

Draft
Great Lakes Water Resources Regional Committee

December 9, 2003
Northwest Regional Office, Meadville, PA

Meeting Summary

Attendance

Committee members in attendance:

Janet Anderson
Lori Boughton
Scott Evans
Thomas Fuhrman
William Gough, Vice-Chairperson
George Greig
Brian Hill
Craig Kern
Jesse Koon
Randy Meabon
Nicholas Mobilia, Chairperson
David Mulvihill
Jerry Rice
Todd Sampsell
Nancy Slater
Kenneth Stockert
Matthew Wolford
Gary Young

Committee members not in attendance:

Richard Brine
Michael Donahue
Edward Kosa
Donna Mindek

Others in attendance:

Gary Johnson
Dave Skellie

DEP Representatives:

Pam Bishop
Stu Gansell
Bill Gast
Mark Gorman

John Green
John Holden
Rick Neville
Kurt Skees
Anthony Tank

Meeting Dates for 2004:

February 10; April 13; June 8; August 10; October 12; December 14

Bylaws

A policy to handle replacement of a committee member in the event of long term absentia (three or more consecutive meetings) is needed so that original representation may be maintained. A suggestion was made that the Regional Committee petition the Governor for removal of a committee member who is absent without excuse for three consecutive meeting. Revision in article VI provides for an “alternate” for one meeting session (without voting privileges) but the idea of permanent alternates was dismissed – especially ones with voting privileges (even though they be in proxy). Idea of new Governor appointee proposed. Chairman Nicholas Mobilia will be getting back to the committee on the specific resolution of this matter.

Matthew Wolford made a motion to accept the bylaws with both the recommended changes to all regional committee bylaws and the specific revisions requested by the Ohio and Upper/Middle Susquehanna Regional Committees to Articles IX and X. Motion seconded by a committee member. Bylaws were adopted as amended.

A voting issue was raised as to the appropriate use of voice votes or roll call votes. It was determined that this is already covered in the “New Robert’s Rules”.

Public Participation

Copies of the Sunshine Act and the Right to Know Law” were handed out.

Bishop explained that the regional committees’ work is subject to both statutes. She said that Act 220 provides for an exception to the Right to Know Law: If an entity requests confidentiality of data, only DEP and the Committee have access to the information. The criteria for claiming that information is confidential is covered in Act 220. DEP will be responsible for publishing Committee meeting dates as per the “Sunshine Act.”

DEP is responsible for record-keeping.

Travel Vouchers/Financial Interest Forms

Travel voucher forms were handed out. Mr. Gansell said that payment was anticipated to be about a 4 week turnaround time, give or take a week or two.

Regarding Financial Interest Forms for 2003, Ms. Bishop stated that these forms do not need to be filled out this year; they are due in May of 2004. Assistance in filling out these forms will be given during the April 2004 meeting. These forms are available on the website.

Scoping and Setting of Major Milestones

Presentation by Stu Gansell. Two handouts: "Regional Committees, Statewide Committee and DEP Responsibilities Under Act 220 – Who Does What" and "Implementation Strategy and Schedule for Regional and Statewide Committees."

Mr. Gansell outlined responsibilities and the timeline for various Act 220 players for the 2003-2008 time frame.

He noted that a correction should be made to "Who Does What" handout; The deadline for adoption of new State Water Plan is March 16, 2008; not March 16, 2003.

Mr. Gansell said that a major purpose of the regional committees under Act 220 is to identify critical water planning areas. This will be accomplished by specific recommendations by regional committees of known local critical water areas. Each regional committee will establish any features that are necessary to address needs for their local areas for incorporation into the State Water Plan. He also stressed the importance of the public participation process on statewide and regional basis.

Mr. Gansell summarized the duties of the regional committee by identifying "Four basic charges in the Road Map" for the next 3-4 years. The four main areas of responsibility for the Committee are:

1. Define regional issues.
2. Establish a process for determining Critical Water Planning Areas.
3. Outline regional plan components of the State Water Plan so that when statewide policies are adopted, regions are ready to go.
4. Review and comment on drafts of regulations to be developed regarding the registration process.

In answer to a question, Mr. Gast said that the data derived from the registration process will take about 6 months (after the March 16, 2004 deadline) to put in a usable form. A question was asked about the 10,000 gal/day cut off for registration. The 10,000 gal/day is a 30 day average over the course of a year and was chosen as the cut off because it accounts for about 90% of the water use in PA. Lower than that could mean that households would be registering, which is not something anyone wants to do.

Overview of the existing State Water Plan/Water Budgeting Vision

Two powerpoint presentations by Bill Gast with handouts.

Mr. Gast said that basically the Department will not be using old State Water Plan, but some of the underlying principles may be useful to this new process.

A committee member made a motion to procure a copy of the portions of the old SWP volumes for Lake Erie and the Genessee River and some PA Geology and Groundwater publications/reports. The motion was seconded and it passed.

Mr. Gast also outlined the new water budgeting process for identification of critical water planning areas.

Suggested agenda topics for next meeting

1. Presentation on existing water law/legal rights in context of the SWP
2. Lake Erie withdrawals/water levels in lake
3. French Creek withdrawals
4. Great Lakes politics – how politicians can get involved
5. Drought condition ramifications on the development of the SWP