



WEST METRO WATER ALLIANCE

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Item 8C
BCWMC 4-18-13

MINUTES

March 12, 2013

A meeting of the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) was called to order by Diane Spector at 8:35 a.m., Tuesday, February 12, 2013, at Plymouth City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Boulevard, Plymouth, MN.

Present were: Laura Jester and Ted Hoshal, Bassett Creek WMC; Doug Baines, Elm Creek WMC; Allan Hartkopf, Osseo; Joan Nephew, Freshwater Society; Alisa Reckinger, Hennepin County Dept. of Environmental Services (HCDES); Denis Hahn, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Diane Spector, Wenck Associates; and Judie Anderson and Amy LeMieux, JASS.

1. Motion by Baines, second by Hoshal to approve the **Minutes*** of the February 12, 2013 meeting. *Motion carried.*

2. **Agreement for Administrative and Public Education Services.** The Agreement has been approved by Shingle Creek as fiscal agent and by West Mississippi and Bassett Creek as participants. It is on the March 13 Elm Creek agenda. [The agreement was approved by Elm Creek on March 13.]

3. **E-Newsletter – Water Links.*** Spector noted that she didn't receive a copy of the last newsletter.

a. **Calendar of Local Events.** Staff continues to seek information from commissions and cities on projects and events scheduled for 2013 to add to a running calendar that will be published with the newsletter. The calendar will show upcoming events for the following two to three months.

b. **Content for Future Issues.** Articles from cities and agencies, and story ideas should be sent to amy@jass.biz and Alisa.Reckinger@co.hennepin.mn.us. Future suggested topics include: Triclosan use, State of the River report, Earthfest article, and Earth Day information. Reckinger will send the list of seasonal article topics in the third week of each month to garner additional articles.

c. **Myfairlakes.com.** This is the Madison stormwater partnership site. They've partnered with a local brewery for beer coasters with messages re water quality. Spector will contact the partnership to learn more about their arrangements.

4. **Watershed PREP.**

a. **Fourth Grade Initiative.**

1) **Update.** TRPD invited the WMWA educators to meet with four nature center supervisors. Information and contacts about the schools each group has worked with was shared. A cooperative could increase the reach of the program significantly, even beyond WMWA boundaries. TRPD will share the information with other nature center staff.

Spector noted that she shared information on the program at the previous week's Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) meeting, and they were "blown away."

The educators are at Noble Academy today. The school is 80% Hmong and 15% Somali. The educators worked to adapt the materials to be more visual in order to better communicate the messages.

It was suggested that a video of the educators in action in a classroom would be a good way to promote the program. Suggestions included contacting Cable TV to videotape a class.

**in meeting packet*

BASSETT CREEK: Crystal • Golden Valley • Medicine Lake • Minneapolis • Minnetonka • New Hope • Plymouth • Robbinsdale • St. Louis Park
ELM CREEK: Champlin • Corcoran • Dayton • Maple Grove • Medina • Plymouth • Rogers
SHINGLE CREEK: Brooklyn Center • Brooklyn Park • Crystal • Maple Grove • Minneapolis • New Hope • Osseo • Plymouth • Robbinsdale
WEST MISSISSIPPI: Brooklyn Center • Brooklyn Park • Champlin • Maple Grove • Osseo

Jenny Schaust will be giving an overview of the program to the Bassett Creek Watershed Commission at their regular meeting on March 21.

2) Brochure/Flyer.* The educators drafted a flyer to send to/leave with teachers and curriculum designers they speak with regarding the program. Reckinger will design the brochure with information from the draft flyer. It is hoped that the flyer will be available for review at the April meeting. Mary Anderson and Jenny Schaust will be asked to request teacher testimonials for the brochure.

3) Book list.** J. Anderson is compiling the list but it is not yet complete. Strand brought some books to the meeting for review. The list is meant to be a resource for teachers. One book per month could be highlighted in Water Links for publicity. Teachers could be encouraged to apply for an education grant to buy books for a class. The Root and Branch grant RFP will be released in early April and may be another good option for classroom funding to purchase books.

b. Public Outreach.

1) Survey Monkey.** An electronic survey was sent to member cities re the availability of watershed educators and facilitators. A table showing the limited response received was included in the packet. The survey was sent to Commissioners, TAC members, city administrators, city clerks, council members, and the city education staff where available. Laura Jester requested a paper copy to hand out at the next BCWMC meeting.

Schaust will follow up with the people who noted that they were “definitely interested” to learn more about their needs. Golden Valley noted that they would be interested in having WMWA host a booth, but did not state when or where.

2) Volunteer Sign-ups. Baines volunteered to staff the booth at the Yard & Garden Expo on Friday, April 12. Hoshal will staff the booth both days. Diane Stauner and Fred Moore usually volunteer to help with these booths, LeMieux will follow up with them and for Commissioners to represent the watersheds at the Brooklyn Center Earthfest.

3) Educational Materials.

a) Yard & Garden Expo. LeMieux has reserved exhibit materials from Blue Thumb and WaterShed Partners. The seed packet order will be coordinated with Bassett Creek. Blue Thumb *Leisurely Landscaping* and WMWA's *10 Things* brochures will also be available. There are a few rain garden booklets and Blue Thumb planting guides available as well.

b) Earth Fest. The same exhibit materials listed above will be available for Earth Fest as needed.

5. Master Water Stewards Project. Freshwater Society (FWS) is collecting applications now for the first cohort of participants in the program. All application information is available on the FWS website. A cohort consists of approximately 25 people. Peggy Knapp has been holding interest meetings in the targeted communities. The project will consist of 13 sessions to be held locally. The first class, Hydrology 101, will be taught by Diane Spector and is scheduled for April 13. This project is focused specifically in Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and applicants are selected based on their locality. Interest in other areas of the metro and greater Minnesota has been received. This three-year program will continually move upstream on Minnehaha Creek. If the program is successful, the intent is to have a state agency such as Extension take over and expand the program.

This program is focused on getting projects in the ground and the educational component for citizens. Part of the curriculum will include identifying, designing, and implementing a project, as well as finding funding for the project. Another part of the curriculum is to initiate a behavior-change program. The class will run April through October. Hoshal noted that some cities won't install rain gardens because of clay soils. He would like a success story that they can work, even if on a smaller scale. The program includes assessing the functionality of rain gardens.

The **Moos Family Lecture Series** hosted by FWS has been great. All past speakers are online in a video series on the FWS website, freshwater.org. On May 1, Don Rosenberry from USGS was scheduled to speak about White Bear Lake, surface water vs. ground water, and municipal pumping. This lecture has been cancelled due to federal budget cuts.

6. Metro Blooms

a) **Green Yard Workshops.** Four MetroBlooms “Green Yards, Clean Water” workshops sponsored by WMWA and member cities have been scheduled – Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Plymouth, and a cooperative between Golden Valley, Crystal, New Hope, and Robbinsdale. WMWA members, staff and educators will be working over the next few months to develop a set of related materials such as website content, handouts, city newsletter articles, and other communication items. J. Anderson will request a packet of the materials that will be available at the workshops.

b) **Letter of Support.*** J. Anderson, on behalf of WMWA, wrote a letter of support for their grant application to evaluate the functionality of installed rain gardens. Metro Blooms is working on an app to evaluate installed rain gardens. The University of Massachusetts just released an app for designing and installing rain gardens.

7. Updates.

a. **Girl Scouts Centennial Day of Service.** Nephew just finalized the report and will send a copy to Anderson. There were 20,000 participants and nearly 200,000 lbs. of debris was removed. The Girl Scouts will be making this an annual program. It is hoped that about 10,000 people will participate in the Girl Scout program each year. The Freshwater Society is presenting the Girl Scouts with an award on April 11 at their fundraiser at the Lafayette Club. They are still determining the criteria of the award. FWS is also considering a Junior Water Steward program with the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts.

b. **Three Rivers Park District.** TRPD provided some contacts in the Maple Grove, Osseo, and Rogers areas to the WMWA educators. TRPD will also provide their water resources exhibit for the educators to use. TRPD is looking to partner with other agencies to promote “green maintenance” in schools and other areas as part of a public outreach program.

c. **Cleanups for Water Quality.** The Freshwater Society focus is mainly on fall cleanups. Municipalities may be concerned about spring cleanups containing chemicals that are not accepted in compost areas. Water Stewards will also implement this program in their localities.

d. **NEMO at Medina.** Medina is hosting a city-specific NEMO workshop on Tuesday, March 26.

e. **WaterShed Partners.** The next meeting is March 13. The meeting attendees will split into work groups to focus on four separate issues: AIS, MS4 Reporting, K-12 Education, and Behavior Change. Meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday each month from 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

8. Announcements.

The **Watershed Assessment Visioning Exercise (WAVE)** is part of the BCWMC Third Generation planning process. WAVE will be used to reach out to communities for input and feedback that will culminate in a summit on June 13. There will be meetings at each of the nine cities. A part of the exercise is asking participants to record ideas on index cards, one card per idea. Other agencies may be engaged to facilitate the summit.

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) sent a rain garden maintenance survey to 200 homeowners who have had rain gardens installed and received a 30% response. They are also launching a K-12 pilot program. They have also received a grant for stormwater adaptation and will be involved in the climate change symposium at the Science Museum. They’ll also be hosting a discussion on public outreach, engagement and behavior change at the Arboretum sometime in September. MCWD also received national grant funding for AIS management and are increasing their cost-share program.

Dakota County has a **maintenance program** for hundreds of residential rain gardens installed in the county. They may be a good source of information for maintenance programs. Discussion will concentrate on what forms the 2013 program communications should take.

9. WMWA Adjournment. There being no further business, motion by Baines, second by Hartkopf to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy LeMieux
Recording Secretary

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