

**Business Roundtable
Meeting Notes**

September 9, 2004

Attendees: John Boehnert, Gary Ezovski, Harold Gadon, Ronald Gagnon, Robert Gallagher, Alicia Good, David Hazebrouk, Janet Keller, Julie Gill, Bev Migliore, Marc Viera, Amy Willoughby, Chris Modisette, William Reynolds, Russell Oceau, Janice McClanaghan, Fred Vincent, Elizabeth Stone, Terri Bisson, Jef Fornaro, Terry Gray

1. **Greetings/Introduction:** Chair Gary Ezovski welcomed participants at 3:37 PM
2. **May Meeting Minutes:** The May meeting minutes were reviewed and approved without change

3. DEM Report:

Budget – Fred Vincent reported that DEM’s 2006 Fiscal Year budget is due to the Governor’s Office September 15, 2004. The Department is assessing how a required 10% cut will impact operations. The Department is exploring fee increases and other options. A 10% cut would translate into 50-60 layoffs, closures of facilities and program reductions. John Boehnert asked about using federal funds to offset the impacts. Fred said DEM has already taken most those opportunities in previous budgets. John also asked about how layoffs would be done. Fred said the Department is exploring alternatives to the last in, first out method in order to avoid losing critical positions that were recently filled, such as Conservation Officers and inspectors. Fred remains hopeful that the funds will be restored. The budget will become public in January when Governor Carcieri submits it to the legislature.

Legislative Update – Elizabeth Stone reported on a number of bills that passed this last legislative session. A comprehensive summary of 2004 environmental legislation can be accessed through the [Director’s web page](#). In addition, the Summer 2004 edition of the [Narragansett Bay Journal](#) provides a good overview of all bay & water quality/protection legislation. Looking forward to 2005, the Department, in conjunction with the Governor’s Office, plans to re-submit its cesspool phase-out bill that unfortunately did not pass in 2004.

Governor’s Bay Planning Initiative – Fred reported on that the Governor’s Commission is transitioning to the Coordination Council established by legislation. The Bay initiative has resulted in significant progress. DEM is responsible for 40 actions and tracking many things.

Personnel – Fred reported that three key positions are vacant. The Department is interviewing candidates for the position of Associate Director of Natural Resource. The Human Resource Chief’s position is part of fiscal fitness initiative, so no formal action will be taken. Duties have been assigned to the deputy chief. The Department will commence recruitment with a national search to replace the Chief of Fish & Wildlife.

Terry Gray reported that the most significant vacancy in his Bureau is retirement of Bruce Catterall in the LUST program. DEM is evaluating options and will fill the position through internally and/or externally. In the meantime questions on tanks should go to Leo Hellested, or in Leo’s absence to Paula Therrian or Kevin Gillen. Alicia Good reported that there are a number

of key vacancies in the TMDL, RIPDES, and Wetlands programs. All of the positions are in process of being filled. Fred noted that all vacancies are posted on [DEM web site](#).

Regulatory Update:

SEP Policy – The policy was finalized 2 weeks ago. Fred has appointed an internal committee to establish a list of pre-approved projects that people could undertake in lieu of paying fines. A form to suggest projects will be available soon.

Water Quality Regulations - Alicia reported that the Department is about to go out to public comment on the Water Quality Regulations. The amendments will update criteria to match EPA standards and to change or clarify some classifications. The public notice and information on a workshop will be posted on the web. Gary asked Alicia to forward the information to Roundtable members as well.

4. Presentation: Question 8: Open Space, Recreation, Bay and Watershed Protection Bond.

Chris Modisette of the Southern New England Forest Consortium provided an overview of the bond. Prior bond funds have run out and demands for open space, water protection are increasing. The Questions authorizes the state to borrow \$70,000,000, which will leverage significantly more dollars from local matching and federal funds, donations and other sources. Chris distributed a [fact sheet](#) and [bond endorsement form](#). He encouraged Roundtable members to support the Bond and to promote in their businesses and communities. Gary agreed that this is an important issue that deserves support.

5. Presentations: Energy efficiency Incentives for Businesses

Janice McClanaghan, Chief of Energy and Community Services, State Energy Office, provided an overview of a number of programs that are available to business to reduce energy costs. Narragansett Electric has two programs: 1) Design 2000 Plus is geared toward businesses that use more than 100 kilowatts/month of electricity. The program offers technical assistance and incentives designed to cover a portion of the incremental costs for energy efficient equipment. Financing is also available in amounts from \$5000 to \$4,000,000 with limited up front cash required. 2) The Small Business Program provides technical and financial assistance similar to Design 2000 Plus to help businesses that use less than 100 kilowatt hours lower energy costs and improve energy efficiency through services such as lighting, heating, and more. More information may be found at [Narragansett Electric's website](#).

The State Energy Office also offers two new programs to help business reduce consumption of fossil fuels: 1) The Fossil Fuel Efficiency Program, along with Energy Service Companies (ESCO), will help facility owners who are over 100 kilowatts/month, design, finance, install, and maintain energy related capital improvements. The customer pays a portion of measured energy savings over time to pay the ESCo for its investment in developing and managing the project. SEO pre-qualifies ESCo's. 2) The Rhode Island Fossil Fuel Add-on program targets businesses that use less than 100 kilowatts/month and piggybacks on Narragansett's Small Business Program. While Narragansett's contractor, RISE, is evaluating opportunities to reduce electricity costs, they will also evaluate heating systems and controls. SEO has \$300,000 to offset the cost of installation of equipment.

Funds for SEO and Narragansett Electric come from Demand Side Management funds paid by consumers on their electric bill. Janice also mentioned that many incentives are available for renewable energy. For more information, call SEO at 401-222-3370 or visit their website.

Bev Migliore asked if the financial incentive programs require the use of mercury-free thermostats. Janice said she didn't think so, but that she would meet with Bev to discuss.

6. Discussion Issues

Flammable Waste - Gary noted that the Rhode Island's definition of flammable waste is different than the federal definition. Terry Gray stated that DEM will look into the issue when it updates its Hazardous Waste Regulations in late spring 2005. He noted that we have to be careful not to be less stringent than RCRA. Gary encouraged members to follow the process.

Electronic Management of Environmental Sampling Results – Terry Gray reported that DEM has developed data management system, called EQUIS, which will allow contractors to submit data electronically to the Division of Waste Management. EQUIS will allow DEM to compare data to previous sampling results and conduct analysis. The system will be operational in November. The Department will offer training to consultants. A member mentioned that water programs should be included. Alicia mentioned that EPA is implementing a similar system for water programs called STORET. Since EPA is involved in both EQUIS and STORET, the hope is that platforms will be compatible and links between systems can be established.

Hazardous Waste Generators Fee – Gary asked how collections are going. Terry reported that collections are on target and that a report will be posted and distributed within a couple of weeks.

7. Future Meeting Topics

Suggestions included: Environmentally Preferably Purchasing, Clean Fleets, Green Buildings, DEM Regulatory Self-Assessment.

8. Other

Gary asked about progress on the RISEP Marginal Risk proposal. Terry said there is nothing new to report, but that DEM is doing a broader self-assessment of its regulatory programs. He will report on at the next meeting.

Ron Gagnon mentioned that the [Environmental Results Program for Underground Storage Tanks \(UST's\)](#) is out and that DEM is planning 6 training sessions. DEM will provide members with the details as soon as the trainings are schedule.

9. Next Meeting – Thursday, December 2, 2004; 3:30 PM; Room 300 DEM Headquarters.