

## **Safe Water Advisory Group (SWAG)**

### **A City Council Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Minutes Thursday, June 27, 2024**

**City Hall School Dept. Conference Room A and via Zoom**

Attending in person: Brian Goetz, co-chair; Andrea Amico, co-chair, Katrie Hillman, Rich DiPentima, Rep. David Meuse. Councilor Rich Blalock, Councilor Vince Lombardi, Chief Bill McQuillen. Excused: James Hewitt, Laurel Schaider, Elizabeth Barrett, Kim McNamara. Staff: Mason Caceres, Stephanie Seacord PIO, recording secretary

Full SWAG meeting recording: <https://youtu.be/c0yhbtOxp-w>

Meeting presentation slides: [Reference Documents | City of Portsmouth](#)

#### **1. Introduction & Approval of minutes – Andrea Amico, co-chair**

Meeting called to order at 6:33 pm. Minutes for the March 21, 2024 meeting approved on a motion by Katrie Hillman; seconded by Councilor Lombardi.

#### **2. Water Supply & Master Plan Update - Brian Goetz, co-chair**

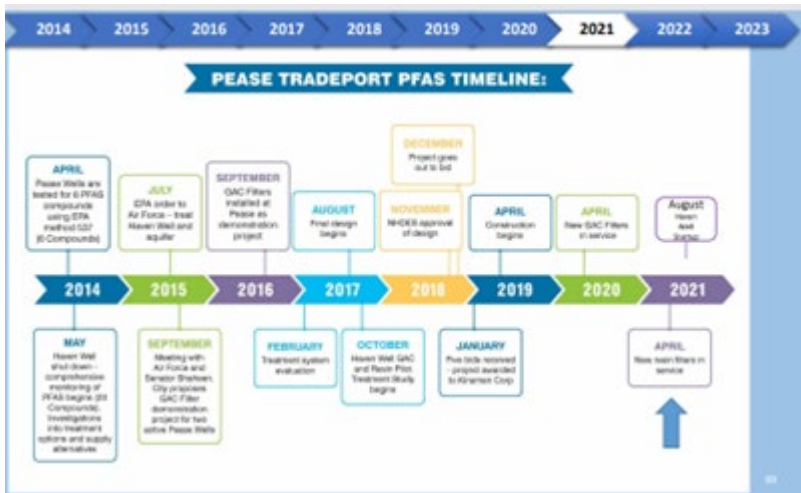
- a. Water supply in good condition with wet/normal precipitation. Best indicator is the flow at Bellamy Reservoir. Latest supply/demand report shows Portsmouth Water System demand is 40 percent of supply and Pease is at 500,000 gal of 1.7 million gal capacity. Working on real-time reporting.
- b. Little Bay Water Transmission Line project, replacing valves on the Durham and Newington shores so that water could be shut off if needed in either of the two water lines under Little Bay. Stubs also completed for the prospective third line but that project bids have exceeded resources.
- c. Dover Interconnect Project is also on hold due to expense. Congressional funds are earmarked but the cost exceeds the NHDOT budget. Emergency Water Supply study is ongoing with Underwood. Brian Goetz is chair of the committee.
- d. Master Plan Update: Of 23 recommendations made in 2013, 14 are now complete, 5 are in progress, 3 are included in future CIP allocations and 1 (waterline from Pease to Greenland) was dropped due to the PFAS evolution. Full report in meeting presentation slides: [rev SWAG Meeting Slides 06 27 24.pdf \(cityofportsmouth.com\)](#)

#### **3. EPA PFAS MCL Update - Brian**

- a. Portsmouth remains in compliance with NH regulations. EPA has promulgated a new 4 ppt regulation. The state has 2 years to implement it but the City's plans for additional treatment are in design.
- b. Andrea noted that the new rulings will protect hundreds of millions of Americans, by potentially preventing tens of thousands of illnesses and thousands of deaths. "It's a big step in the right direction and I want to thank the City for being proactive."

#### **4. Pease Water System Contamination 10 year recap - Brian & Andrea.**

- a. Narrative in recording: <https://youtu.be/c0yhbtOxp-w>
- b. Timeline: [PFAS Presentation SWAG Meeting Slides 06 27 24.pdf \(cityofportsmouth.com\)](#)



- c. Andrea: Ten years ago my life changed forever. A personal issue with two children in daycare and husband working at Pease, all drinking the water. Pushed for blood testing, gain support from Senator Shaheen who advocated the national health study. Now many communities are sharing the information and connecting.
  - i. Pease Study ongoing. Data collected but no final report yet. PFAS levels are coming down.
  - ii. NH is now ahead of the EPA.
  - iii. Rich DiPentima – healthcare providers have many questions and no answers yet: what does elevated level mean in terms of impact? What should they be looking for? Recommended “Dark Waters” film.
- d. Questions:
  - i. Does the additional resin filtration mean the carbon filters don’t have to be replaced as often? Yes. Using carbon alone would require 12 filters and changing 2-3 per month. City is in the process of the resin changeout schedule so that all are replaced 2023-24.

**5. National PFAS Conference update - Andrea**

Attended 4<sup>th</sup> national conference in Michigan. By switching locations each time different communities can be the focus. Full details on sessions at: [Home | National Pfas Confer \(nationalpfasconference.org\)](http://nationalpfasconference.org) Next conference in June 2026, location TBD. PFAS Contamination Coalition has 48 groups in 26 states acting as advocates and providing mutual support.

**6. Lead Testing & Service Line Inventory for Lead Regulations update – Mason Caceres. New title: Assistant Water Resources Manager**

**KEY TAKEAWAYS & NEXT STEPS**

- Inventory of service line materials will be submitted by October 16, 2024.
  - Zone 4 & 5 customer-side identifications currently underway.
  - City-side pathing continues in targeted developments.
- Must replace 100% of LSLs and GRRs within 10 years.
- Must verify 100% of unknown service line materials within 10 years.
- Lowering of lead action limit from 15 ppb to 10 ppb.
- Additional outreach and required pitcher-filter distribution for systems with more than 3 action level exceedances in a 5-year period.
- Lead and Copper Rule compliance sampling starts next week (Quarter 3 – all systems)

- 7.
  - a. Free Lead Testing: Funded for 100 kits. 49 residents responded; 24 have provided samples. Reminder letters sent to the other 25. Further outreach is planned.

- b. Service Line inventory continues: 904 unknowns remain out of the 8,382 total services. No lead found to date. 91% of lines are copper. The 136 galvanized lines found so far must be replaced in 10 years. City is required to report inventory on October 16, 2024 including any unknowns.
- c. Lead & Copper rule compliance – City starts required Q3 sampling at 60 sites on July 1.

7. **Katie Hillman's new role** – In May, Katie became Communications Engagement Program Manager for the Great Bay Changemaker Program, responsible for educating, training and inspiring those working with water resources. Piloted a Cocheco River Watershed bootcamp program for 20 participants. With NH Charitable Foundation funding now planning a fall Lamprey River workshop (Andrea and David Meuse will be presenting.)

8. **Mission update** – Andrea. Asked SWAG to consider this revised text for next meeting before requesting that City Council vote to change.

*To review and communicate the latest science on the health and environmental effects of PFAS, to monitor federal and state level legislative changes, and to anticipate policy changes that could impact the city of Portsmouth. To discuss topics relevant to the City's water quantity, quality, preservation and conservation efforts, and projects pertaining to the water master planning through the City's annual Capital Improvement Plan process and other engineering studies.*

- Brian commented that the new language codifies what SWAG is already doing.
- Councilor Blalock agreed it would be good to clarify what SWAG is already doing.
- Councilor Lombardi agreed it's good to update the mission as you go along and noted that the group has become a very important resource from which much can be learned.
- Rich and Andrea suggested there may be new health issues related to water quality; SWAG is the opportunity to valuable conversations.
- Brian and Mason commented that SWAG feedback helps the City and supports a very transparent information and outreach effort.

9. **Future field trip** – Brian proposed that the September meeting would visit the reservoir, convening at the Madbury facility. **Tentative date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 6 pm.**

10. **Legislative update** provided by Rep. Meuse in advance:

[2024 NH Environmental Bills 06272024.pdf \(cityofportsmouth.com\)](#)

No public comment.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.