

**MINUTES**  
**Sustainable Storm Water Funding Task Force**  
**March 20, 2012**  
**City Hall, Room 209, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM**

**1. Introductions of Task Force members and meeting attendees.**

All members were in attendance except for David E. Robinson, John Cannell, Vin Veroneau, Ron Miller, and Michele Brooks. Cathy Ramsdell came in place of Task Force member Joe Payne. Tom Brigham came in place of Bill Bennet. Also in attendance was Mayor Michael Brennan, Tom Bell, Seth Garrison, Martha Sheils, Tamara Pinard, Lisa Cowan, Conrad Welzel, and two Preti Flaherty representatives. Staff in attendance included Doug Roncarati, Mike Bobinsky, Katherine Early, and Ian Houseal.

The Mayor thanked the Task Force on behalf of the City Council and the citizens of Portland for their hard work during the past year.

**2. Review and approval of the SSWFTF minutes from December 13, 2011.**

Gellerson motion, Martin seconded the motion. Approved by all in attendance.

**3. Report and discussion of Task Force public outreach.**

The Task Force reviewed the public outreach efforts made since December and the comments received. Suslovic summarized the groups that had been heard from including Portland Water District Board of Trustees, the Greater Portland Chamber of Commerce, University of Southern Maine, City Manager's Neighborhood Advisory Group, and Convention and Visitor's Bureau as well as the public meeting held on March 12, 2012.

Suslovic stated that he heard broad support for the policy concept of a stormwater fee. He said he heard that there were some details that the public was in disagreement including Chris O'Neil's comments that combined sewer costs allocated to the stormwater fee should be less than 50%, while Mark Eyerman suggested that the allocation should be more than 50%. Suslovic stated that he felt this represented that the Task Force's draft recommendations were probably where they needed to be.

Bobinsky stated that there was a need to move forward with combined sewer projects and was looking for funding to do so.

Connolly stated that he felt it was a weakness of the public presentation that specific cost implications were not mentioned. He stated that he felt cost examples were necessary when referred to the business community.

Dillon said that he felt there was need of specific cost examples.

Houseal stated that he noted that cost examples were absent and would have been helpful to the presentation.

Suslovic suggested a presentation of the magnitude showing that the impact would be valuable to allay fears that the fee represents a huge change. The ramp-up (fee cap) would also help in how the recommendations are presented.

Martin stated that he wanted it to be clear that everyone understood fees were going up either way (stormwater fee or no stormwater fee) and that to suggest that someone's fee was going to go down was not correct. People need to understand that their total fees are going up, just not as much in some cases. The way this is said is important.

Dillion stated that there was importance to the time table for implementation and the resources that were used to getting the message out to the public after the Task Force has finished their activities.

Suslovic stated that the process that had been taken so far was taken at a measured pace and has been very transparent. He expects that pace and transparency to continue.

Ramsdell pointed out that there was importance to marketing as roll-out occurs. When the first bill is sent out is probably the most important period. The language surrounding the marketing is also important.

Suslovic presented a proposed public process including a workshop in May or June, followed by a Council item and then a proposed ordinance in the fall. Implementation and policy details would take a year to a year and a half after that time. Suslovic asked the Task Force if they would be willing to review documents at a time in the future.

Bohlen stated that there would be a need for multiple meetings to provide feedback on process as implementation begins and he recommended that feedback based on his involvement in Long Creek.

Ramsdell asked if there would likely be push and pull on the allocation recommendation at the Council workshop. Suslovic stated that questions may be asked, but there are a lot of good reasons to stick with 50%.

#### 4. Review draft Task Force recommendations.

Potter suggested a grammatical change to Task Force Recommendation #19.

Connolly suggested a change to Recommendation #18 to include all impervious area in the statement, not just parking lot area.

Connolly asked about past Task Force discussion surrounding exempting the airport runway (Recommendation #23.) Other Task Force members spoke that the Task Force agreed to exempt the runway.

Dillon brought up the question of exempting roads since the question was discussed in the public meeting. Suslovic summarized Mark Eyerman's comments about shifting the burden of roads to the property tax. Martin stated he believed that homeowners would rather not reduce costs by complicating their tax returns with tax deductions on property taxes. Suslovic stated that he felt property taxes were not the best place to put additional costs. The Task Force was in agreement not to modify their recommendation on exempting roads.

There was discussion on Recommendation #27. Martin questioned how an educational credit would be applied or used. Houseal stated that the Task Force did discuss educational credits, but did not recommend their use. The Task agreed to remove #27 from the list.

Bohlen asked for changes to Recommendation #26 to include more specificity about what the incentives would be. The Task Force agreed to have more specificity "retrofits that reduce stormwater runoff volumes such as rain barrels or rain gardens.

Sheils asked that Recommendation #25 be split into two sentences. Bohlen stated that the Recommendation was about credits would be offered for to reduce charges not credits for reducing impervious area.

Suslovic suggesting a recommendation for a citizen oversight panel to annually review sewer and stormwater fund activities. Connolly suggested an audit. Ramsdell suggested an auditing requirement. Brigham suggested an audit. Bobinsky stated that there was an annual audit conducted.

Bohlen asked if there was a need for an oversight board. Gellerson stated monitoring a fund was a lot to ask of a citizen committee and liked the idea of an audit. Bobinsky stated that there were oversight mechanisms within the staff structure.

Ramsdell stated that there was a need for a citizen board during the period of transition as the stormwater fee is implemented. Bohlen also suggested a board for that purpose. The Task Force agreed to include a Recommendation of a board for the transition to the stormwater fee.

Task Force members asked for additional language on scale and timetable of costs.

##### 5. Recommendations of the Task Force to the City Council.

The Task Force then recommended their finding to the City Council as amended. Gellerson motion, Connolly seconded the motion. Approved by all in attendance.

6. Adjourn.