Approved Minutes New Durham Water Quality Committee (NDWQC) April 20, 2022@ 6:30PM Community Room

Present: Fred Quimby, Mike Gelinas, Maureen Knepp, Casey Buell, Keith Barnard, and Bill Meyer.

Absent: Penny Meyer and Cynthia Quimby(alt)

Quimby called the meeting to order at 6:27PM.

After a brief discussion, Bill Meyer moved and Mike Gelinas seconded a motion to approve the Draft Minutes of March 16,2022 as written. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Quimby received a letter from the Town Administrator addressing the membership of a newly reconstituted Cyanobacteria Mitigation Steering Committee (CMSC). Gene Young had written and asked the TA to assist in finding out who among New Durham’s Select Board, Milfoil and Water Quality Committee and the Conservation Commission would serve on a reconstituted CMSC. Fred asked Bill if he would continue to serve for the Milfoil Committee and Bill agreed. There were no objections to Bill’s representation.

Quimby then read an email from Amy Smagula regarding the treatment of Milfoil in 2022. Amy advised the NDWQC that the control grant was approved by the State for matching funds this year. The permit application was working through the process and that the NH DES would survey the sites involved and share maps of the infestation with NDWQC members and the contractors. This was followed by a brief discussion on timing. Mike Gelinas brought up a situation which may potentially affect herbicide application in Jones Pond.

Quimby asked Gelinas to expand upon this and Mike said there was a rumor that water in Jones Pond may be dropped up to 4 feet this year to repair the dike, although the timing of this event was not known. Quimby stated that he would contact Amy Smagula at NH DES and alert her to this possibility. We may need an alternative plan.

Quimby lead a discussion on the latest water testing results in the Merrymeeting and Cocheco River watersheds. In general water quality in the first three months of this year look pretty good. Mike reminded the members that heavy snow melt and rain this Spring probably led to dilution of the phosphorus levels in the rivers. Fred pointed out that this was the first time a watershed-wide survey was done in the Cocheco River Watershed and the only thing which stood out were high total phosphorus (TP) levels in two tributaries to Marchs Pond, Maggie Ln culvert 2 and the Country Lane culvert. Mike clarified that it was Maggie Lane culvert 1 which had to be investigated before and a stream-side manure pile was removed; now the TP level was 5.4 ug/mL. Bob Craycraft called and asked if Fred wanted to join him this Saturday 4/23/22 to look at these streams and collect additional samples and Fred agreed. Maureen asked when they were meeting and Fred replied at 10AM at Bob’s house. Fred also mentioned that he had been in contact with Chrissy Morell and she wanted to play a role in finding a solution to the Marchs Pond tributary problem. Keith mentioned the extreme values seen at Mill Pond and Quimby explained the conditions under which this sample was taken. The combination of high turbidity and TP suggest sediment was involved and the combination of high specific conductivity (SC) and high chloride suggests that road salt was also a problem. Both of these conditions were seen at the site and the problem brought to the attention of the Alton Road Agent, Scott Kinmond. Maureen pointed out that a similar high SC was seen at Ela River at Silver Street in Farmington and Fred mentioned that the chloride values were also high, so road salt was probably contributing to this problem.

Quimby began a discussion on this summer’s testing schedule and handed out a table describing a possible schedule. Quimby agreed with Gelinas that ponds without a history of prior internal phosphorus loading (IPL) and which did not develop anoxia at the bottom probably did not need to have a bottom sample collected. Quimby also thought if any IPL was to occur it would likely happen in July or August. Gelinas recommended that Marsh Pond have the bottom sample taken in September. Fred agreed and said this change would be made. Fred also mentioned that this Table would be shared with Bob Craycraft so he knew the bottles necessary in each week of the summer.

Maureen circulated a list of new volunteers who would assist the NDWQC collect samples this year. Fred mentioned that one volunteers was working in Alton but asked to be trained with our group on April 26, 2022. Fred and Bob have been coordinating activities for this training session and Fred will purchase more clip boards and sharpies for the new Volunteers. Maureen noted that no new volunteer would be allowed to go out without an experienced member present the first time. Quimby mentioned that the boat he used last year will be used less this year and he could leave it a camp Birch Hill for use in Marchs and possibly Chalk ponds. He would pick the boat up at Birch Hill when he used it and return it. Maureen was concerned about how the equipment would be distributed this year and Fred suggested she make up the working schedule with those present at this meeting and send it to him. Quimby wanted to take the first Monday of the month for the river survey and he would also take stream gauge readings weekly and a TP sample every other month. Maureen wanted to know how the bottles were to be labelled and Fred said that Bob would describe this process to all the new volunteers on April 26. Fred said he did not want to be responsible for labeling all bottles again this year. Deep water samples are labelled with the Location i.e., Shaws Pond Deep; the date; the time of collection; and the depth of collection i.e., 1-3M or the measured depth of the bottom collection.

Casey brought up the issue of taking cyanobacteria samples to Concord for verification after Fred read them. Mike said that only samples with high bacterial counts were sent out. Fred agreed an thought this trip would only happen 2-4 times during the summer and that he would be happy to take Casey to Concord on the first trip and introduce her to the laboratory.

Quimby then mentioned some rather bad news concerning the s319 stormwater BMP construction. After 1.5 years of assisting Fred writing this grant the NDDPW pulled out its support 1 month before the construction was to begin. Quimby quickly sought bids from other local excavators. McKay Excavation wanted to help but could not finish this project within the expected timeline of December 31, 2022. Northeast Earth Mechanics thought they could make the timeline and are preparing a bid due at the end of the week. Casey Buell had some ideas about this situation and agreed to share them with Quimby after the meeting. In addition to the disappointment caused by NDDPW, solicitation of bids for materials is much higher post pandemic than before the pandemic. Thus, the bid from Earth will help decide if the town can still afford the project.

Maureen told the committee and interesting story concerning the LOCSS program and using GPS coordinates to verify satellite results regarding the size of waterbodies.

Quimby made three announcements regarding continuing education on water quality issues including the Wentworth Water Association’s Water Summit in Wolfeboro May 14, the NH Lakes Congress in Meredith June 2-3, and an EPA Watershed Academy Webcast. Keith noted this program was the next day (April 21.2022).

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Quimby, Chair NDWQC