



RHODE ISLAND BAYS, RIVERS, & WATERSHEDS COORDINATION TEAM

May 28, 2008

RI Economic Development Corporation

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Coordination Team Members in Attendance: Kevin Flynn, Sue Kiernan (for Michael Sullivan), Guy Lefebvre, Juan Mariscal, Mike Walker (for Saul Kaplan), Jeff Willis (for Mike Tikoian), Tom Uva (for Ray Marshall)

Other Meeting Participants: Kathleen Crawley, Greg Gerritt, Chris Powell, Jane Sherman, Curt Spalding

Coordination Team Staff: Ames Colt, Melissa Stanziale

CT Administration:

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

Colt requested approval of draft minutes for March 26, 2008 meeting.

Motion passed unanimously to approve the 3/26/08 meeting minutes.

Update on Subcommittees:

Colt reported that he has been working with Matthew Wojcik, of the Governor's Office, in order to update and renew the CT Subcommittee rosters. The Governor has signed off on the list of proposed names assembled by Colt and Wojcik.

The PAC and SAC have not met for some time, and Colt recommends that they should not reconvene until the 09 Budget is declared. Colt has met with SAC Chair Donald Pryor, who would like the CT to establish an agenda and priority list, formally approve it, and send it to the SAC. Hopefully, something can be set up for approval in June. During their meeting they discussed two possible initiatives for the SAC: science education (primarily for high school students and up) & the development of research strategies in terms of CT initiatives. Colt advises that they deemphasize the science education objective for the time and focus on research strategy development. Colt stated that it is unclear how the BRWC will align with the SAC, but someone must begin looking at scientific research in terms of how it relates to strategic priorities laid out in the BRW SLP.

There is also an issue of leadership and support, in regard to the Economic Monitoring Collaborative. Colt will serve as interim chair and Melissa will provide administrative support for the time being.

Budget Article 30 Implementation:

The septage fee is going forward with no difficulties.

The cable fee has still not been formally approved by the CRMC. It next meets on May 27th. At this point it seems very unlikely that the cable fee will be established so that cable owners could be invoiced for the period of FY 2008. This will result in a loss of up to \$150,000. Colt advised that BRWCT personnel costs will have to be covered by the revenues generated by the Budget Article 30 fee revenues.

Colt also reported that he is going to acquire a summer intern, a finance major from UNH, in order to assist with his work on a financial analysis of the agencies connected to the BRWCT.

SLP-Public Review Draft:

Colt met with several Legislators, including Representatives Malik, Handy, & Naughton. They are generally supportive by the SLP and the efforts of the BRWCT to date.

The BRWCT legislation is silent as to how the SLP should relate to the State Guide Plan. Colt has been discussing this issue with Kevin Flynn and Jared Rhodes. Flynn would like to reduce the voluminous State Guide Plan to something more succinct and more accessible. Also, a decision must be made fairly soon as to how the CCMP relates to the SLP.

Colt then reviewed briefly the comments received to date on the SLP Public Review Draft.

The Rivers Council

- The SLP does not adequately account for freshwater issues – rivers are also waterfronts.
- DEM's freshwater & watershed policies not adequately recognized or incorporated into the Draft.
- There is not enough on watershed restoration & remediation.
- Land Use 2025 & the Rivers Plan are not given enough emphasis.
- absence of LU 2025 and DEM policies regarding riverfronts.
- Freshwater transportation should be emphasized more than it is in SLP. (The Rivers Council does recognize that this is not economically viable at this time, but they believe there should be some kind of vision statement.)
- The 2015 goal for swimmable/fishable waters in the upper Bay is not mentioned.
- There is not enough on the protection of URBAN environments & waterways.
- Freshwater fisheries are not mentioned. (Colt mentioned that he left this out purposely because he is not sure how much can be said about it productively.

Marines Fisheries is bigger and overall has more management issues. However, he agrees that something should be mentioned about this.)

- Jane Sherman, of the Rivers Council, summarized their comments by saying that this is not only intended to be a bay document; it is also about equalizing emphasis on rivers and watersheds.

Water Resources Board:

- WRB has drafted a new water supply section for plan. Colt will circulate it when available to the other BRWCT agencies.
- There was general concern expressed over the content of the SLP in terms of new legislation regarding RI's freshwater resources. Colt is concerned about major new legislative mandates would not be captured in the SLP. Kiernan recommended that if the legislation is altered, it must be reflected in the plan, but they should not try to capture everything that everyone is doing at once.
- Mariscal observed that the only fiscal year this plan could possibly have an impact on is 2010, but the title page says 2008-12. Colt concurred and said that this could be changed. He asked members if they wanted to start with 2009 instead.
- Walker responded to Mariscal's comment by saying that plan's objectives would not be accomplished within three updates, so what is there to amend? They would be constantly updating the document.
- Mariscal said that if that is the case, should they simply not have a date? Is this going to be a plan that is worked on by any at any time? Walker answered – yes.
- Colt interjected by saying that he felt 4-5 years was a good time period for a plan.
- Mariscal cautioned that the longer the document gets, the less likely it is to be read. People will be looking for specific "to do" lists within the plan, so they must be included.
- Colt said that the final document will be approximately 20-25 pages longer than it is now. They must develop an executive summary for the people who cannot read the entire thing. He is holding out developing on a priority list until the SLP is more thoroughly vetted.
- Flynn commented that he noticed there are a lot of things in the plan that are never going to be completed. The strategies are all ongoing, continuous activities as opposed to specific actions. He asked if Colt is planning to prepare a list of more specific actions. He said that this was not a criticism, but a general question about how detailed the team wants the plan to be?

- Colt replied that if the strategies are too general, then the BRWCT needs to work to make them more focused. That will be a challenge, however, as everyone is very conservative in the current fiscal climate. He would like to have the language in the columns to reflect a 4-5 year orientation.
- Flynn asked if Colt wants to have all of the columns filled in the SLP Final Draft.
- Colt answered that he would like to fill up the “Agency Actions” column more but that much of the work to specify Agency Actions should occur during development of the Annual Work Plans. The point is to assemble an SLP that will enable the BRWCT agencies to do the annual work planning/budgeting. In terms of communicating SLP priorities to a broader public, summary documents will be developed and circulated.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.