

## Vermont Clean Water Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Wednesday, August 5, 2020, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.  
Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

### **Clean Water Board Members/Designees:**

Susanne Young, Agency of Administration (AoA) Secretary and Clean Water Board Chair  
Chris Cochran on behalf of Ted Brady, Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD)  
Deputy Secretary  
Bob Flint, public member  
Joe Flynn, Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Secretary  
James Giffin, public member  
Christopher Louras, public member (absent)  
Julie Moore, Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Secretary  
Anson Tebbetts, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (AAFM) Secretary  
Chad Tyler, public member

---

### **1. Welcome**

- a. The Chair, Secretary Susanne Young convened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and reviewed the agenda. No action taken.
- b. Secretary Young entertained a motion to approve prior meeting minutes from May 21, 2020. Motion to approve minutes passed.

### **2. Review Revised Clean Water Fund Operating Statement**

ANR Director of Finance and Administration Emily Byrne reviewed the Clean Water Fund operating statement. Actual State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2020 revenue to the Clean Water Fund was approximately \$12.9 million, which was approximately \$1 million more than anticipated during the supplemental budget adjustment but still less than the original SFY 2020 budget as passed. There is approximately \$1 million of unallocated/unreserved funds from SFY 2020 that will be available for SFY 2021. No action taken.

### **3. Review and Approve Revised SFY 2021 Clean Water Budget**

- a) ANR Secretary Julie Moore reviewed the revised SFY 2021 clean water budget process. No action taken.
- b) Secretary Moore reviewed the plan to revise the SFY 2021 Clean Water Fund-portion of the clean water budget following the Emergency Board's August 12<sup>th</sup> revenue forecast update. There will be no changes to the Capital Bill-portion of the clean water budget. Emily Bird has led a process with the interagency finance team to define a set of guiding principles for the budget revision. Guiding principles are outlined in a separate document, to be posted with the meeting materials.
  - Discussion in response to questions clarified that each agency will take the percent reduction from the revenue forecast and then individually decide how to allocate reductions across its agency's line items. Each agency will use these guiding principles to prepare its budget recommendation. The interagency finance committee can share the budget recommendations back to the Board. The guiding principles were not listed in priority order but were listed with full funding recommendations first.
  - A motion to approve an across-the-board reduction at agency-level, with agencies recommending how to apply reductions among line items using guiding principles passed.

- c) Secretary Moore discussed an update to the Clean Water Fund Contingency Plan. In May 2020, the Board passed an amendment to the June 2018 contingency plan addressing COVID-related budget planning for the SFY 2021 first quarter budget. The budget process has changed since May, and the original June 2018 Clean Water Fund Expenditure Contingency Plan is recommended for SFY 2021.
- In response to questions as to whether the Board would build a stronger reserve amount as finances permit, Secretary Moore responded that the Clean Water Board had previously approved a contingency reserve of \$500,000. The Clean Water Fund has diverse income streams, which allowed for a modest contingency and more funding to be used for clean water projects on the ground. The Board had not anticipated the pandemic's impact on the economy. The topic of an expanded reserve can be explored at another Board meeting if there is interest.
  - Motion to approve the use of the original Contingency Plan with a contingency reserve of \$500,000 for SFY 2021 passed.

#### **4. Review Draft SFY 2022 Clean Water Budget Process**

Department of Environmental Conservation Clean Water Initiative Program Manager Emily Bird reviewed the draft SFY 2022 clean water budget process. The process follows typical steps, although it is starting slightly later this year due to COVID impacts on other budget planning. The process is subject to change, pending COVID impacts on budget planning.

#### **5. Public Comments**

Secretary Young welcomed input from the public. Written comments will also be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 5, 2020.

- Jill Arace requested that the memo on the SFY 2021 budget guiding principles be included with the meeting materials.
- Tom Berry of Senator Leahy's office shared that clean water appropriations, such as the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, for federal FY 2021 will likely look like appropriations for federal FY 2020. The federal infrastructure package has been delayed and will likely be addressed in the next Congress.
- Jack Widness (Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds) pointed out that the Federation submitted comments in a letter to the Board expressing support for Clean Water Act funding that highlighted the importance of funding for water quality monitoring for basin planning and understanding lake water quality and asked that the letter be delivered to the Board.
- Written comments submitted by 4:30 p.m. on August 5, 2020 are attached.

#### **6. Determine Next Steps, Closing Remarks**

Secretary Young thanked all attendees for their time and comments. She also thanked the Board for their continued flexibility during the challenges of the pandemic.

- Secretary Young welcomed discussion on how to communicate the forthcoming budget proposal to the Board. After discussion, it was decided that Board members would receive the SFY 2021 budget proposal as soon as it is completed with the consensus forecast to be determined on August 12, and that the legislature would be informed that the Board approved the guiding principles applied to the allocations and had an opportunity to review the proposal and to comment before it was submitted.

#### **7. Adjourn**

**11:00 am**

Secretary Young entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn passed.

Supporting Materials:

1. August 5, 2020 Clean Water Board Virtual Meeting Ground Rules
2. May 21, 2020 Draft Clean Water Board Meeting Minutes
3. Draft-Revised Clean Water Fund Operating Statement
4. Revised SFY 2021 Clean Water Budget Process
5. Draft-Revised SFY 2021 Clean Water Budget Template
6. June 1, 2018 Clean Water Fund Expenditure Contingency Plan
7. Draft-Revised SFY 2022 Clean Water Budget Process