Virginia Water Monitoring Council Steering Committee Minutes
Thursday, January 25, 2007
VA Dept of Forestry, Charlottesville, VA

Minutes by David Buckalew

Steering Committee representatives attending:
Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB) – Leslie Middleton
County of Henrico, Department of Public Works (HDPW) – Robin Wilder
Ferrum College (FC) – Carolyn Thomas
James River Association (JRA) – Chuck Frederickson
Longwood University (LWU) – David Buckalew
Newport News (NN) – Ron Harris
People Protecting Watershed Headwaters (PPWH) – Jim Disbrow
United States Geological Survey (USGS) – Karen Rice
University of Virginia (UVA) – Rick Webb
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) – James Beckley
Virginia Department of Health (VDH) – Dan Dietrich
Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) – Lyle Varnell
Virginia Rural Water Association (VRWA) – Albert Crigger
Virginia Water Resources Research Center (VWRRC) – Stephen Schoenholtz and Jane Walker

Organizations without a representative at the meeting:
Clean Virginia Waterways (CVW)
United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III
United States Marine Corps, Quantico Base (USMC)
Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAgC)
Virginia Association of Counties (VAC)
Virginia Association of Municipal Wastewater Agency (VAMWA)
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD)
Virginia Citizens for Water Quality (VCWQ)
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR)
Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF)
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Virginia Municipal League (VML)
Virginia Water Well Association (VWWA)

Committee Chairs attending:
Marketing – Jim Disbrow
Education
Finance
Groundwater
Inventory – James Beckley
Membership – Lyle Varnell
Operations
Welcome and Introduction: Mr. Chuck Frederickson (JRA), 2006 VWMC Chair, led the January VWMC Steering Committee, calling order at 11:10 a.m. in the 2nd floor conference room at the VDOF Building in Charlottesville. All steering committee members present verbally provided their name and affiliation. Two new faces – Albert Crigger (VRWA) and Ron Harris (NN) were introduced and welcomed to the VWMC Steering Committee.

Approval of Agenda: The meeting’s agenda was examined and adopted as written.

Approval of the November 20, 2006 Meeting Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

Financial Report:
Jane Walker (VWRRC) distributed financial statements from the end of November 2006 and from January 25, 2007. As of Nov 20, 2006, a $6,604 balance was reported. Since then, little activity was reported other than $2,504 expenses for administrative expenses leaving a balance of $4,100 on the January report.

Old Business:

1) Groundwater inventory:
Jane Walker (VWRRC) reported that Jessica Schildroth (VCWQ) had finished the inventory and that an advertisement needed to be posted on the web to attract users to the service. The inventory will provide general information on each well such as location and depth. Additional parameters may be discussed as the project progresses. James Beckley and Stuart Torbeck (VDEQ) are compiling a list of well drillers across Virginia. Additional discussion included an inquiry by Lyle Varnell (VIMS) as to the best place(s) to post advertisements for potential users. Ron Harris (NN) noted that an earlier inventory may possibly have been circulated among municipal governments in the state.

2) LOA between ACB/ DCR/DEQ/IWLA VaSOS/VCWQ/VWMC/Sec of Nat’l Resources – The Virginia Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Program:
The signing ceremony took place on Friday, October 20, 2006 on Robious Landing Park in Richmond. VWMC aided in sponsorship, and there was general agreement among steering committee members that we strive to improve lines of communication/awareness between the VWMC water monitoring inventory and other agencies and possible users of the water data. Chuck Frederickson (JRA) suggested that the Operations Committee and others might try to discuss ways to better communicate our water monitoring inventory along with a discussion of our 2007 Workplan during a conference call in February.

New Business:

1) VWMC Steering Committee Officer Nominations/Elections:
Chuck Frederickson (JRA) mentioned that the search for officers remained in an “ongoing” status as of January 25. Chuck also mentioned he would receive the “OK” from individuals and run an electronic election.
2) VWMC Steering Committee Nominations/Elections (January 2007 – December 2010 term):
The following people were elected to serve on the VWMC Steering Committee for the stated term:

Karen Anderson – VCWQ
Ron Harris - NN
John Kauffman – VDGIF
Michelle Monti – VDH
Lyle Varnell - VIMS

3) Role of VWRRC in administering VWMC:
Stephen Schoenholtz, (VWRRC) has observed that Jane Walker’s workload as administrative assistant for the VWMC has extended well beyond the duties described for that position in our Operating Guidelines. The text on page 3, paragraph 3 of the guidelines reads “Administrative activities fulfilled by the VWRRC include maintenance of the membership roll, preparation of reports, and fiscal management.” All members agreed that Jane has been serving a much greater role for the VWMC than described in the guidelines and the situation is unfair. To make matters worse, Jane’s commitments and responsibilities at VWRRC have continued to increase, producing an impossible work situation. After much discussion, it was agreed that the issue would be put on the March agenda.

4) VDEQ Non-agency Surface Water Inventory:
James Beckley (VDEQ) reported that the link to the inventory was currently available from a temporary server at: http://vadeq.easi.org/. James provided a projected presentation of the site showing its Google map features and downloadable database. There are currently 171 water monitoring programs with contact information available for each program on the website. After discussing the many positive points of the inventory website, James cautioned that there is currently no money set aside in future VDEQ budgets to cover the costs of maintaining the site. This problem needs to be addressed in the near future by the VWMC.

5) 2007 VWMC Conference coincide with EPA Region 3 Conference?
James Beckley (VDEQ) and Leslie Middleton (ACB) mentioned that the EPA Regional Conference is to be held at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA in October 2007. Since that month coincides with our annual VWMC conference, many on the Steering Committee echoed the concern that it may be counter productive for us to plan a separate event on a different October date. It was suggested that the VWMC have our meeting in conjunction with the EPA at Shenandoah. James Disbrow (PPWH) suggested that, in planning for our conference, we keep in mind Virginia’s 400-yr Jamestown celebration. Jane Walker (VWRRC) and Robin Wilder (HDPW) questioned the relevance of the EPA Conference to local governments. Others (Ron Harris (NN)) felt that the EPA meeting may serve as an attractor for local governments. Dan Dietrich (VDH) inquired as to who would be the collector of registration monies and to whom would they be given. James Beckley (VDEQ) mentioned that Stacey Brown (VCWQ) may be able to serve as a point of contact for VWMC registration. Chuck Frederickson (JRA)
suggested that members of the Operations Committee and several others on the Steering Committee discuss the issue and to organize their thoughts related to such an event possibly via a conference call in February.

6) VWMC 2007 Workplan - to be completed by February 24.

Committee Reports:
Operations: No information to report.

Inventory: See VDEQ Surface Water Inventory above. James Beckley (VDEQ) invites all to visit the website

Marketing: Identity and Communications: Jim Disbrow (PPWH) distributed copies of VWMC’s new marketing brochure, bumper sticker, pens, magnets, and poster. Jim mentioned that the brochure is not completely finished and is open for suggestions for the last page on the front side of it (contains photo of surface foam with abbreviated address for the VWMC). The discussion evolved to one of who controls the website for VWMC. Does the VWRRC have sole responsibility? Stephen Schoenholtz (VWRRC) noted that clarification of this question will be worked out with the new web person to be hired at VWRRC in early March. Chuck Frederickson (JRA) asked members of the Marketing Committee to address this topic at the March meeting

Membership: Each Steering Committee member should have received an updated electronic copy of the VWMC membership list from Jane.

Finance: no report. See earlier report from Jane Walker.

Education: no report.

Groundwater: no report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

James Beckley (VDEQ) announced the winter meeting of the Virginia Citizens for Water Quality to be held on Saturday, February 3 in Clark Hall at UVa.

Carolyn Thomas (FC) announced a Regional Water Conference is to be held at Ferrum College on April 19. Carolyn made a request for judges for student research projects related to water. If interested, please contact Dr. Thomas at (540) 365-4368 or at cthomas@ferrum.edu.

Chuck Frederickson adjourned the meeting at 3:10 pm.

The next meeting date was set for Tuesday, March 27 – USGS in Richmond, VA