

DATE: October 1, 2012

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

INITIATED BY: Dave Howland, Councilor

AGENDA ITEM: **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING WATER
SUPPLY OVERVIEW AND PRIORITIES**

CC PREPARED BY: Dave Howland, Councilor

PRESENTED BY: Dave Howland, Councilor

AGENDA DESCRIPTION:

In upcoming budget deliberations, the Town Council will discuss whether to connect the Spruce Hole well to the UNH/Durham Water System. In addition to drawing water from the well, the proposed project would include infrastructure to inject Lamprey River water into the aquifer for storage and later withdrawal. The project has been recommended by our staff as a means to provide additional supply and resiliency to the public water system, especially during the summer and early fall when flows are lower on the Lamprey River.

To help place this proposed project in context and better inform our decision on funding it, I have put together a 20-minute presentation to provide an overview of our water system. I will focus on how our system is managed in dry summer months through three drought stages, describe impending state water restrictions on the Lamprey River, and examine how these might affect our supply. Data from two of the driest years on record – 1957 and 2002 – will help illustrate the value of 1) substantive drought conservation measures and 2) an allowance of a fraction of additional flow on the Lamprey River for drinking water. I will provide a brief critique of the scientific and policy assumptions underlying the state’s proposed limits on our use of the river and will close with an argument for reasserting the reasonable objections of the UNH/Durham Water system to this emerging policy regime.

LEGAL AUTHORITY:

N/A

LEGAL OPINION:

N/A

FINANCIAL DETAILS:

N/A

SUGGESTED ACTION OR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Hear presentation and hold discussion.