



# **RHODE ISLAND BAYS, RIVERS, & WATERSHEDS COORDINATION TEAM**

**Meeting of April 14, 2010**

**Conference Room A**

**2-4 pm**

**RI Department of Environmental Management**

**235 Promenade Street**

**Providence, RI 02908**

**FINAL Minutes**

Coordination Team Members in Attendance: Nancy Hess, Guy Lefebvre, Kathy Crawley, Tom Uva, Sue Kiernan, Mike Walker, Jeff Willis

Coordination Team Staff: Ames Colt

## **Administration**

Meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

*Meeting Minutes for February 26<sup>th</sup> approved.*

## **Introduction to Port Development Opportunities Study Kelly Mahoney, RI Senate Policy Office**

Per the recommendation of the RI Economic Development Corporation Corp, Colt began in February 2010 discussions with Kelly Mahoney of the RI Senate Policy Office about the BRWCT partnering with the Special Legislative Commission to Study Potential Opportunities in the Development of Port Facilities in the State of Rhode Island (the "Port Commission").

Based upon these discussions, it has been proposed that the BRWCT fund and oversee the development of a "Port Economic Opportunities Study." The BRWCT will through this study provide a complete examination of all reasonable means available to better position Rhode Island as a successful maritime trade and marketplace competitor.

Colt distributed a draft RfP to seek such consulting services that he and Mahoney had developed with assistance from DEM for review and discussion. Walker pointed out that the schedule for completing the study is aggressive.

Mahoney replied that based upon detailed conversations with several consultants and port experts, she feels that the current economy has created a lack of available work and consulting firms will price the work competitively and agree to tight timeframes. If during proposal review, a strong bid recommends lengthening the schedule, they will consider that.

Walker added that cost containment problems usually arise with deliverables. He recommended that they have electronic versions of the draft reports posted on on-line.

Walker also said that the time devoted to stakeholder and information collection meetings can become extensive. The draft scope of work could be interpreted to mean a study costing \$150,000.00. The BRWCT will want to make sure that proposals reflect what is available to spend. He suggested adding to the RfP that the budget is not to exceed \$50,000 including expenses related to the production of the report.

Kiernan suggested that they might want to quantify proposal review a bit more so that everyone is bidding on the same perception of what the work is. If the work tasks are going to be defined broadly, then it's helpful for them to put down what the budget is.

Crawley had a suggestion concerning the scope. For task 2, quantifying economic benefits, it will be important understand up front how different the port development opportunities will generate additional demands on existing water supplies.

Mahoney said that they will seek to develop a set of alternative strategies that the State should consider. It would then be up to the State, through whatever mechanism is appropriate, to determine which strategies to pursue in the short-term, and which would require additional research and studies. That would be the point when water supply issues would be considered.

Kiernan added that she thought such considerations were to occur at the end of task 1. After they have collected this data, it will be up to the consultant to identify the respective logistical costs, advantages and disadvantages of alternative port development strategies. If one port development strategy includes a water supply constraint, it will not be assessed as closely.

Crawley asked what it means to quantify economic growth. Walker answered that that is exactly what the proposed scope of work entails – to determine where the “reach” of RI's ports. The port reach is not only in the port or in the neighborhood, like North Kingstown, surrounding the port. It is also the region that the port serves. A port could function as a transfer point or a collection point; it all depends on what the port facilities entail.

Colt said that the emphasis of this work is on identifying opportunities for RI job growth in the maritime transportation sector, including specifying the job-creating potential of alternative development and investment strategies. This may lead to recommendations for attracting businesses that seek specific port services that RI's port's competitively offer..

The study will also consider the benefits of a coordinated, statewide, port development strategy, focusing on three Rhode Island Port regions: Providence/Metro Bay, Quonset, and Newport. The study would not consider commercial fisheries port facilities, planning for which has been conducted by DEM.

Kelly added that the study will look at the entire context of existing ports facilities. A 2002 study of Quonset port development opportunities by Martin & Associates was extremely comprehensive and accounted for a number of other port activities that are or may occur. It's difficult to talk about increasing port capabilities and marketing without understanding who is currently utilizing the port.

Colt reviewed the study's proposed funding. The BRWCT would provide \$25,600 from the FY 2010 OSPAR monitoring allocation, and the balance from the BRWCT revenue account, probably in FY 2011.

Colt said he expects to utilize the BRWCT Economic Monitoring Collaborative to pull together port development stakeholders to support the study and in recognition of recommendations in the Metro Bay SAMP Ports chapter for better industry-state collaboration on port management and development.

*Walker moved that they should move this forward and get it finalized in purchasing. Kiernan seconded. The BRWCT approved the motion unanimously.*

## **Chair's Report**

### BRWCT Revenue Account

Colt provided an update on the BRWCT revenue account (summary appended to the minutes), reporting that about \$420,000 in receipts had been received for FY 2010.

### 2010 Marine Invasives Rapid Assessment

A grant to the MIT Sea Grant/Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel for 2010 Regional Rapid Assessment of Marine Invasive Species was approved by the BRWCT not to exceed \$5,000 utilizing BRWCT Revenue Account funds for FY10. Colt is working with CRMC's Kevin Cote, NEANS Panel member Jan Smith (Mass. Coastal Zone Management Office), and MIT Sea Grant Outreach Coordinator Judith Pederson to process the grant proposal and coordinate the project with CRMC and other funders such as the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program.

### BRWCT FY 2010 2011 Work Plan

Colt distributed the final version of the BRWCT FY 2010 2011 Work Plan (April 2010 Ver.). The revised plan responds to suggestions from BRWCT members made at the last

BRWCT meeting. The BRWCT FY 2010-2011 Work Plan projects a carry-forward to FY 2011 of about \$90,000, with annual receipts estimated at \$420,000.

*The BRWCT approved unanimously the final draft of the Work Plan.*

Colt will distribute copies of the Work Plan to the Governor, the General Assembly, and to other organizations.

#### Overview of the Stream Gage Network.

Colt reviewed expenditures for environmental monitoring in FY 2010 (BRWCT OSPAR monitoring allocation), including the emergency allocation of funds the BRWCT provided for the stream gage network in December 2009.

Kiernan reported that the final emergency allocation was about \$59,000, and that the FY 2011 budget for DEM Office of Water Resources includes the same amount of funding from the BRWCT revenue account to support the USGS stream gage contract that DEM administers.

Colt recommended a revisiting of the monitoring projects supported currently by the BRWCT's annual OSPAR allocation for monitoring, and renewed discussion of additional funding sources for baseline environmental monitoring, via the BRWCT Environmental Monitoring Collaborative.

Walker questioned the assumption that the annual OSPAR allocation for monitoring will continue. The OSPAR account at any time could be drawn down by an actual spill in RI marine waters. It was never intended to serve as a permanent funding source for BRWCT or state monitoring priorities. He urged that the BRWCT be careful about committing long-term its monitoring funds to baseline monitoring programs.

Kiernan suggested that, before the BRWCT's September 2010 meeting, they ask DEM to make a request to Depart. of Administration to having baseline monitoring funds restored to OWR's budget. She recommended that at the BRWCT's June 2010 meeting, re-visit what's going on with the FY 2011 budget and formally request that DEM initiate such a request.

Colt said he will put in the topic of stream gage network support on the agenda for the BRWCT June agenda.

#### Miscellaneous Activities

Colt reviewed his work on the Northeast Great Waters Initiative, done in partnership with the Northeast Regional Ocean Council.

He reviewed the OSAMP chapter review process. The OSAMP fisheries chapter is due to be released for public stakeholder review on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Colt testified in March and April before House and Senate Committees in support of the 2010 Climate Risk Reduction Act. The sections of the bill that call for the creation of

new programs by DEM Office of Planning and Development will not go forward this year, but the Senate is interested in pursuing the recommended establishment of a Climate Change Study Commission.

Colt is working with RI Sea Grant on their multi-year evaluation scheduled for July 2010.

Colt has received the Governor's office approval to proceed with inviting candidates to be nominated to the Science Advisory Committee.

Support for the New England Regional Water Program (lead by URI's Art Gold. and supported by "Section 406" US Department of Agriculture funds) is in jeopardy and Colt is providing support to Director Sullivan and Colt in efforts to ensure continued program funding.

#### Update on the BRWCT/NBEP Integrated Planning Process

The integrated planning work group conducted two productive half-day planning sessions facilitated by Mark Amaral. Colt distributed two documents that were produced by the sessions: a stakeholder map and communications matrix, and a planning project schedule. Colt felt the project work schedule was of more importance to the BRWCT. The planning process will conclude in the Spring of 2011. Because there are so many deadlines, they will need to do a lot of work fairly quickly.

One of the topics discussed by the IP work group was the interest of some to establish more quantitative goals in the future Integrated Plan. The IP work group resolved that, when feasible, quantitative goals would be put forward. Colt urged that if BRWCT members had any thoughts on this, this is the time for them to let him and the rest of the IP work group know.

Crawley said that it made sense to get more quantitative at a programmatic level; but when they come up to the level of the State Guide Plan, there's less of that because it won't be the same kind of quantifying that you would do with an agency responsible for carrying out the plan.

Kiernan added that DEM Office of Water has always been reluctant about setting quantitative management goals. They are often asked by EPA what specifically will be cleaned up next year. But the length of time it takes to restore a body of water, so that it can be officially removed from the "33(d) list", is not a one and two and three-year project, unless it's a small water body with a simple problem. DEM has prioritized the Narrow River as an area they would like to see restored for shellfishing. Kiernan agreed that, based on the communications imperatives alone, there is a need for better performance criteria and metrics, DEM and other BRWCT agencies have to do better quantifying goals and programmatic expectations.

Colt said that the EPA/DEM Performance Partnership Agreement does stipulate quantitative goals on annual timescales.

Hess said that it's difficult for Planning, because a lot of what they do is not quantifiable.

Proposed alignment of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program with the BRWCT

Colt distributed a new proposal to align the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program with BRWCT. He reviewed discussions of similar proposals made in the past two years and asked for feedback on the latest proposal. Colt is scheduled to discuss this proposal with NBEP on April 29. He emphasized that he considered the latest proposal an initial step in an important discussion that RI, BRWCT, EPA Region I, and the NBEP need to have.

He plans to circulate the proposal widely and seek comment and refinement on it over the next two months. Then it or a revised version of the proposal will be placed on the agenda of the BRWCT June meeting for further discussion and possible endorsement.

*Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm*