



PUBLIC WATER ACCESS ADVISORY BOARD  
MARCH 2, 2020 MEETING MINUTES  
N.H. FISH & GAME DEPARTMENT, 11 HAZEN DRIVE, CONCORD, NH

Members Present: Thomas Quarles, Esq., Chairman (general public); Jim Gallagher, DES; Glenn Normandeau, NHFG; Rebecca Martin, DOT; Ken Gallager, OSI; Bill Gegas, DNCR; Garret Graaskamp, NHFG; Gene Porter (power boat interests); Dick Smith (fishing interests); Gary Clark (general public); Michele Tremblay (river interests); Paul Van Blarigan, GCD; David Bryan (coastal interests); Rep. Chuck Grassie.

Members Absent: Rep. Roger Dontonville; Tom O'Brien, NH Lakes (sitting in for Kelly Buchanan); Timothy Dunleavy, DOS; Senator Ruth Ward; R. Andrew Robertson (non-motorized boating interests).

Guests: Amanda McQuaid, NHDES, Beach Monitoring Program Coordinator.

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**MEETING CONVENED**

Chairman Quarles welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

**AGENDA ITEMS – [Note: Text in bold denotes action items or motions.]**

**1. Approval of PWAAB Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2020**  
**Jim Gallagher made a motion to approve the January 6, 2020 minutes as amended and Ken Gallager seconded. The board unanimously approved.**

**2. DES Cyanobacteria and Algal Bloom Program and DES Beach Monitoring Program – Amanda McQuaid-Beach Monitoring Program Coordinator, DES.**

Amanda McQuaid, Beach Monitoring Program, NHDES, provided an informative overview of the Beach Monitoring Program and the effects of cyanobacteria and algal bloom.

She reported that cyanobacteria is a blue-green algae, which is aesthetically displeasing in sight, smell and taste. She reported that the presence of

cyanobacteria in recreational waters is a great concern, as blooms of these primitive cyanobacteria have caused adverse health effects in livestock, domestic animals and humans. She further reported that cyanobacteria is a public health danger because they may produce toxins, referred to as "Cyanotoxins", that can be released into the water when cells die or are consumed by organisms in the food chain. She recommended anyone that has noticed a blue-green mass floating in the water to take a picture of it and then contact their local health official/beach manager, the NHDES Beach Program at [beaches@nh.gov](mailto:beaches@nh.gov) or call the NH Cyanobacteria Hotline @ 603-848-8094, to report the location of concern.

Amanda reported that the Beach Monitoring Program began in 2003. It samples both public coastal and freshwater beaches from approximately Memorial Day through Labor Day, including the testing of 16 coastal beaches at least every two weeks, depending on visitor frequency. Amanda reported that on a busy summer weekend day 50,000 people are at Hampton Beach.

At one time, DES tested up to 200 beaches, some of which were private. Due to shifting funding priorities they will now test 79 beaches this summer.

She reported that tools required for a typical inspection include:

- Sterile sample bottles for bacterial analysis
- Thermometer
- Inspection sheet
- Waders, as needed
- Gloves, as needed
- Non-sterile cyanobacteria sample bottles, used for freshwater only

She reported that water samples are collected from the designated beach area by program staff for bacteria analysis. The water temperature is recorded, as well as the weather conditions, and the number of bathers, dogs, and wildlife present. If a cyanobacteria bloom is suspected, the inspector will collect a sample to be microscopically analyzed. The sample bottles are always labeled with the date, time, location, and collector's initials. Inspectors take extra precaution not to touch the inside of the cap or rim of the sterile bottle to prevent cross contamination. DES charges a municipality \$30 per test, whether or not the beach is open to the general public. It does not charge for its costs to collect the sample.

In addition, she reported that in the event a person or animal comes in contact with water contaminated by cyanobacteria, he or she may experience the following symptoms:

Headaches  
Diarrhea  
Vomiting

Nausea  
Abdominal pain  
Itchy, irritated eyes and skin

State Park beaches with cyanobacteria blooms have been: Silver Lake, Hollis; Pawtuckaway Lake; Kingston Lake and Jericho Lake in Berlin.

Chairman Quarles asked about the ongoing problems with water pollution of state park beaches due to goose droppings. Affected state parks are: Ahern State Park on Lake Winnisquam; Pawtuckaway, Sunapee, Silver Lake and the municipal beaches at Weirs Beach on Lake Winnepesaukee and Crystal Lake, Gilmanton. One of the problems is people feeding the geese or leaving food that they can plunder. **The Chair asked Bill Gegas to look at State Park beach rules to see if they prohibit feeding birds and animals and how much people can be fined.** Solutions to this problem are difficult. Grass areas can be left to grow out. Sometimes the geese have to be euthanized. Eighty geese were euthanized at Pawtuckaway State Park.

In closing, she reported that the program posts beach advisories when sample analyses result in bacterial levels above the state standard, typically lasting 2 or more days. These advisories are recommended to the public to avoid water contact activities until further analyses reveal safe conditions. The public may obtain beach data for their particular cities/towns by visiting: NHDES's "OneStop" data retrieval site and follow the instructions to "Beaches", "Lakemapper" tab. Each monitored beach has an "annual beach report" page.

### **3. Beach Access - DES and All sites spreadsheets – T. Quarles, A. McQuaid, and K. Gallager**

Chairman Quarles distributed a spreadsheet he had prepared that is a merger of DES' list of beaches they tested in 2013-2014 and any information in OSI's Allsites data base listing beaches.

The spreadsheet has three colors. Green entries mean there are no access restrictions, the beach is open to the general public without charge. At present, this spreadsheet shows there are 38 such beaches. All state park beaches are also open to the general public, but a fee is charged. Yellow means that the beach is not listed on OSI's Allsites database and efforts will need to be made to try to reconcile these or add them to the Allsites database, if appropriate.

He reported that it was the PWAAB's responsibility to inventory, catalog and make these sites public knowledge. He reported that the objective is to open as many sites as possible for public access. Ken reported that more work is needed on the spreadsheets.

#### **4. Pending Legislation**

Chairman Quarles reported that Kelley Buchanan, NH Lakes, would be resigning from the PWAAB, and that Tom O'Brien would be replacing her.

He reported on the following legislation:

HB-137, relative to study commission on wake boats. This commission is meeting simultaneously with today's PWAAB Meeting.

SB-428, notifications to rivers coordinator of state action is moving forward. It has passed the Senate and will go before the House next for consideration.

HB-645, dock registration bill, was vetoed. However, it was resubmitted and passed the Senate and will go to the House next for consideration, where it will be amended.

HB-640, amended legislation regarding registration fees for canoes & kayaks. An amendment was made to make this strictly voluntary. This initiative is to encourage participation and allow you to donate the amount of your choice.

HB-1810 – study commission still working on dock issues. The language of the draft bill the commission is working on would pull all seasonal docks from the wetland statutes and require them to be addressed under a separate statute.

HB-1245 – board to study commissions and boards to look at how often they meet, and in fact, if they have quorums. The bill could potentially eliminate House Representatives & Senators participation on these bodies due to time constraints.

#### **5. 2019 Annual Reports – OSI – Ken Gallager**

Gene Porter made a motion to approve the 2019 OSI report as presented and Jim Gallagher seconded. The board unanimously approved.

Garret thanked Ken for all he does to assist the board.

#### **6. Roads to Public Waters – orphaned sites project – T. Quarles., Ken G. and Garret G.**

Chairman Quarles reviewed the current Road to Public Waters Spreadsheet. He thanked Ken Gallager and Garret G. for the considerable progress they had made since the last meeting verifying that almost all the RTPW sites listed in OSI's Allsites database are either part of the Fish and Game program or are "orphaned" sites which remain state property, requiring free public access, but must be maintained by the town. There are now 82 sites in this verified "orphan" category. Removed from this spreadsheet are 16 sites highlighted in salmon color, on a separate spreadsheet, each of which have various documentation missing such that title work will be needed to see if these sites can be verified. **Already, access issues are apparent from the verified orphaned site spreadsheet. For example, they show three RTPW sites where various towns have improperly restricted these sites to residents only.**

New versions of this spreadsheet will be distributed before the next meeting. Most individual site entries show no information about whether the site provides adequate access. **PWAAB members should review those sites to see if they know the site and can speak to whether it provides adequate access. We may need to assign members to review such sites in their home areas and/or ask the Fish and Game Conservation Officers about their familiarity with the sites and their adequacy.**

Agenda Item #10 was heard out of sequence.

#### **10. Baker River, Rumney, DOT's surplus rest area – T. Quarles**

Chairman Quarles reported that he received a letter from the Department of Transportation regarding their surplus rest area in Rumney, NH on Route 25. He reported that the Town of Rumney is interested in purchasing the land. Chairman Quarles reported the he had no objection to the Town purchasing the land, as long as they allow a clause in the deed to keep the land open for general public access.

Discussion ensued.

Chairman Quarles made a motion to write a letter to the DOT, on behalf of the PWAAB, supporting the sale of the rest area, located on Route 25, in Rumney, NH, to the Town of Rumney, as long as there is a deed restriction to keep the land open for general public access. Gary Clark seconded. The motion passed with 13 in favor and 1 abstention (B. Gegas).

**Due to time constraints, the following agenda items were not discussed and were deferred until the next meeting:**

**#7 – Rocky Pond, Loudon – Garret G. & R. Martin**

**#8 – Rust Pond, Wolfeboro – Garret G.**

**#9 – Merrimack River, Greely Park Update – G. Porter**

**#11– Fish and Game site development matrix – Garret G.**

**Old Business**

- River Access review & prioritization.

**Public Comment**

No comments heard.

**Adjournment**

**At 12:02 p.m., Paul Van Blarigan made a motion to adjourn and Rebecca Martin seconded. The board unanimously approved.**

**Next Meeting**

Chairman Quarles thanked everyone for coming and announced that the next PWAAB meeting was scheduled for May 4, 2020, location to be announced.