

Maine Water Utilities 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.

May 20th, 2003, 9:30 AM
Portland Water District, Portland, Maine

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

Committee Members Present: Brian Tarbuck; Gary Stevens; Jeff McNelly; Madeline Storer, Greg Cataldo, Joy Adamson, Mary Jane Dillingham, guest Michelle Clements

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 am by Gary Stevens.

- There were no comments or corrections on the previous minutes.
- Gary asked for news clippings. This generated discussion about the AWWA fly-in that Jeff McNelly and Jeff LaCasse attended some weeks ago. Jeff said they discussed funding issues and sustainable water use issues with congressional delegates and that it was generally fruitful.
- Joy brought up an issue that Limerick is having with a pond that has been infested with a non-native, invasive plant called “hydrilla”. See <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/weeds/hydrilla.html> for details. MJ discussed the DEP’s proposed use of herbicide to exterminate this plant, expressing concern that the herbicide proposed (fluridone; trade name Sonar; http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/plants/management/fluridone_strategies.html) could cause “daughter products” that have been linked to cancer. So far, the hydrilla has been confined to the pond in Limerick. The group was concerned how the DEP might contain this plant to a single pond, and how hydrilla might affect public water supply sources if it is introduced. Significant discussion led to the conclusion that MJ and Michelle would write up a short release on hydrilla and why the Association is concerned with it, with an emphasis on the need to clean your boat etc...
- There was discussion about LD 707 which had to do with notification of water supplies before herbicides could be used.
- Gary’s watershed article came up again attached to the question, “what do we do with this?”. After lengthy discussion the group concluded that the ideas contained in the article had merit, but were too generic to be picked up in toto as an article in the local press. However, the decision was made to add some comments about SWAP to the head of the article and send it to the Board for review. At the same time, the article would be sent to the surface water supplies in the state along with a request for their local stories. What is going on in Ellsworth? Presque Isle? Canton? We need that information so we can help local utilities put the word out to their local press outlets.

Public Awareness Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Page 2

- Jeff provided an update on website progress. The web address at www.mwua.org now represents the FrontPage website. Brian is still unable to edit the MWUA website from work. Joy Adamson is capable of logging onto the MWUA website and has authoring ability.
- Jeff discussed the outline of the website and walked through the elements that worked (i.e. made the successful transition from ColdFusion to FrontPage) and those that didn't. The malfunctioning items included the member directory, special events, membership submit, search functionality, sell/swap ; bulletin board. MWUA is waiting for a proposal from Ludo Bruyere from XWave on the member directory, calendar and bulletin board items.
- Brian asked Jeff to email him a list of members so that this could be converted to the Adobe Acrobat format for posting to the website until the member directory is available in a database form.
- Joy reported that Drinking Water Week was a success from the perspective of the Drinking Water Program, though she indicated that Baldacci lacks the personality that King brought to the office. The theatre group continues to be a success and is very well received by the kids who get to see it.
- The Southern Maine Children's Water Festival is a go, although it will not include classroom time. Gary and Jared Stevens will be attending along with Carrie Rossiter and Brian Tarbuck. Carrie will bring a complement of pens, waterwheels, pencils and other freebies to give away. The theme will be watershed protection and may include unicycle demonstrations by Jared's dad.
- Gary expressed concern about the PAC and what it's direction is supposed to be. This generated significant conversation about the PAC's mission statement and the goals required of it by the Board of Directors. Gary believes that the group should return to a more goal oriented group that has assignments, deadlines and thus forces production. The group nodded in agreement, and the following tasks were assigned.
 - Press release for Dover Foxcroft – Brian
 - Press release for October meeting – Greg
 - Press release for CCR notification – Madeline
 - Press release for SWAP activities - ? talk with Andy Tolman
- Several goals were discussed. These included:
 - publicity regarding municipalization and sustainable water use needs to be at the forefront of our efforts

Public Awareness Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Page 3

- put all CCR's online for utilities that can't otherwise do that (scan and drop into .pdf)
- continue to solicit ideas from utilities and ask them for ways that we can help them get their message out
- Gary asked about displays or booths for public meetings / presentations. The PAC agreed that it would be a good idea to look into creating a portable, professional display that represented what water utilities do, where they're located, etc.
- Jeff indicated that he would contact a local person about constructing a cross-sectional model of a gravel packed well for display.
- The next meeting will include a brief FrontPage training / informational session, and we will invite Andy Tolman to attend.
- The Committee welcomed Michelle Clements as a new member with the understanding that she would not be able to commit to every meeting.

Next meeting: Monday, June 30th, Portland Water District, 13:00 (1:00 PM)

- Meeting was adjourned at 12:25 pm.