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**Regional Water Plan
Steering Committee Meeting
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Thursday, April 17, 2025 1:30 PM**

Location: Old Colony Planning Council, 70 School St, Brockton, MA 02301

Attendees:

Steering Committee	
Organization	Name
Town of Abington	Liz Shea
Town of Avon	Michael DeRienzo
Town of Avon	Brian Martin
Town of Bridgewater	Shane O'Brien
Town of Bridgewater	Greg Tansey
City of Brockton	Pat Hill
CPCWDC	Howard Randall
East Bridgewater	John Haines
Easton Department of Public Works	Greg Swan
Town of Kingston	Val Massard
OCPC	Mary Waldron
OCPC	Bill Napolitano
OCPC	Joanne Zygmunt
State Senate	Senator Michael Brady
Town of Pembroke	Dan Sullivan
Town of Plympton	Gavin Murphy
Town of Plympton	Brian Vasa
Watershed Associations	Pine duBois

Observers	
Organization	Name
Town of Kingston	Matt Penella
MassDEP	Jon Hobill
MassDEP	Duane LeVangie
Senator Brady's Office	Al DeGirolamo

Consultants	
Organization	Name
CDM Smith	Kirk Westphal
CDM Smith	Amara Regehr
CDM Smith	Kara Rozycki (via Zoom)

Minutes:

1. Introduction, Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Further Development of Specific Recommended Strategies
 - a. **Additional thoughts on Strategy A:** Support Public Health and Raise Awareness of Water Quality Among Private Well Owners
 - i. Include updates to town websites on PFAS from MassDEP as next step – explore ways to make the links more obvious, including information on laboratories/services that provide bulk rates for well sampling
 - ii. Broaden to consider beyond PFAS, thinking about nutrients, pesticides, fertilizers.
 - iii. OCPC has done education / materials
 - iv. OCPC runs a septic loan program that could potentially be basis for water quality testing program
 - v. Board of health appropriate leader for this as they have more authority on this – but need to include information links more prominently on Town Websites.
 - b. **Additional thoughts on Strategy B:** Introduce Policies and Regulations to Reduce the Waste of Water and Improve Ecosystem Health
 - i. OCPC currently works with three communities on open space plans and could work with others.
 - ii. General consensus that stormwater BMPs could be improved throughout the region.
 - iii. Consider incentives to replace lawns, incentivize water neutrality in new development with on-site offsets or other local offsets / funds.
 - iv. A list of native plant species is included in the Appendices of the Plan – this should be made accessible on OCPC's websites and community websites.
 - v. Some communities restrict private wells during droughts - Enforcement is a challenge. The group discussed proxy measures (long-term) on conservation

effectiveness as evidenced by improved low-flow conditions and groundwater levels (Ipswich is a good example).

- vi. Though federal funding is uncertain, EPA offers 319 and 604(b) funding for these types of restoration and preservation projects (planning and implementation).

- c. **OCP project website:** Can include links to the documents described above to help improve accessibility/centralization: MassDEP PFAS fact sheets, Model stormwater bylaws, Program of MassDEP credits for stormwater management in water permitting, etc.
- d. **County Government:** The example of distributing federal funds for COVID through county governments and the efficiency this helped produced was offered for consideration in the context of funding implementation strategies for the plan.

4. Open Discussion on Regional Water Plan

- a. Some Steering Committee representatives agreed that the draft regional water plan appropriately addresses the guiding principles developed by the Steering Committee at the beginning of the project.
- b. A steering committee expressed concern that impacts to streamflow in the Jones River have not been improved by the drafting of this report. Several responses included:
 - i. The report identifies recommendations for improving this condition (specifically, a study to improve ecosystem health and connectivity and the increased utilization of the Aquaria desalination plant to offset other withdrawals), but on its own, the SC does not make these decisions. It is incumbent on SC members to get these issues in front of local and state elected leaders now that the report is complete.
 - ii. The report is a collection of sound opportunities, backed by SC consensus, that require political outreach and action.
- c. Another steering committee member expressed concern about the gap in steering committee members support for the draft regional plan and elected officials support for the plan.
 - i. OCP responded sharing that there is additional coordination planned to outreach to town officials about the plan.
 - ii. Similar to (b) above, it was stressed that the report itself is now a tool that could influence political will with reasons *why* its recommendations are regionally beneficial, and the group was encouraged to offer suggestions on how the prominent themes can be presented and worded as influentially as possible.
- d. Additional discussion focused on the success of this plan, built using consensus, and bringing many different stakeholders to the same table that historically would not have collaborated.

5. Discuss Drafted Charter for Old Colony Water Resources Committee

- a. Many Steering Committee Members expressed the need for the continuation of meeting under a standing committee.
- b. Drafted key responsibilities for the terms of reference for this water resources standing committee included:
 - i. Implementation coordination for regional activities between partners pursuing joint projects.
 - ii. Identification of funding sources and advising OCPC and others on grant funding applications.
 - iii. Public education – helping citizens understand their regional resources and vulnerabilities.
 - iv. Advocacy – coordinating with state legislators and regulatory agencies on planned strategies.
 - v. Monitoring and Adaptation – Collect performance-based data on the impacts of various strategies as they are implemented, as well as changes in demographic and economic conditions, regulations, hydrology, etc.
 - vi. Continuity of collaboration – serve as a regular forum for participating towns and organizations to review and discuss issues and ideas.

6. Next Steps

- a. Steering Committee Comments Due: April 22
- b. Public Meeting #1 Plymouth Town Hall: April 28 6:30-8:00 PM
- c. Public Meeting #2 Virtual Meeting: May 1 6:30-7:30 PM
- d. Public Meeting #3 Brockton Public Library: May 6 6:30 – 8:00 PM
- e. End of Public Comment Period: May 18

Action Items:

Assigned to	Action Item
Steering Committee	Provide feedback on Draft Regional Water Plan using word document form provided.
CDM Smith	Incorporate Steering Committee comments into Draft Regional Water Plan

Attachments:

1. Meeting Presentation Slides

Prepared by CDM Smith.