

Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee Minutes

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

USGS Water Resources, Richmond, VA

Minutes by David Buckalew

Steering Committee representatives attending:

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB) and Virginia Citizens for Water Quality (VCWQ) – Leslie Middleton and Jess Bretz

County of Henrico, Department of Public Works (HDPW) – Robin Wilder

Ferrum College (FC) – Carolyn Thomas

James River Association (JRA) – Chuck Frederickson

Longwood University (LWU) – David Buckalew

People Protecting Watershed Headwaters (PPWH) – Jim Disbrow

United States Geological Survey (USGS) – Mark Bennett

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) – James Beckley and Stuart Torbeck

Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOT) – Sam Austin

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) – Dan Dietrich

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) – Steve Begg

Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) – Lyle Varnell

Virginia Water Resources Research Center (VWRRC) – Jane Walker

Organizations without a representative at the meeting:

Clean Virginia Waterways (CVW)

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III

United States Marine Corps, Quantico Base (USMC)

University of Virginia (UVA)

Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAgC)

Virginia Association of Counties (VAC)

Virginia Association of Municipal Wastewater Agency (VAMWA)

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD)

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF)

Virginia Municipal League (VML)

Virginia Rural Water Association (VRWA)

Virginia Water Well Association (VWWA)

Committee Chairs attending:

Marketing – Jim Disbrow and Steve Begg

Education

Finance

Groundwater

Inventory – James Beckley

Membership – Lyle Varnell

Operations – Sam Austin

Welcome and Introduction: Mr. Chuck Frederickson (JRA), 2006 VWMC Chair, led the July VWMC Steering Committee meeting. All present verbally provided their name and affiliation.

Approval of Agenda: The meeting's agenda was examined and adopted as written with the addition of discussing the new VWMC marketing materials to be added under Old Business.

Approval of the May 17, 2006 Meeting Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

Financial Report:

Jane Walker (VWRRC) distributed the financial statement showing a balance of \$6,880 as of July 1, 2006. Jane also reported a pending proposal to USGS for \$2,500.

Old Business:

1) 2006 VWMC Workplan

The Steering Committee examined the 2006 workplan. All those present generally agreed with the goals of expanding the VWMC outreach to encourage and engage more participation in monitoring activity and reporting throughout the Commonwealth. Perhaps just as important is our need to secure sustainable funding for the organization.

David Buckalew (LWU) suggested a provision for initiating informal "town hall" meetings to focus on water issues to increase VWMC contact with local citizens. Leslie Middleton (ACB) suggested that we could perhaps join in watershed roundtable meetings. Chuck Frederickson (JRA) and other Steering Committee members decided to discuss the idea for the 2007 workplan.

2) Marketing the VWMC

Slogan/Logo/Brochure: Marketing Committee member Steve Begg (VDOT) presented four renditions of the new VWMC slogan for group discussion as well as the newest editions of our logo and information brochure. After much discussion, Lyle Varnell (VIMS) motioned, for the sake of time, the Steering Committee allow members of the Communications Committee to collect emailed comments from those having any additional suggestions on the project. The motion was universally accepted.

Jane Walker (VWRRC) agreed to send electronic copies of all marketing materials to all Steering Committee members for comment. Comments are to be sent to Marketing Committee members Jim Disbrow (PPWH), Steve Begg (VDOT), and James Beckley (DEQ) prior to July 19 so that the materials will be available at the 10th Anniversary Summit meeting of the VA Citizens for Water Quality in Charlottesville on Saturday, July 22.

New Business:

1) LOA between ACB/ DCR/DEQ/IWLA VaSOS/VCWQ/VWMC – The Virginia Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Program:

A draft version of the letter of agreement was distributed. The discussion continued on this important document to include its background, strategies, and goals. James Beckley (DEQ) mentioned that the signing ceremony is expected to take place at the Richmond area World Water Monitoring Day event on October 20, 2006. James suggested that regular meetings will likely be held between all partners on an annual or, perhaps, biannual basis.

VWMC Chair, Chuck Frederickson (JRA), felt that the specified deliverables provided by this agreement are beneficial given the significant partners in the realm of VA water quality and could be added to the VWMC Workplan. Ideas and comments concerning the letter of agreement should be sent to Chuck Frederickson prior to July 27, 2006.

2) 2006 VWMC Conference:

Jane Walker reported for the Education Committee. The VWMC Conference is to be held on Thursday, October 12, at the Henrico Training Center in Richmond. The committee proposed that the topic be: *“The Future of Water Monitoring: Emerging Contaminants, Emerging Technologies.”* The morning session could focus on monitoring of these contaminants; the afternoon session could focus on future technologies including the shift towards water sensor technologies for EPA approval. Possible speakers from VaTech (Professor Nancy Love), UVA (Professor Janet Herman), DEQ (possibly a wastewater specialist), VDH, and USGS were discussed. Robin Wilder expressed an interest in learning more about monitoring for pathogenic bacteria instead of simply monitoring for indicator organisms such as *E. coli*.

3) 2006 Water Monitoring Day:

The Planning Committee for these events recently met in a conference call set up by Dana Roberts (VASWCD) and Tracy Hancock (USGS). James Beckley (DEQ) reported that the event for Richmond/Chesterfield is to be held on October 20, 2006 with October 27 serving as the rain date. The VWMC, DEQ, and USGS have committed to purchasing approx. 300 water monitoring kits for teachers and other educators across the state.

Committee Reports:

Operations: Sam Austin (VDOF) distributed the finalized 2006 VWMC Workplans.

Inventory: James Beckley (DEQ) reported on the new layer of GIS information to be within the new DEQ Water Quality Integrated Assessment Report.

Marketing: Identity and Communications: See Old Business

Membership: It was suggested that each Steering Committee member receive an updated electronic copy of the VWMC membership list.

Finance: No report. See earlier statement provided by Jane Walker (VWRRC).

Education: See New Business

Groundwater: Out of the 5,000-6,000 email inquiries sent by Jessica Schildroth (VCWQ) and others on this committee, only 3 responses have thus far been received. Anyone with groundwater monitoring data is encouraged to participate in the VWMC's groundwater monitoring survey.

Announcements:

- Dan Dietrich (VDH) commented that Michele Monti spoke to the Virginia Lakes and Watersheds Association (VLWA) about the VWMC. VLWA is interested in having a representative come to a VWMC Steering Committee meeting in the future.
- Leslie Middleton (ACB) invited everyone to the 10th Anniversary Summit of the Virginia Citizens for Water Quality Summit to be held Saturday, July 22, in Charlottesville.
- Carolyn Thomas (FC) announced the 20th Anniversary celebration of the Smith Mt. Lake/Ferrum College water quality program is to be held Nov 8, 9, and 10, 2006. Information can be found at <http://www.ferrum.edu>. Carolyn mentioned the celebration may be a good opportunity for the VWMC to have an information booth.
- Leslie Middleton (ACB) announced there will be a Chesapeake Bay Restoration Forum held in Shepardstown, West Virginia on November 14-16.

- **DEQ updates:**

- James Beckley reported that the 2006 Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report was released by DEQ on July 10, 2006. The report summarizes the water quality conditions in Virginia from January 1, 2000, to December 31, 2004. The report is available for public comment from July 10, 2006 through August 11, 2006.
- DEQ is offering a new round of Citizen Monitoring Grants to fund volunteer monitoring activities from January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007. Funds can pay for monitoring equipment, laboratory analysis, publications, and related items. Applications are due by September 1, 2006. This year, DEQ is offering two different types of Citizen Monitoring Grants: 1.) The regular Citizen Monitoring Grant with a maximum award of \$5,000, and 2.) a new Citizen Monitoring Mini-Grant with a maximum award of \$1,000. The mini-grant is open to groups new to citizen monitoring or groups who have not received a DEQ Citizen Monitoring Grant in the past three years. DEQ is looking for non-applicants to review the Citizen Monitoring Grant proposals and requested the assistance of the VWMC.
- Training for electronic submission to DEQ's non-agency database will be held at: DEQ headquarters in Richmond on Friday, September 22 and at the Longwood University Sciences Center on Saturday, September 23.

Future meeting date: Tuesday, Sept 12 at Longwood University, Farmville