



RHODE ISLAND BAYS, RIVERS, & WATERSHEDS COORDINATION TEAM

June 25, 2008

RI Economic Development Corporation

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Coordination Team Members in Attendance: Nancy Hess (for Kevin Flynn), Guy Lefebvre, Juan Mariscal, Robert Ballou (for Michael Sullivan), Tom Uva (for Ray Marshall), Jeff Willis (for Grover Fugate)

Other Meeting Participants: Jane Austen, Meg Kerr, Chris Deacutis

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 May 28, 2008 meeting.

Motion passed unanimously to approve the 5/28/08 meeting minutes.

Budget Article 30 Implementation:

AT &T submitted comments to CRMC on June 13 regarding the proposed trans-Atlantic submarine cable fees. Colt will submit to CRMC a response to AT&T's comments on behalf of the BRWCT. CRMC intends to continue its public hearing on the fee at its July meeting.

AT&T has noted that several of the four cables it operates are not currently functioning and have been disconnected from the land station. The fee amount has yet to be confirmed. If the fee schedule is approved, the fee will take affect for FY09.

The BRWCT Restricted Receipt fund will remain in the red due to personnel costs until the winter of 08-09. However, the allocation of \$250,000 from the OSPAR account for the BRWCT will continue in FY2009.

Kiernan has been working on contract renewal with USGS for the three stream gauges the BRWCT supports and for the large river monitoring program and estimates that

\$170,000-180,000 will be needed for these two monitoring programs, a 15% increase from FY 2008. Kiernan will provide more precise costs estimates for the July BRWCT meeting.

Subcommittees:

Environmental Monitoring Collaborative

Colt will talk to August, Kiernan, and UVA about reconvening the Environmental Monitoring Collaborative prior to the BRWCT's July 23rd meeting to provide recommendations on environmental monitoring for FY 2009.

There is a strong need to continue with monitoring programs already underway such as the large river & stream gauge monitoring efforts. The upper bay fixed –site network must also continue but should have sufficient financial support.

Fresh water beach monitoring was also given high priority for funding by the Env. Monitoring Collaborative. Unfortunately, funds are not available to support this program in 2008. Colt recommended that the BRWCT consider additional monitoring priorities at its July 23 meeting and confirm its support for USGS contract renewal for large river monitoring and the stream gauges.

Science Advisory Committee

The SAC and Colt are seeking guidance and mandate for the SAC from the BRWCT. Comments and feedback were solicited to a June 6 memo circulated to the BRWCT from Colt regarding the SAC. Accordingly, Colt proposed the following motion:

The BRWCT requests that the SAC Chair and membership work with the BRWCT Chair to develop a written response to the BRWCT Chair's June 16 memo regarding setting an agenda for the SAC.

This response should include:

- 1) A brief description of how the SAC will address one or more of the 3 tasks delineated in the June 16 memo; and*
- 2) An updated roster.*

The BRWCT respectfully requests the SAC's response be submitted to BRWCT by September 17, one week before the September meeting of the BRWCT.

This motion was passed unanimously.

Public Advisory Committee

At its June meeting, the PAC recommended a second round of public review upon issuance of the final draft of the BRWCT. Accordingly, Colt announced that he would

accept comments on the SLP Final Draft from the BRWCT until Friday June 27 and then release the final draft for a second round of public review on the 27th. Public comments on the final draft would be accepted until July 18. A final version of the BRW SLP will be circulated to the BRWCT on Monday July 21 with the BRWCT to consider endorsement of the final version at its July 23 meeting. An executive summary of the SLP will be drafted in August.

The BRW SLP Final Draft:

- Revised and expanded the major issues sections and the introduction.
- There is a brand new water supply section drafted by WRB.
- Shifted the timeframe to FY 2009-13.
- Cost estimates for SLP implementation will be developed subsequent to completion of the SLP.
- Strategy Tables refined and expanded.

General Comments:

- Nancy Hess asked why the actions and responsible agencies were combined in a single column and recommended that an agency lead column be created. Colt agreed.
- Willis commented that an agency lead column is probably a good idea because other agencies will see it and they will see how they can participate.
 - Hess cautioned that sometimes, if you don't put an agency down they will claim to have no responsibility. It is important to be specific.
 - Colt said that he would assign agency responsibilities which the BRWCT could review and confirm.
 - Willis suggested that maybe they should indicate the major agency, and then less responsible agencies.
 - Colt asked if they wanted to list actions that are the responsibility of one agency.
 - Willis answered yes, in order to educate other agencies and make them remember it.
 - Tom Uva asked if all of these strategies are important for 2009-13. If so, then they should fill in related agency actions.
 - Colt answered that he could not fill in the agency actions, it's really up to them. He hopes that more actions can be inserted over the next month.

- Uva stated that the real question is whether the BRWCT should delegate responsibilities.

Watershed Section:

- Hess advised that technical support could be provided by the Division of Planning to develop community asset maps, but most likely not financial support. She recommended that that recommendation be struck.
- Colt suggested that Hess, Nelson, Rhodes, and Millar should work out what is meant by Community Asset Map.

Water-Reliant Economy:

- Some material about water-based transportation and commuters and dredging recommendations/regulations have been added to the final draft.
- Meg Kerr suggested that this section should celebrate freshwater & inland sources as well.
- Hess said that the recommendations should focus on industrial/commercial maritime transportation and de-emphasize commuter water-based transportation.

Natural Hazards:

- Sherman stated that this section should give greater consideration to river flooding.
- Kerr mentioned that although CRMC has taken the lead on sea-level rise and related climate change challenges, could the BRWCT engage other agencies in these issues?
- Jane Austen suggested some changes to the Strategy Table for Natural Hazards. Colt asked her to propose the language and send it to him. If there is more on river flooding, he would like to know more about it, & dams as well.

Water Quality Strategy:

Colt emphasized this section's strong orientation toward Clean Water Act mandates.

Uva asked that other point sources discharging into the Bay and its tributaries be assessed more thoroughly in relation to the region's wastewater treatment plants.

Fisheries and Aquaculture:

- Colt noted how strongly Rhode Island fisheries management policies are oriented to federal and inter-state management imperatives.
- There are no actions for this section; DEM fisheries staff needs to provide input.

Aquatic Habitats & Invasive Species:

- An important recommended action is to find funding for a statewide habitat restoration coordinator.
- Tom Ardito is working on this and may have more to report in a month.
- Insana suggested that Colt look at Plymouth, MA because they have an environmental planner in addition to a town planner.

Conclusion:

- Colt reiterated that he will have the final draft for public review on the website by midday on Friday.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.