

Second Generation Plan CAG Meeting Minutes

Bassett Creek Water Management Commission

April 23, 2001

A. Attendance: John O'Toole (chair), Al Lundstrom, Rita Nystrom, David Fellman, David Stack, Karen Cheseborough, Sue Weinberg, Mark Oestreich, Lois Eberhart, Bridget Jodell, Ed Cochrane, Helen LaFave, Lynn Schwartz , Karen Chandler

Guest: Ron Struss, Board of Water & Soil Resources, University of Minnesota Extension Services

B. Agenda

1. Primary Responsibilities of the Citizens Advisory Group
2. Preliminaries
3. Education and Public Involvement
 - Ron Struss, BWSR/MN Extension Services
 - BCWMC Education and Public Involvement
4. Plan Next Meeting

C. Meeting Handouts

- CAG Questions and Answers (from March 26, 2001 meeting)
- Revised March 26, 2001 CAG Meeting Minutes
- Public Education/Involvement by Member Cities
- BCWMC Public Education/Involvement
- Major Issues (restated) – handed out at the end of the meeting

D. Primary Responsibilities of the Citizens Advisory Group

Overall primary responsibilities:

- Develop a program to involve citizens in BCWMC activities and inform the public of BCWMC programs, goals, and activities.
- Review and comment on the TAG's proposed method to measure the success/progress of the BCWMC and the member cities in meeting the goals of the BCWMC plan (annual review/report).

This meeting's goal:

- Provide the background information the CAG needs to begin developing the public involvement/education program.

E. Preliminaries

- The meeting was convened by CAG Chair John O'Toole at 4:30 p.m. Mr. O'Toole restated the meetings will run from 4:30 until 6:30 and expressed appreciation for those willing to meet beyond that timeframe; however, in order to keep to the 2-hour commitment made at the start of the process, Mr. O'Toole will honor that commitment.
- Barb Peichel, Minnesota Sea Grant, was unable to attend today's meeting.
- The CAG reviewed the 3/26/01 CAG meeting minutes. Mr. O'Toole suggested members give their name before making comments so that they can be identified in the minutes if possible.

- Karen Chandler discussed the Questions & Answers document of questions raised at the 3/26/01 CAG meeting and brought to the attention of the Steering Committee for a response. **Comment:** [Dave Fellman] regarding General Mills, Inc. cooling system controversy. Concerned that BCWMC chose to not comment on the project and the appearance of a conflict of interest between the Commission, City of Golden Valley, and Barr Engineering Company. **Response:** Ms. Chandler commented that Barr's involvement was to prepare a Phase 1 assessment and identify potential hazards for General Mills. In addition, there was an Environmental Assessment Worksheet where Barr prepared comments for Commission approval on behalf of the Commission. This question will be directed to the Steering Committee for comment. **Comment:** [Lois Eberhart] making a distinction between roles from the private sector, the city, and the Commission. **Response:** Mr. O'Toole commented that when the Commission voted on the comments to the General Mills' EAW prepared by Barr, he abstained from voting because of his employment with General Mills.

F. Education and Public Involvement

Ron Struss, BWSR/MN Extension Services: Mr. Struss discussed the benefits and needs of public involvement, what it accomplishes, and the methods and their effectiveness. He distributed a number of handouts (What's a Joint Powers Agreement Watershed Management Organization?, Citizens Advisory Committees in Joint Powers Watershed Management Organizations, Acronyms Used in Water Resource Management, and Watershed Management Internet Websites).

Presentation Highlights:

- Strengths of a citizens advisory group: (a) the wide diversity of a citizens advisory group helps challenge the planners; and (b) although most citizens advisory groups come to an end in this type of process, an auxiliary group could be formed to participate in other areas that could assist the governing body.
- Weaknesses of a citizens advisory group: (a) if the group's role is not clear and/or they do not have a clear purpose; (b) relationships between the group (advisory) and the board (decision making) are not defined; and (c) if the group's input is not heard.

"Changing Behavior" presentation:

- The biggest pollution sources are now from individuals (automobiles, lawns, etc.).
- Education is the tool used to facilitate behavior change.
- Currently, using shoreline management, urban housekeeping, yard care, and urban design programs to change behaviors.
- Evoke behavior change by incentives (cost-sharing or coupons), disincentives, and education/marketing (self-motivated).
- Education/marketing is community-based social marketing (people-to-people contact conducted on community level).
- Identify internal (attitude) and external (budgets, regulations, unavailability of product, lack of technology) barriers to change.
- Institute ways of overcoming barriers (provide information and training, revise rules and regulations, etc).
- Motivate for change by modeling good behavior and through personal contact.

“Developing A Watershed Educational Strategy” presentation:

- Develop a watershed education strategy
- Identify water resource issues
- Identify target audiences
- Determine educational needs of each target audience
- Identify delivery methods
- Using education that includes the youth is very effective.
- Write an outline for the education strategy that is revisited yearly for continued implementation.

Mr. Struss’s handouts and powerpoint presentation can be found on the website www.bassettcreekwmo.org.

Ms. Chandler pointed out that it is important for BCWMC to work closely with the member cities in whatever education and public involvement strategies that the CAG develops. The funding element will be the challenge. Mr. Struss added the EPA (through the NPDES Phase II permit program) now requires stormwater management for all cities. Part of the EPA permit requirement is education strategy. The suburban communities therefore need to have an education component for stormwater management. Mr. Struss recommends creative ways of pooling funds (i.e., presenting a consistent mass media message by purchasing air time on television, etc.).

Comment: Some of the group members commented on the need to use a cooperative and recognizable theme between the cities and the BCWMC to help effectively communicate to the public.

Comment: [Ron Struss] We have some early comprehensive educational strategies. The success of their effectiveness is yet to be proven (i.e., Browns Creek, Washington County and Scott County’s countywide water plan). Mr. Struss brought the plan for Browns Creek in Washington County for the group to look at.

Comment: [unknown] Do they (Browns Creek) have funding yet?

Response: [Ron Struss] They are a watershed district and they tax the communities. They are contracting with different outreach groups.

Ms. Chandler distributed two handouts (a 10-year chronology of BCWMC public education/involvement, and public involvement/education by member cities). In the past, BCWMC has been focused more on getting project-related information out to the public (e.g., presentations of the various lake management plans within the watershed). Currently, public participation is the present Second Generation Planning process and the ongoing maintenance of a website.

The member cities each have their own avenues of public education/involvement (newsletters, open houses, educational posters, nature center operations, community handbooks, cleanups, etc.).

Comment: [Al Lundstrom] Observation is the lack of continuity with other watersheds. Should the Commission consider adding a staff person to the organization that would be in charge of education and be the liaison with the member cities?

Comment: [??] Along with that consideration, we need to find a way of answering people’s questions when broadcasting information (giving out a telephone number, etc.).

Comment: [Al Lundstrom] A lack of funding may be one of the reasons that Robbinsdale reports no active program in place. Like Ron Struss said, it’s easy to write a plan, but if there is nobody in place, it turns out to be five people’s responsibility which equates to no one’s responsibility. It

would be beneficial if the watershed assigned someone to handle educational activities by adding a position to its staff. Maybe the Commission's liaison could help coordinate the education efforts with the member cities and there could be budget benefit by having one person doing it rather than nine.

Comment: [John O'Toole] Someone that could be held accountable for taking action or no action. Great suggestion; however, anything that is done comes down to money. The BCWMC operating budget for last year was about \$464,000. Our revenues or appropriations from the cities was around \$235,000. An observation one could make is that the Commission is spending two dollars for every one dollar taken in, but in reality, the Commission is using up its reserve. If a full-time staff position were added to the budget, that would present an issue. What I think you are saying is that there may be hidden costs in how it is currently being done and funds to be saved by adding a staff person.

Comment: [Helen LaFave] The cities are trying to target their messages more locally (i.e., Parkers Lake watershed). BCWMC could be useful in getting out a broader message and providing information.

Comment: [Karen Cheseborough] Cities could spring off of base provided by BCWMC.

Comment: [Lynn Schwartz] Rather than have a staff person, could contract to get basic message out.

Comment:[Rita Nystrom] The cities and BCWMC could share a basic theme every year.

Comment: [Al Lundstrom] The nine cities are struggling with an education program required as part of Phase 2 of the stormwater plan. Now is the time to examine a cooperative effort among the cities.

Comment: The group members suggested contracting/using school districts, community education, and Hennepin Parks as resources.

Comment: [Bridget Jodell] AMLAC consists of 134 households around Medicine Lake – they are considering a website.

Comment: Group members suggested involving/targeting lake associations (e.g., Sweeney Lake, Parkers Lake).

Comment: [David Stack] Friends of Bassett Creek gets word out in local papers.

G. Plan Next Meeting

- May 21, 2001, 4:30 p.m., City of Golden Valley
- Karen Chandler distributed the Major Issues (restated) document that will be discussed at the May CAG meeting.