

Maine Water Utilities Association's Public Awareness Committee Minutes

Mission: The *Public Awareness Committee* shall communicate to the general public on issues important to the drinking water profession and assist the membership in enhancing public awareness in their local communities.

January 21st, 2004, 9:30 AM
Augusta Water District, Augusta, Maine

Committee Members: Joy Adamson; Mary Jane Dillingham; Kim Marchegiani; Jeffrey McNelly, Jeff Preble, Gary Stevens, Madeline Storer, Brian Tarbuck, Greg Cataldo, Michelle Clements

Committee Members Present: Gary Stevens, Brian Tarbuck, Greg Cataldo, Joy Adamson; Mary Jane Dillingham; Kim Marchegiani

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 AM by Brian Tarbuck.

- There were no corrections to or comments concerning the previous minutes. The minutes were reviewed at length to provide a summary of the previous meeting.
- The PAC defined three primary areas to prioritize in 2004.
 - Safety of drinking water
 - Reliability of drinking water service
 - Value of public drinking water
- The PAC identified three primary outreach mechanisms for 2004:
 - Go out and talk w/ the public on their turf
 - Create a brochure that discusses MWUA, its members and activities
 - Create a poster / posters that discuss varied uses of drinking water.
- Need to see the existing booth and determine whether or not improvements are needed for a more professional image.
- The group discussed data management at the Association level. Many topics that might interest the public could be better supported with more information. This is a liability that exists now, and it should be corrected. Discussion surrounding hiring a person to help assist with data gathering and analysis was deferred to the Board for further review.
- Another topic for Board review was the desire for a Drinking Water Summit here in Maine to review current regulatory agencies' views of drinking water issues and where regulations relating to drinking water are heading in the future. This would facilitate discussion among agencies that don't generally have much to discuss, and would help water utilities gauge environmental issues that could impact operations many years in advance.

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- Shirley did get information about water bottles. For 16.9 ounce (half a liter) water bottles with a "choice of label" and a "sports cap", the costs are: \$2.50 each for 240 bottles, \$1.55 each for 600 bottles, and \$1.00 each for 1,200 bottles.
- The PAC will also request that the MWUA contribute \$500 to the Children's Water Festival. This will make everyone feel good, and it will secure a spot on the back of a T-shirt.
- The PAC agreed that it makes sense to work more closely and participate more with other agencies. Maine Municipal Association, Maine Rural Water Association and the Maine Wastewater Control Association were all mentioned. This might involve presentation, booths, or simply attending these Association's conferences, but the outreach opportunities available should not be ignored.
- Joy Adamson volunteered the Maine Drinking Water Program for a presentation on its work with geographic information system information on the internet. Program Committee members will be notified accordingly.
- A final note was included to raise funds for causes near and dear to water utilities. One of these causes is Water for People. This fund raises money to improve water systems in developing countries. Another is to support the Bikers Against E. coli. BAEC rides in the Maine Lung Association's Trek Across Maine each June to support clean air and awareness of drinking water issues too. Suggestions included a dunk tank for the August clambake, and 50/50 raffles at the Trade Show.
- Next meeting: Tuesday, February 10th, 2004, 11:45 am, Woodard and Curran booth, then lunch.
- Meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

Significant Drinking Water Events Timeline

Events in italics represent unknown dates.

Date	Event	Outreach Opportunities	Lead PAC contact
February 10 – 11	MWUA February Trade Show	Booth & Presentation	McNelly
February 27	Maine Milfoil Summit http://www.cascobay.usm.maine.edu/cal.html	Attend	Water Resources Committee
March 27 th / 28 th	Maine Sportsman Show Contact: Harry VanDerweide (sp?), 626-3315 (already full for 2004; contact for 2005)	Booth	Cataldo Marchegiani
<i>March ??</i>	Maine Environmental Education Association	www.meeassociation.org	
April 16	Maine Water Conference	Booth & Presentation	Dillingham Rossiter
May 2 – 8	Drinking Water Week	Press Coverage & Presentation	Adamson
May 23	Southern Maine Children's Water Festival	Booth & Presentation	Dillingham Tarbuck Stevens
<i>August ???</i>	MWUA Annual Clambake	Mingling?	
September 24 - 26	MOFGA Common Ground Fair	Booth	Tarbuck
<i>October ??</i>	Maine Municipal Association Conference	Booth & Presentation	Cataldo
<i>October 12</i>	Northern Maine Children's Water Festival	Booth & Presentation	Stevens Dillingham
<i>November ???</i>	Geographic Information System (GIS) Day	Presentation	
<i>December ??*</i>	MRWA Conference & Exhibition	Booth & Presentation	