Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee Meeting
January 16, 2001
USGS Office, Richmond, VA

Minutes by Jane Walker

Organizations with representatives that attended:

- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
  Stacey Moulds
- Citizens for Water Quality
  Bill Shanabruch
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA--Region III)
  Chuck Kanetsky
- United States Geological Survey (USGS--Virginia Office)
  Ward Staubitz
- Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAC)
  David Frackelton
- 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 Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF)
  John Kauffman
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)
  Lyle Varnell
- Virginia Manufacturers Association (VMA)
  Steve Klevickis
- Virginia Water Resources Research Center (VWRRC)
  Jane Walker

Organizations with representatives who were unable to attend:

- American Water Works Association (AWWA--Virginia Section)
- Clean Virginia Waterways (CVW)
- Virginia Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies (VAMWA)
- Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD)
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)
- Virginia Water Environment Association (VWEA)
- Virginia Water Well Association (VWWA)
- Water Quality Academic Advisory Committee (WQAAC)

The Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee met January 16, 2001 (11:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.) at the U.S. Geological Survey office in Richmond, Virginia. Ward Staubitz of the USGS, Chair of the VWMC Steering Committee, led the meeting. Twelve organizations were represented. The minutes from the December 12, 2000, VWMC Steering Committee meeting were accepted.

2001 Conference
Fran Geissler with DCR reported that she had suggested the idea of having the VWMC Conference in conjunction with, either the day before or the day after, the Virginia Watershed Management Conference to the organizers of the watershed conference. Their initial reaction was very positive. The date and location have not been set for the conference, but it is expected to be in the fall of 2001. Having the VWMC Conference the day before the watershed conference was suggested as a better time, depending on the day of the week in which this falls. The VWMC will need to work closely with the organizers of the Virginia Watershed Management Conference. It was suggested that at the VWMC Conference, people be allowed to
talk about their monitoring work, and organizations be allowed to display their work in a poster session. Exhibit displays by organizations are another possibility, depending on the cost.

Officer Elections
The following VWMC Steering Committee members were nominated and elected to serve as officers for the 2001 year: Sam Austin of the DOF as Chair, Ron Gregory with the DEQ as Vice-Chair, and Jane Walker with the VWRRC as Secretary.

Vision, Mission, and Goals
A shared vision for the VWMC was developed based on the proposed vision statement at the December meeting. After much discussion, the following vision was approved:

*Water resources information of appropriate quantity and quality is available so that the condition of Virginia’s waters is known and informed decisions can be made on their preservation, protection, and use.*

The Operating Guidelines of the VWMC are to be changed so that the vision appears before the mission statement. The mission statement and goals of the VWMC were reviewed. The goal to encourage “*effective*” use of monitoring resources was explained to suggest non-duplication of monitoring efforts, identification of data gaps, and identification of sources of information. No changes were made to the mission or goals as currently described in the Operating Guidelines.

Committee Reports
Ron Gregory of the DEQ reported that the Operations Committee has not met since the December Steering Committee meeting. It was also proposed that the Operations Committee schedule a meeting and help establish the Membership Recruitment Work Group, which will be initially led by Jane Cain with the Virginia Water Well Association.

Jane Walker, a member of the Operations Committee and VWMC Administrative Assistant, distributed an administrative budget developed by Tamim Younos, the Associate Director of the VWRRC. The projected expenses for the 2000-2001 fiscal year are $11,180. The revenues received so far include $5,500, and the pending revenues total $6,500. It was suggested that in-kind support and other costs incurred by the VWRRC, including overhead, office space and utilities, and website development and maintenance be included in the budget when seeking grant funding. It was also suggested that at each Steering Committee meeting, Jane provide a financial report and list the status of grant efforts.

Bill Shanabruch with the Citizens for Water Quality stated that the Communications Committee had not met since the last meeting. A letter will be emailed in the near future that describe the annual meeting, the new Steering Committee members, new Steering Committee officers, and an updated membership list.

Ward Staubitz reported on behalf of Michele Monti, Chair of the Inventory Committee, that the Inventory Committee has completed the survey component of the inventory project. The mailing list continues to be compiled and edited. Ron Gregory commented that DEQ is currently working to revitalize its STORET program, with the goal of having the data on STORET available to everyone.
Fran Geissler reported that the Needs Assessment Committee had met and had discussed developing a survey to learn what products and services people want the VWMC to provide. The survey will also offer a list of different activities in which members can participate to gauge their interest. The committee will begin to develop the survey from similar surveys conducted by other water monitoring councils. The survey will be sent to the VWMC membership and to others identified as being interested in water monitoring activities in Virginia. It is suggested that some survey participants be given an in-depth interview. Bill Shanabruch offered to contact Joan Salvati, Water Quality Coordinator for Chesterfield County, and ask her to join the Needs Assessment Committee.

**Announcement**
Ward Staubitz and Chuck Kanetsky with EPA Region III described stream-gauging work accomplished by the Maryland Water Monitoring Council (MWMC). The MWMC conducted an analysis of the streamflow-gaging-stations in Maryland to determine their appropriateness for meeting information needs. The committee received input from discussions and recommendations given at a workshop and by responses to a questionnaire (sent to 500 users of stream-gage data). The results of their work can be viewed at [http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/MGS/index.htm](http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/MGS/index.htm).

**Financial Planning**
The group began to develop a budget for the 2001-2002 fiscal year. Six areas of expenditures were identified: 1) staff, 2) overhead, 3) contractual services (travel, printing, phone, etc.), 4) conference, 5) committees, and 6) web design and maintenance. Possible avenues for fund raising were explored. In general, it was suggested that base funding cover the staff, overhead, and contractual services, while grant funding or sponsorship by other companies and organizations could provide funding for special events and products such as the conference and the web site. The work of the committees could be support from the various government agencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff (Based on 33% of Jane’s time, with benefits)</td>
<td>$14,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead (estimated at 30-50%)</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual Services</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>self-sustaining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committees</td>
<td>agency support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Design</td>
<td>&lt; $10,000</td>
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Possible base support:
- Virginia General Assembly Budget—Request a legislator to appropriate money to the DEQ Budget for the VWMC (David Frackelton with the Virginia Agribusiness Council offered to take the lead with this, and Steve Klevickis with the Virginia Manufacturers Association and Jay Gilliam with the Citizens for Water Quality were suggested as others who could provide support.).
- Virginia General Assembly Budget—Request a budget amendment for the VWRRC state funding to include support for the VWMC.
• Federal grants from EPA—Either 104B-3 or 604-B (preferable); submit application (through DEQ by July 1).
• Agencies could request in-kind working support for the administration of the VWMC through their staff.

Conference:
The goal for funding of the conference is to make it self-sustaining. Cash can be taken from the VWMC budget surplus or attending members can pay for the conference through a registration fee. Grant proposals, like the one for the 2000 annual meeting sent to the EPA (and funded by the Regional Director’s discretionary funds) or EPA Environmental Education Grants. etc., can be submitted. Sponsorship from water monitoring equipment companies and other organizations (e.g., Hydrolab, YSI, Hach, LaMotte, Forest Products, and the Virginia Agribusiness Council, etc.) could be requested, and conference sponsors could be acknowledged in the program and at the conference.

Committees:
The funding for committee projects could come in the form of “in-kind” agency support.

Web Design:
We need to research the costs for designing and maintaining a web site. The VWMC could submit proposals to the Virginia Environmental Endowment (due April 15, August 15, or December 15) and EPA (due July 1 for 604B), with Jane’s salary included for developing the site content. Stacey Moulds with the Chesapeake Bay Alliance offered to look into an offer by the Richmond Times-Dispatch to provide free web space and guidance. If the VWMC web site is no longer offered through the VWRRC’s site, the VWRRC staff would still be willing to help maintain the site (if needed and technically possible). Sponsorship by monitoring equipment companies and other organizations in return for acknowledgement on the site was suggested.

Next Four Meeting Dates
Based on information provided by the Steering Committee members, the following dates were chosen for the next four VWMC Steering Committee meetings:
  - March 6, 2001 (DOF, Charlottesville)
  - April 10, 2001 (USGS, Richmond)
  - May 29, 2001 (DOF, Charlottesville)
  - July 10, 2001 (USGS, Richmond)

Unless otherwise decided, all meetings will begin at 11:00 a.m. and continue until 3:00 or 4:00 p.m.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.