

Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee Minutes
Tuesday, October 28, 2008
USGS, Richmond, VA

Minutes by David Buckalew

Steering Committee representatives attending:

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB) – Chris French
Chesterfield County, Water Quality Services (CWQS) – Weedon Cloe
Clean VA Waterways (CVW) – Katie Register
Hanover Public Utilities and VA Association of Counties – Matt Ellinghaus
County of Henrico, Department of Public Works (HDPW) – Robin Wilder
Ferrum College (FC) – Carolyn Thomas
Longwood University (LWU) – David Buckalew
Newport News Waterworks (NNW) – Ron Harris
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) – James Beckley
Virginia Department of Health (VDH) – Dan Dietrich (**Chair**)
Virginia Save Our Streams (VSOS) – Stacey Brown
Virginia Water Resources Research Center (VWRRC) – Jane Walker

Organizations without a representative at the meeting:

James River Association (JRA)
Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Districts (NVSWCD)
United States Geological Survey (USGS)
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD)
Virginia Citizens for Water Quality (VCWQ)
Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOT)
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF)
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)

1) Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Dan Dietrich (VDH), Chair of the Steering Committee, at 12:30 pm in the conference room of the USGS offices in Richmond, VA. Introduction of those present, along with their home office affiliation, were promptly provided.

Since at least one Steering Committee member had to leave early, the order of topics of the meeting agenda was changed. NOTE: These minutes do not reflect the order of topic discussion as they reflect the sequence of topics as listed on the agenda for the October quarter meeting.

2) Review, edit, and adopt meeting agenda: Agenda topic sequence was changed as mentioned above.

3) Review, edit, and adopt minutes from May 5, and July 17, 2008 meetings: Each meeting's minutes were adopted and accepted as written.

4) Financial report: Jane Walker (VWRRC) distributed two (2) different copies of reports – 1 report covered the entirety of the 2007-08 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008); another report covered the 1st quarterly period of the 2008-09 Fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2008 – October 28, 2008).

The **Fiscal Year 2007-08** report showed that we began the fiscal term with a balance of \$0. During the term, the VWMC incurred \$26,085 in expenses (\$15,616 through Administrative expenses added to \$10,469 of project expenses). With \$31,080 of Project Grant (\$16,000) and Administrative (gift) assets (\$15,080), we ended the fiscal term with a positive balance of \$4,995. This funding is earmarked for project expenses associated with the Philip Morris grant.

The financial report of the **current Fiscal 2008-09 term** showed an increase in balance since July 1, reporting October 28 with a balance of \$13,704. The balance reflects the addition of the Altria grant funds (\$14,000 – see discussion below) minus expenses incurred through administrative expense for the 1st quarter.

5) Announcements:

a. DEQ updates: James Beckley (VDEQ) announced the following updates:

1- The VDEQ 2008 305 (b)/303 (d) Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report is a summary of the water quality conditions in Virginia from January 1, 2001, to December 31, 2006. The final draft of this report is to be complete and available on October 31, 2008. <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/wqa/305b2008.html>. Jane Walker will send a link of this document to all VWMC members as soon as it is available.

2- So that VDEQ can either attend or help coordinate community/citizen water quality monitoring events in VA, they need to know well ahead of time in order to plan effectively and enter activities into their schedule. The VDEQ activities are coordinated by Stuart Torbeck (email: cstorbeck@deq.virginia.gov or phone at: (804) 698-4461). Contact him if you would like VDEQ participation in your events.

3- Mr. Gary Du, VDEQ Quality Assurance Coordinator is no longer at VDEQ; there is now a new person in that office.

b. Clean Virginia Waterways:

Katie Register (CVW) reported that three (3) CVW/VWMC rain barrel workshops were held this summer 2008 at: 1) the Philip-Morris headquarters office (June); 2) the Prince Edward County Agricultural Offices (July); and 3) at Forest Hill Park in Richmond (Aug). All three of these workshops were subsidized through funding supplied through an Altria grant to the VWMC.

Katie also reported that there is to be another “Train the Trainer” rain barrel workshop planned for Tuesday evening, March 24, 2009. At this time, the workshop is planned for the local area of Woodstock, VA. Please contact Katie Register

(email: cleanva@longwood.edu or phone: (434) 395-2602) if interested.

c. Chesterfield County is seeking a water quality compliance specialist. The job announcement was distributed to interested members and will be posted on the VWMC's website.

d. Mid-Atlantic Regional WRI Water Conference – “The Water-Energy Nexus: A Necessary Synergy for the 21st Century” to take place at the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown, WVA – November 17-19, 2008. For more info, email: 2008waterconferenceinfo@mail.wvu.edu or go to the website: <http://wwri.nrcce.wvu.edu/conferences/2008/WRI>

6) Old Business:

a. Environmental Lab Certification update (NELAC/VELAC regulations)

As of the day of the Steering Committee meeting (Oct 28), the VA DCLS had amended the language of the House Bill 1VAC30-45 “Certification for Environmental Laboratories”. The comment period is to last until November 12, 2008 on the newly revised standards (Secs 45 and 46). James Beckley (VDEQ) and Chris French (CBF) mentioned that, since the VDEQ's QA/QC program is redundant with respect to the spirit/goals of the proposed regulations, citizen monitoring labs accredited through VDEQ are exempted from accreditation by DCLS. Everyone agrees that good data is essential, but using such a fee structure may be too regressive an action in these economic times.

As the Bill is currently written, the effects to local governments (e.g., sewage and water treatment plants) may result in significant cost increases to the public for these services.

b. World Water Monitoring Day (WWMD) Wrap-up –

James Beckley (VDEQ) reported that 335 water monitoring kits were distributed this year – the highest number to this point. James also reported that 400 kits were requested from ~200 teachers across VA.

WWMD activities take place each year between the dates of September 18 and October 18. They have occurred in VA since 2001 when Robbi Savage, now with the Rivanna Conservation Society, created World Water Monitoring Day (www.worldwatermonitoringday.org). The LaMotte company provides kits which allow streamside monitoring of such parameters as: pH, DO, temperature, and turbidity/clarity. The data is uploaded to a worldwide database. James mentioned that individuals or groups may continue submitting data until December 18, 2008. VA DEQ is willing to upload data if people contact James Beckley at jbeckley@deq.virginia.gov or (804) 698-4025.

7) New Business:

a. Overview of Altria Grant Award (\$10,000 – see 1st quarter Financial Report above)

Stacey Brown (VSOS) distributed a handout describing and outlining four (4) activities to be funded by the recently acquired Altria grant to the VWMC.

These activities will allow VWMC to present:

1. An Annual Conference for local government staff (proposed cost **\$3900**)
2. One Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring workshop (proposed cost **\$3416**)
3. Produce an online guide which outlines the typical Stream School activities traditionally provided by VSOS field course (proposed cost **\$1000**)
4. Educational opportunity for school teachers to allow for greater ease in presenting a program for World Water Monitoring Day (proposed cost – **remainder of funds** (possibility at this point – will perhaps re-address in future months))

b. VWMC Annual Conference Planning (coming in Spring 2009) -

1. **Conference location** – since many budgets have been cut, many thought a **Richmond** location may work best? Robin Wilder (HDPW) volunteered to look into room availability at the Henrico County Training facility and James Beckley (VDEQ) is to check on the newly renovated meeting space at VDEQ offices.

Stacey Brown (VSOS) suggested we might offer continuing education college credit as an enticement to attend.

2. **Conference topic/theme** - Katie Register (CVW) provided an exhaustive listing of 27 different topical ideas for the Steering Committee to vote on and discuss. After reading and discussion, the committee picked their three (3) best topic choices. The three highest choices were:

- a. Low impact development – see item #15 on list
- b. Stormwater issues – addressing items #1, 6, and 8 from list
- c. Success stories – see items 2, 3, and 5 on list

It was suggested that some of the Steering Committee who work in municipalities (i.e., Robin, Ron, and Matt) suggest speaker choices and/or serve as a sort of “sounding board” for topics in which municipal workers/staff may be interested.

3. **Possible date** - **Friday/Saturday, March 20/21, 2009** seemed to be everyone’s 1st choice – a bit close to Environment VA meeting in Lexington, but the targeted audience may be different in this case.

4. **Conference agenda/format** – Does the VWMC want to have a 5-hour meeting with lunch or a 4-hour affair without lunch? In the coming month, perhaps we can prioritize and solidify interest and finalize a plan for our format through an ad-hoc committee?

8) Next meeting date and Adjourn

The next VWMC Steering Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for January – Jane Walker will send out a Doodle contact message.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm