

Ohio Water Resources Committee Meeting

November 7, 2005

10:00 am to 1:00 pm

Cranberry Township Municipal Building

Introduction

The meeting started at 10:05 a.m.

Administrative Items

Ron Rohall, Chair opened the meeting with introductions around the table. Gerry Feldman noted in the last meeting minutes that Jerry Schulte not Gerry Feldman should be listed under Local Planning (page 2). Ron Richey calls for a motion to change the last meeting minutes to reflect this change, Don Bluedorn seconds the motion. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The 2006 schedule has proposed dates of February 13th, May 8th, August 7th, and November 13th. Motion to approve meeting dates from Gerry Feldman, second Ron Richey, **MOTION CARRIED.**

Election of Officers

Office of Chair – motion from Don Bluedorn and Gerry Feldman to retain Ron Rohall as Chair. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Vice Chair – motion by Don Bluedorn, second from Charles Stowe for Mitchell Brouman to retain Vice Chair. **MOTION CARRIED.**

DEP Summary of Activities

John Hines noted that September of every year budgeting begins, all Commonwealth agencies are to flat-line budgets. The next 2 years of budgeting are going to be tough. Up to 10% of EPA programs to be cut and it will impact us here. It is not that simple to get funding and planning programs are usually the first to get cut. I believe strongly that we can do this by 2008 (state water plan).

Regulations will go to EQB in early 2006. Critical water planning area – public comment period has come to a close. Very few comments received. The USGS tool is still on target. We are working with Delaware River Basin Commission and USGS.

Don Bluedorn discussed drafting the components ourselves. DEP will put together templates for the regional committee plans, and they can amend them as they see fit. It

will make it a lot easier and it will be consistent throughout the state. Partial funding may be available from the Heinz endowment.

This is the year of the plan. John Hines stated it took 20 years to get this legislation into place. Long term planning – update this plan every 5 years. 2008 is just the beginning of the process.

Summary of Regional Public Meeting/Hearings

Lori Mohr discussed the Public Meetings from May. Testimony is on the website. Official public comments given are on the Internet. Don Bluedorn noted that the new DEP homepage is easier to use.

Regional Plan Component Outline and Work Assignments

Building state water plan - the first update is due March 2008. Talking about a system, better budgeting, channeling resources – it is a living system. The Plan has to address 16 components. The year 2008 sets the stage to continue into the future, the number one priority is getting the data sets together.

2008 – Phase I - there are three things needed:

- Data system
- Regional components
- State plan action agenda for 2013.

Staff has been assigned to each component and all are accountable to Mr. Hines.

1. February through spring *outlines* are to done.
2. Steering – setting agenda through 2013, late 2006 through 2007.
3. Each planning cycle – 2008 has to set the stage to flow into 2013. Build the process for a 20-year basis. Specific recommendations should be done by 2008. 2008 is a baseline, a gap analysis. Sound data is the baseline.
4. Collection of data and template outlines to take to the Spring meetings.

Bill Gast noted that USGS data is a part of this budget. USGS is built directly into this system.

Local Planning Section

Leann Chaney from Indiana County.

- Water resources have not been an area of activity in Indiana County. Our comprehensive Plan is dated 1969 and we are in the process of updating. We have hired consultants to do this plan. We have one formal watershed plan for Crooked Creek Watershed. We have watershed assessments for Blacklick, Aultman Run, and Little Mahoning watersheds. There are problems with acid mine drainage, abandoned mine drainage, and storm runoff on roads.

John Surmacz from Westmoreland County.

- The Comprehensive Plan was adopted last December. There are 200 or 300 action steps in the plan. Some of the water issues – a lot of the communities are upgrading water Infrastructure with 313 money, funding is a problem, and CDBG money is to be cut. Pretty good shape as far as water supply is concerned. Intend to update the plan in another 10 years. We see one of the issues being stormwater management. We have 11 watersheds, and only one, Turtle Creek Watershed, has a plan. Our plan encourages municipalities to adopt stormwater management ordinances. We go to the Authorities for the information on Act 67 & 68.

Brad Beigay from Cambria County.

- Cambria County is split between the Ohio and Susquehanna. They updated their comprehensive plan last year. They did a wellhead protection plan in 1995. A watershed assessment has been done, Chest Creek in 2002, Stonycreek watershed plan is underway. Critical water issue in Cambria County is acid mine discharge into local streams. Also had problem with reliability of surface water, drought problems mostly in the northern counties. Lack of financial resources for small water companies, 35 –50 around the county. Malfunctioning on-lot sewage systems is a big problem. We do have model ordinances for water resources. A water supply plan is needed to guide us in the future. Water quality management and wellhead protection are priorities also. Bethlehem was taken over by CSA and they need more users.

Robby Matesic from Greene County.

- Greene County Commissioners choose to keep everything together. There are serious problems in Greene County. The coal companies are long wall mining. Countywide comprehensive plan is just getting started. CMU study was an assessment on the three rivers. I do need to know what we need to do to fix our problems. We have aerial photography to be generated soon. DCED floodplain planning, PennDOT approving stormwater plans, offered assistance from Agriculture and Corps of Engineers.

Socio-Economic/Land Use Conditions Section

Lori Mohr – We started working on some of the templates. Preliminary draft outline to collect data. Facts on sheets are from GIS, to get a brief picture. These are the things to include in the socio –economic section.

New Business

Ron Rohall noted that we need to read emails and stay updated with what is going on.

Adjourn Business Meeting

Ron Rohall has a motion to adjourn, Gerry Feldman seconds that motion.

MOTION CARRIED.

Business meeting adjourned at 12:30.