Minutes by David Buckalew

**Steering Committee representatives attending:**
- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB) – Stacey Moulds
- Citizens for Water Quality (CWQ) – Jessica Schildroth
- 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) – Karen Rice
- University of Virginia (UVA) – Frank Deviney
- Virginia Association of Counties (VAC) – Matt Ellinghaus
- Virginia Association of Municipal Wastewater Agency (VAMWA) – Marvin Booth
- Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD) – Dana Roberts
- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) – Nicole Sandberg
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) – James Beckley, Darryl Glover, and Stuart Torbeck
- Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) – Sam Austin
- Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) – John Kauffman
- Virginia Department of Health (VDH) – Dan Dietrich
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) – Steve Begg
- Virginia Water Resources Research Center (VWRRC) – Jane Walker

**Organizations without a representative at the meeting:**
- Clean Virginia Waterways (CVW)
- County of Henrico, Department of Public Works (HDPW)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III
- United States Marine Corps, Quantico Base (USMC)
- Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAC)
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)
- Virginia Municipal League (VML)
- Virginia Rural Water Association (VRWA)
- Virginia Water Well Association (VWWA)

**Committee Chairs attending:**
- Communications – Jim Disbrow
- Education – Dana Roberts
- Inventory – James Beckley
- Operations – Sam Austin
- Marketing – Steve Begg and Darryl Glover
Marvin Booth called the January VWMC steering committee meeting to order at approximately 11:05 a.m. Several new members to the Council were present and group introductions ensued. The meeting’s agenda was adopted as proposed. Changes to the November minutes include: a) a clarification that Mr. Stuart Torbeck (DEQ) will replace Darryl Glover on the Steering Committee but not on the Marketing sub-committee and, b) a correction to the USGS name: U.S. Geological Survey.

Financial Report:

Jane Walker distributed the report showing both 2-month and 6-month activity figures for the VWMC. Although there is a balance of $4,101 as of January 11, 2006, there is an outstanding encumbrance for expenses due John Schildroth for his time working on the VWMC website.

Old Business:

Six new and returning members voted to the VWMC Steering Committee include:

Marvin Booth, City of Bedford/Virginia Association of Municipal Wastewater Agencies;
Rick Brown, Virginia Rural Water Association;
Chuck Frederickson, James River Association;
Carolyn Thomas, Ferrum College;
Rick Webb, University of Virginia; and
Robin Wilder, Henrico County Department of Public Works.

Since not enough ballots were cast/received via email, the names of the nominees were presented and approved through voice vote. The newly-elected officers for 2006 are:

Chair: Chuck Frederickson
Vice-chair: Marvin Booth
Secretary: David Buckalew

Results of the VWMC Marketing Study in conjunction with VCU students:

Members of the Marketing Sub-Committee -- James Beckley (DEQ), Steven Begg (VDOT), Darryl Glover (DEQ), and Michele Monti (VDH)) -- described the results of their work with Dr. Patricia Thompson’s business class at Virginia Commonwealth University in a report distributed to the Steering Committee (included at the end of the minutes). After much discussion, the Committee reached a consensus that the VWMC should consider, as a minimum, changes to: 1) the current VWMC logo, 2) the VWMC slogan and, 3) the VWMC brochure. Outside of the above changes, the Committee may also choose to consider gift ideas for membership and changes to the VWMC website and display/presentation posters.

To meet the costs required by such action, the sub-committee presented an amended budget proposal to our 2006 DEQ Citizen Water Monitoring Grant (attached as 3rd page of the Marketing report). In the amended plan, the funds allocated for Educational expenses would be decreased to support just one (instead of two) educational event for the grant cycle to increase the funding needed to implement the new marketing strategy.

All members of the Steering Committee agreed that increased visibility to the public is necessary at this time and agreed to re-examine and discuss the logo, slogan, and brochure format at the March meeting. Although ideas for proposed changes are to be addressed by the Communications Sub-committee, all Steering Committee members should come prepared to discuss and decide upon these items so that grant monies may be utilized before the May deadline.
A possible slogan was introduced by Jim Disbrow which reads, “Know water?” in conjunction with a magnifying lens examining a water droplet as it drops to a small pool/puddle. In addition, the phrase “participate, investigate, communicate” was generally agreed to be a “catchy” addition to the slogan.

New Business:
CWQ Winter meeting: The winter meeting is to be held in Charlottesville (location not determined as of 1/11/06) on February 18, 2006. Jane Walker provided a brief bio for a possible speaker and suggested VWMC provide about $150 to cover the speaker’s travel expenses and $50 as an honorarium.

South Anna Citizen Water Monitoring Project: Symposium to be held February 18, 2006. James Beckley reported that the symposium would cover low-impact development, conservation, and water pollution within this Louisa County location. The VWMC has been asked to provide a portion of the speaker fee for this event. After some discussion, the committee decided to provide $150 to the organizers of the event to help cover the speaker fee of Dr. Harry Haney. Committee members also offered to help find suitable speakers in Virginia if not enough funds were raised to support Dr. Haney’s participation.

Environment Virginia Symposium: Annual meeting at VMI is to be held in April. Last year VWMC attracted 50 new members at the meeting, and it was generally agreed that we should make every effort to return this year. If we register two individuals to monitor the booth, it may cost more than $500-600. Last year, Katie Register and Robin Buckalew performed these duties. The committee decided to participate as an exhibitor again this year and suggested asking Katie and Robin if they would serve as the VWMC’s representatives.

James River Fish Festival: Annual festival takes place along the James River Park in Richmond. Ralph White, Park Manager/Naturalist is the point of contact for this event (www.jamesriverpark.org), which attracted about 500 people last year. Stuart Torbeck suggested that VWMC should possibly set up a display for this event.

Ferrum College’s 20th Anniversary Celebration of Water Monitoring: Dr. Carolyn Thomas announced the celebration will be marked by a symposium in October or November 2006 at the Ferrum campus.

Rain barrel workshops for Spring 2006: Katie Register and Alecia Daves have presented several rain barrel workshops, which have been well received. Since the majority of registrants live in houses served by well water, these workshops have provided critical information related to an assortment of water issues. Earlier, two workshops were planned for spring of 2006. After VWMC receives a cost estimate, we will know to what extent we may support this endeavor.

GPS in the classroom: Dana Roberts announced that the Education Committee is considering helping to coordinate the use of GPS with watershed education in schools and partnering with interested teachers.

DEQ Citizen Monitoring Grant 2006: James Beckley reported that DEQ will need invoices for checks to be sent out to all grantees by January 20. James plans to send out blank formatted invoices
that can be filled in electronically and returned for this purpose. James also reported that there is a 1-month extension on the 2006 grant deadline from June 30 to July 30.

Committee Reports:

Operations: no report.

Inventory: Sadly, Roland Owens is leaving DEQ within the next few weeks. James Beckley reported that the ‘group contact’ information will be added/updated prior to Roland’s departure.

Marketing: (See Old Business)

Finance: Jessica Schildroth volunteered to set up a VWMC member database to keep track of members who have paid dues if, in the future, the Council requires membership dues.

Education: Dana Roberts reported that she and the committee had been working on a template for National Water Monitoring Day activity to be held in October 2006.

Groundwater: No report.

Other Announcements:

DEQ: James Beckley reported that 2005 was a “banner year” for contributions from citizen monitoring efforts in Virginia. This includes:

1) The citizen Coliscan Easygel monitoring in TMDL implementation watersheds has 12 groups actively monitoring in 12 separate TMDL watersheds.

2) DEQ has received a record number of citizen nominations this past year, covering 47 separate streams and 73 nominating sites. A table with the nominations is underneath the ‘What’s New’ box on the DEQ citizen monitoring website (www.deq.virginia.gov/cmonitor)

3) For the 2006 305b water quality assessment report, DEQ received monitoring data from 22 citizen monitoring groups. Of these 22 groups, data from 14 citizen groups were approved by DEQ to include in the report. This data covers 834 separate sites and is an increase from 704 sites used in the 2004 305b report. DEQ also received monitoring data from 13 non-DEQ government agencies. Of these 13 contributions of non-agency data, 7 contributing agencies received DEQ approval and will have their data present in the 2006 report. This dataset will add 663 more sample sites to the report.

4) The grand total number of sample sites DEQ received from citizen and non-agency groups that will be included in the 2006 305b report is 1,497 sites.

ACB: Stacey Moulds reported that the ACB has produced a DEQ/EPA-funded manual that promotes and provides information for volunteer restoration projects of wetlands. The PDF file formatted copy can be downloaded from the ACB website. A few hardcopies are also available.

And last, but certainly not least, the entirety of those present wished Darryl Glover the very best of luck as he now embarks upon life “sans VWMC Steering Committee.” All the best good friend!

Future meeting dates: Monday, March 20 – Richmond USGS  
Wednesday, May 17 – (location yet to be decided)
Marketing Committee Report
Virginia Water Monitoring Council
January 11, 2006

Darryl Glover (DEQ), Steven Begg (VDOT), Michele Monti (VDH), and James Beckley (DEQ) present the following report to the VWMC Steering Committee.

Two groups of students from Professor Patricia Thompson’s class at Virginia Commonwealth Business School presented marketing plans for the VWMC in November 2005. Each group contained 6-8 students.

Each of the presentations from the students included PowerPoint and presentation binders, newly designed brochures, new slogans and logos, recommendations for the VWMC website, gift ideas for membership, and display posters (most of the latter were kept by the students).

Some of the students’ ideas and some brainstorming of our own were shared with Jane Walker and Lyle Varnell in December, including possible membership incentives and whether the 2006 grant to VWMC from DEQ should be amended to increase the funds available to implement marketing tactics. The reporting committee members met on January 5th to further discuss all of this. A summary of the best suggestions from the students, and the committee’s recommendations to the Council follow.

1) **The VWMC needs a new slogan!** – The existing slogan does not generate any interest (students), or curiosity (professor) by the uninitiated public. Each of the student groups proposed a slogan
   a) “What’s in your water”
   b) “Participate, investigate, communicate”

   The Marketing Committee recommends an alternative
   c) “Get involved in water quality”

2) **Change the logo!** – Two new logos were proposed (see brochures). The committee recommends using the magnifying glass logo but modifying the way the Council’s name is written to:

   Virginia
   Water
   Monitoring
   Council

3) **New brochure!** – Two brochure designs were proposed and the committee found advantages to each. The design of the black and white brochure especially the way fonts were used catches the eye. The full color brochure would enable the use of action photos with people in or near the water (an early recommendation by Professor Thompson for the tabletop display). Three-color would be less expensive. A modification the committee recommends is to go from three-panel to four-panel brochure with a sign up panel that can be cut off for mailing.
4) **Shorten the URL for the website!** – It is too long to remember. One of the groups of students recommended hosting the site through a service. The committee recommends investigating keeping the site at VaTech but shortening the URL to http://www.vwmc@vt.edu.

5) **Enhance the website!** – By making it a little more visual. Allow people to donate to, sign up and pay for council events (or membership) on the web. The committee recommends a “How did you hear about the VWMC?” feature be added to the website to track which marketing tactics were effective.

6) **Promote the website!** – Give away bumper stickers with the VWMC slogan and website address. Make the URL more prominent on the brochure and use gift items such as water jugs, labeled bottles of water (will show an example), tote bags, etc. with the URL as gifts. Because of the labor required to track paid memberships, the committee recommends, instead of paid memberships at this time, that the VWMC use these items as thank you gifts for donations like public television does (specific suggestions below). Perhaps if the VWMC eventually get a full-time staff person, paid annual memberships would become more manageable administratively.

7) **Advertise and recognize through small gifts!** – in addition to #6, limited quantities of similar gift items, each with the new VWMC logo and slogan, could be given away at public events, such as VMI Conference, various festivals (state fair?), and other organizations’ meetings in 2006. The committee recommends the following incentive levels.
   a) $25 donation – water jug (with logo and URL)
   b) $50 donation – water jug and tote bag (also with logo and URL)
   c) $100 donation – water jug, tote bag, and water monitoring kit
   d) $250 corporate donation
      – your logo and link on VWMC sponsor page
      – annual meeting sponsorship and display space
      – list of corporate sponsors in VWMC annual report
      – two complementary tickets to the annual meeting

8) **Funding** – if the VWMC agrees to hold only one, instead of two education events between under the FY06 DEQ Citizen Monitoring grant it could be amended to shift enough money to double the available funds for implementation of marketing tactics from $1,000 to $2,000. Also, if a cooperating third party can be found, bottles of water, labeled with the VWMC logo, URL and a small bit of info, could be sold at some public events. Proceeds could be shared with the third party.

9) **Costs** – if website needs to be hosted and maintained elsewhere the overall proposed budget of $2,000 would be affected plus long-term costs incurred. Unit costs are estimated at:
   Brochures - $0.70 (full color, 3 color or b&w would be less)
Bumper Stickers - $0.80
Water Jugs    - $5 includes shipping
Water Bottles w/Labels- $0.80/16 ounce bottle
Tote Bags     - $7.50 (actual price TBD)
Monitoring Kits - $20 (not from budget allotment for WM Day)

10) **Budget (for illustration)** – if the grant were amended to increase funds from $1,000 to $2,000 (expended by May 2006), here is one of a number of possible ways it might be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brochures</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bumper Stickers</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Jugs</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tote Bags</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total          $2,000

Lastly, the committee emphasizes how impressed each of us was with the effort and creativity the students put into these projects. We recommend that the VWMC write Professor Thompson and her class a thank you letter.