Tarr's office will send around a link to the completed Water Management Act grant project recently completed by Hamilton, which explored many questions critical to the Task Force's mission.
- ➔ The facilitation team will reach out to any Task Force members who did not issue a formal vote to accept the charter and assess if there is consensus on the current draft. If consensus is reached, a signing date will be set.
- ➔ The earmark subcommittee will finalize the bidding documents and request bids from select vendors. They will then come back to the full Task Force to recommend a vendor and, if necessary, to discuss prioritization and paring down of scope elements.
- ➔ The facilitation team will complete the remaining introductory interviews with Task Force members.