

NEW JERSEY CLEAN WATER COUNCIL

January 9, 2007

DRAFT Meeting Highlights

Location:

NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust, Building 6, Suite 201, 3131 Princeton Pike, Lawrenceville, NJ

Attendees

Members:, Russ Furnari, Pamela Goodwin, Mary Beth Koza, Tony McCracken, Sr., Ray Nichols, Pat Pittore, James Requa, Jessica Sanchez, Ray Zabihach

Others: Gabi Grunstein (representing New Jersey Farm Bureau) & Chris Sturm (representing George Hawkins)

Meeting convened by Pamela Goodwin, Chairperson, at 10:07 a.m.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2006 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

The highlights were approved as distributed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Formal recommendations of the Clean Water Council were sent in a letter to Commissioner Jackson on December 21, 2007. It was noted that the final version of the letter reflected extensive e-mail communications among several council members. Discussion focused on the desirability of a meeting directly with Commissioner Jackson to discuss those recommendations. Also, since one of the recommendations called for changes to the Municipal Land Use Law, the desirability of having the League of Municipalities recommend changes to the Legislature was noted. Since Lou Neeley represents the League on the CWC, it was thought that he would be the ideal person to work with the League on this matter.

2007 Public Hearing Date

After considering possible dates in October that the DEP Public Hearing Room was available, the CWC decided to set the date for the hearing as **Tuesday, October 23, 2007, from 9:00 a.m. to noon.**

NEW BUSINESS:

2007 Public Hearing Topics considered

Discussion of possible hearing topics resulted in the identification of several possibilities:

1. Non-Regulated Contaminants Getting into the Water Supply: such as pharmaceuticals and hormones used in agriculture. Reference was made to the Report of the New Jersey Comparative Risk Project and studies being undertaken by USEPA.
2. Global Warming: Consensus was that this issue was more related to water supply concerns than water pollution. The CWC would need to establish an “innovative” link to clean water before it could sponsor a public hearing on this topic.
3. Water Infrastructure: Members recognized that this is a large topic. They considered the need for addressing urban water pollution including prevention, sewer reconstruction & treatment capacity, together with financing.
4. Keeping Clean Water Clean: Concerns were expressed about capturing cumulative impacts and the anti-degradation standards.

5. Stormwater Regulations: Members wondered if this was the appropriate time to examine how the rules enacted in 2004 were working and if revisions to them were needed.

Ray was asked to relay this list of possible topics to Larry Baier and to ask if he or other DEP staffers had other topics to suggest.

Other thoughts about the public hearing

Members were generally pleased about how the 2006 hearing went, in terms of speakers and attendance.

To make the 2007 hearing even better, the following ideas were mentioned:

Start the planning process earlier than was done in 2006, e.g. select a topic by the March meeting.

The 2006 hearing ran too long.

Members of the public had to wait too long to have an opportunity to speak.

Better coordination among speakers is needed to avoid redundancy while getting comprehensive topic coverage

Ten speakers on a panel may be too many.

After deciding on topic, CWC members could create a set of questions and then identify one speaker to address each question. After this panel spoke the public could question them.

A time-keeper is needed to control how long presenters speak.

Topics for future meetings

Natural Capital Project and Green Infrastructure: It was suggested that Bill Mates, of DEP-DSR, was familiar with this topic.

The NJ Water Resources Institute – Joan Ehrenfeld and Chris Obrupta are both involved with this institute.

Ray was asked to see if these people would be willing to speak at a future meeting.

Attendance: The Chair expressed concern that attendance had been dwindling and was concerned that some people were not making the effort to attend the two hour meeting once a month. She also noted that the people present were not the ones she was concerned about.

Educational event in late spring: Ray Nichols reported that he was looking into the possibility of the CWC holding such an event with financial support of the Division of Watershed Management and logistical support from the Rutgers Office of Continuing Professional Education. Rutgers would handle advance publicity, registration and coordination with the facility and food service. However, as of the date of the meeting, it was uncertain if the Division had available the financial resources to support such an event in 2007.

Members suggested that some comparative costs could be obtained from the Eco-Complex, TCNJ, the Trenton War Memorial and Thomas Edison College in Trenton. Various ways of cutting costs and covering lunch were discussed. It was thought that charging \$75 should cover the costs of lunch, etc.

(Subsequent to the meeting, Jim Requa did some preliminary research which yielded the following, based on 100 participants for one day:

Thomas Edison College- Room fee \$250.00 & Breakfast \$5.25/person

Trenton War Memorial – Room fee \$276.00 & Breakfast \$5.25/person)

Pam will talk with Larry to try to ensure that the CWC is able to sponsor and conduct an educational event featuring representatives of the various DEP water related programs, even if DEP lacks the funds to underwrite it.

Proposed essay contest: The CWC members had an extended discussion on how to do something that would involve high students, such as an essay contest. They finally decided to try to set it up so that the topic of the essay would be the same as the topic for next October's Public Hearing. This would need to be organized by the council members. They envision announcing the contest in May, and the essays would be due in early September. Perhaps the announcements of the essay contest could be distributed at the Envirothon to each of the students attending that event and to the Enviromentors. The Council would select the winners and invite them to present their ideas at the CWC Public Hearing in October. It would be nice if the winner(s) could also be awarded a savings bond, or perhaps a gift certificate for books from Borders or Barnes & Noble.

Succession of the chairmanship: Pam indicated that she is entering her second year as chair and considers it in the best interests of the council that there be a plan for succession of the chair. She asked the members to consider this matter. She hoped that it would be a topic for discussion at future meetings.

Getting out more: Members expressed interest in holding meetings at locations other than the EIT offices. Russ offered to host a boat trip on the Delaware Estuary. Jessica offered to host a meeting at DRBC offices and have a presentation on PCBs, possibly in March. MaryBeth expressed interest in hosting the Council at the BMS Hopewell facility in May. It will be necessary to consider how to meet the open meeting requirements whenever the Council members are invited on field trips like these.

DEP UPDATES:

Public information meeting re NJPDES rules at DEP on Jan 10 starting at 9:00 discuss upcoming rule amendments.

Clean Air Council will hold its annual public hearing on Wed., April 11. The topic will be "Improving Air Quality Through Energy Efficiency and Conservation."

The DWM is preparing a major education initiative on phosphorus in areas where there are phosphorus TMDLs. The plan calls for the 110 affected municipalities to adopt ordinances to prohibit the use of phosphorus in lawn fertilizer. Concurrently, the DEP is working with major fertilizer manufacturers to make available in the marketplace fertilizers that are phosphorus-free.

The Water Supply Master Plan, although it was supposed to be released by the end of 2006, is still being finalized.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

****THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON FEBRUARY 13, 2006, BEGINNING AT 10:00 A.M. ****