

Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee Meeting

December 12, 2000

DOF Building, Charlottesville, VA

Notes taken by Jane Walker

Organizations with representatives that attended:

American Water Works Association (AWWA--Virginia Section)	Andrea Ryon
Citizens for Water Quality (CWQ)	Bill Shanabruch
Clean Virginia Waterways (CVW)	Kate Register
United States Geological Survey (USGS--Virginia Office)	Ward Staubit
Virginia Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies (VAMWA)	Dan Barker
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD)	Alecia Daves
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)	Fran Geissler
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	Ron Gregory
Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF)	Sam Austin
Virginia Department of Health (VDH)	Michele Monti
Virginia Manufacturers Association (VMA)	Steve Klevickis
Virginia Water Resources Research Center (VWRRC)	Jane Walker
Water Quality Academic Advisory Committee (WQAAC)	Tamim Younos

Organizations with representatives who were unable attend:

- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA--Region III)
- Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAC)
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)
- Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF)
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)
- Virginia Water Environment Association (VWEA)
- Virginia Water Well Association (VWWA)

The Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee met December 12, 2000 (11:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.) at the Department of Forestry building in Charlottesville, Virginia. Ward Staubit (Chair, Steering Committee) of the USGS led the meeting. Twelve organizations were represented. The three Steering Committee members elected at the November annual meeting, who are beginning a four-year term that ends at the 2004 annual meeting, were welcomed (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Clean Virginia Waterways, and Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts). Each person introduced himself or herself.

The minutes from the October 17, 2000, VWMC Steering Committee meeting were distributed, edited, and accepted.

Annual Meeting:

The 2000 VWMC annual meeting in Roanoke, Virginia was reviewed and suggestions for next year were offered. The comments included satisfaction with the meeting facilities and the

workshop and speaker presentations. Because the participants from other states significantly added to the workshops, it was decided to invite active monitors of border states and extend a special invitation to the Maryland Water Monitoring Council.

Ways to remedy the low membership turnout were discussed—such as changing the name and format to that of a conference as opposed to an annual meeting, advertising the conference better, avoiding Election Day, and having it in a more central location of the state. It was suggested to poll the membership to see what activities and topics would entice them to the VWMC conference, develop a theme for the conference, and provide the opportunity for the membership to tell what they have accomplished. Having short presentations with plenty of opportunity to talk informally seemed of preference. An exhibit hall where the members could present posters and other information about their monitoring was suggested (It was also suggested that the VWMC should create an exhibit that could be displayed at other meetings.). Concurrent sessions that would appeal to the different types of monitors (e.g., citizens, the regulated community, and government agencies, etc.), including dedicating a part of the conference to the monitoring efforts of local governments, were recommended.

A discussion followed on the advantages and disadvantages of combining with or having back-to-back conferences with that of another organization. It was decided to explore the possibility of having next year's VWMC conference in conjunction with the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Watershed Management Conference. The following year, 2002, the VWMC could hold its conference independently or back-to-back with another water oriented conference, and in 2003, it could stand alone as its own conference.

Fran Geissler with DCR offered to bring the joint conference idea before the planners of the 2001 Watershed Conference. The VWMC conference would be a one-day event with presentations and a poster session in addition to the business meeting. Tamim Younos, representing the Water Quality Academic Advisory Committee, explained that the Virginia Water Research Symposium is slated for November 7-9 in 2001 and suggested that DCR and the VWMC try to have their conferences at least 3-4 weeks before or after the symposium.

Officer Elections:

Steering Committee officer elections were discussed as the next item of business. Ward Staubitz explained that the Chair helps plan and lead the Steering Committee meetings and the annual meeting of the VWMC as well as work with the Operations Committee on funding. The Vice-chair fulfills the role of the Chair in the event of the Chair's absence. It was suggested that the Vice-chair become the Chair in the following year, with the recognition that changes in staffing within the organizations comprising the Council may interrupt the planned sequence. Jane Walker, VWMC administrative assistant who has been filling the role of Secretary, described the duties as keeping records of the meeting and assisting with the meetings. The Chair, Vice-chair, and Secretary need to serve on the Operations Committee. It was agreed that the Ex-chair should serve on the Operations Committee.

Nominations were informally opened for Chair, Vice-chair, and Secretary. Ward Staubitz asked that he not be nominated as Chair owing to increased demands as District Chief of the USGS Virginia Office covering a position vacancy. Ron Gregory with DEQ and Matt Bley with DCR

were suggested as possible nominations for either Chair or Vice-chair, pending their availability and willingness to hold the positions. Sam Austin with the DOF agreed to be nominated for Chair or Vice-chair if Ron, Matt, or others were not available. Jane Walker accepted a nomination for Secretary. Other nominations are welcomed and encouraged. Jane agreed to email all Steering Committee members and request additional nominations. Formal nominations will be accepted at the next meeting, and voting will follow.

Committee Reports:

Michele Monti with the VDH and Chair of the Inventory Committee reported the addition of three new members to the committee: James Beckley (Piedmont Region TMDL Initiative), Joyce Brooks (DEQ), and Stacey Moulds (ACB). The Inventory Committee currently has 15 members. Roger Stewart with DEQ has been updating the inventory survey from comments made at the annual meeting, and several organizations completed the survey during the annual meeting. The committee plans to meet in January to begin revisions of the mailing list. Michele emphasized the need to post the survey on the web.

Ward Staubitz announced that Alecia Daves-Johnson (VASWCD) joined the Membership Recruitment Work Group, a component of the Operations Committee. Jane Cain with the Virginia Water Well Association agreed to serve on this work group at the last meeting. A third member is needed to make the work group viable. It was suggested that a member not serving on the Steering Committee could best serve the work group. Jane Walker agreed to send the membership list to everyone to help identify possible work group members and will ask for volunteers from the membership.

Bill Shanabruch with the Citizens for Water Quality and Chair of the Communications and Outreach Committee reported that a communications concerning the annual meeting would soon be sent. In addition, the notes from several speakers will be posted on the VWMC website.

Bill Shanabruch, who will be working with the Needs Assessment Committee, reported that their committee was joined by James Beckley (Piedmont Region TMDL Initiative) and Kate Register (CVW) at the annual meeting. Fran Geissler has also agreed to work with this committee. Joan Salvati will be asked to join the committee as well. It is important that this committee be represented by the different groups comprising the Council.

Announcements:

Ron Gregory with DEQ announced that Virginia citizens are able to nominate state waters (not private lakes, etc.) to be monitored by DEQ, and reported that Joyce Brooks, Citizen Volunteer Monitoring Coordinator with DEQ, has distributed this information. Ron asked that interested parties check that they receive the announcement and help distribute it to others.

Following the business component of the meeting, Steve Talley with the Canaan Valley Institute facilitated a session on developing a common vision for the VWMC. Notes for this part of the meeting are provided separately.

Proposed dates for the next five Steering Committee meetings were suggested:

January 16 or 23, 2001 (USGS, Richmond)
February 27 or March 6, 2001 (DOF, Charlottesville)
April 10 or 17, 2001 (USGS, Richmond)
May 22 or 29, 2001 (DOF, Charlottesville)
July 10 or 17, 2001 (USGS, Richmond)

Jane offered to email all Steering Committee members and request which dates are preferred. She will then communicate the most preferred meeting dates to the group. The next Steering Committee meeting will be at the USGS office in Richmond at 11:00 a.m. As part of the meeting, the visioning session will continue. The committee will also reconsider the goals of the VWMC and develop a financial strategy for the Council.