

Minutes from the Indiana Water Monitoring Council Board of Directors meeting (9/8/2009)

Next scheduled meeting: November 10, 2009

Action Items (these items were not voted upon but were recommended by those in attendance):

- Send Board reminder to review InWMC Web site and register as general members as part of beta test (Shawn)
- Add water policy and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) to rolodex expertise list (Shawn)
- Address Web site feedback from Board and present Web site to General Membership and public by October 1, 2009 (Communications Committee)
- Schedule October Technical Resources Compilation Committee meeting (Ernie Johnson)
- Schedule October Coordination and Collaboration Committee meeting (Bill Guertal)
- Schedule October Research, Education, and Outreach Compilation Committee meeting (Ruben Goforth)

Attendees (7 total, 6 voting members):

Scott Morlock, United States Geological Survey (USGS)
Jody Arthur, Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM)
Cindy Muffett, Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District
Shawn Naylor, Indiana Geological Survey (IGS)
Stu Shipman, Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

Via conference call

Leighanne Hahn, Indiana Office of the State Chemist (IOSC)

General Membership attendee

Ernie Johnson, Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM)

Jody Arthur: calls the meeting to order at 10:10 am

Jody Arthur: We do not have a quorum so there will be no voting today.

Projects in Committee

Jody Arthur: Can we get an update on the Communications Committee?

Scott Morlock: We are currently conducting a beta test after the Communications Committee: Shawn Naylor, Ernie Johnson, Elizabeth Trybula, Sally Letsinger, and myself recently finished developing the Web site. Sally did a lot of work on the site and we now have a finished product that we have presented to the Board to test the member-tracking mechanism and get feedback on general functionality before we roll the site out to the General Membership.

Jody Arthur: I've looked through the site and it functions well with good formatting. Can the expertise categories be amended to include a field for people to enter a short bio? For some people, such as myself, none of the categories exactly capture what they do so entering a bio might be better. Is this an option?

Shawn Naylor: I think the problem there lies in the canned nature of the Wild Apricot site template. We can add as many categories as we want, but I'm not aware of a fill-in option. If there is another category, such as water policy, that will better describe your role then we can add that to the expertise list.

Leighanne Hahn: Can we add personal Web sites to the rolodex?

Shawn Naylor: Yes, once people login, they have access to all the contact information that a member enters including email address, mailing address, phone number, and a Web site if they have one.

Leighanne Hahn: This is a nice marketing tool for the Council so we need to make it clear that the rolodex is a benefit of being a member.

Scott Morlock: Several Board members have logged-on to the site, but should we send out a reminder to the rest Board so we can try to get them to login as well.

Several: Yes.

Scott Morlock: With regard to events, what limits and scope do we want to establish? Do we want to post all of the workshops that are out there? Is there a certain protocol that we want to establish where someone wanting to post an event needs to contact a certain individual?

Jody Arthur: I think that we need to go back to the Council's mission statement and use that as a guideline to determine whether or not an event is appropriate.

Scott Morlock: Ok, but is there a certain individual that will be applying this filter?

Shawn Naylor: During our last Communications Committee meeting, we discussed the possibility of having Ernie (Johnson) fill this role.

Ernie Johnson: Essentially, I would be filling the role of an initial filter for events. I have already compiled a list of 25 organizations that hold meetings or workshops that we should consider contacting to see if they have events that we can post on our Web site. This would be a value benefit for these organizations and their members to join the Council.

Jody Arthur: I think this is a good idea as long as Ernie has the time. In the future, can we add a utility such that we can separate technical events aimed to water resources professionals and outreach events aimed at the general public.

Scott Morlock: I'd like to propose that we have Ernie fill the role of events coordinator with him going through the president, instead of the entire Board, before making final decisions on events.

Ernie Johnson: Can we implement separate categories for events as Jody mentioned?

Shawn Naylor: Not that I know of. The calendar view, as opposed to the list, allows viewers to screen through and see what events are more technical in nature and what events are outreach oriented.

Ernie Johnson: I can try to make it clear in the title of the event what the nature of that event is.

Jody Arthur: There are events that will blur the distinction between technical and outreach oriented so maybe it is best to let individuals determine for themselves who the target audience is for different events.

Cindy Muffett: Since we will be posting these events for other organizations, can we request that they return the favor and post our Web site on theirs?

Jody Arthur: This does raise an interesting question. Should we start making some phone calls to other organizations and see if they can post who we are and what we do?

Stu Shipman: Cindy, do you think that each one of the soil and water conservation districts would want to post event information on the site?

Jody Arthur: Another option is to have an umbrella organization, such as the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, provide information. They may prefer that we simply provide a link to their site in order to avoid duplicating information that they are already providing. It seems like we may need to contact them directly and see what their preference is.

Leighanne Hahn: Maybe we can put this issue into a more black and white context and then wait until the next Board meeting to make a final call.

Jody Arthur: I agree that we need to determine how much effort we really want to put towards soliciting other organizations to provide us with event information. It seems like once we move forward, organizations will be coming to us and there will not be a need for us to ask others what events they would like us to post.

Shawn Naylor: My only concern there is that we don't want to delay the site rollout until the next Board of Directors meeting.

Jody Arthur: I agree – there's no reason why this issue should delay the rollout. We should move forward with the rollout, but at the next Board meeting we will need to address how we go about gathering events information, and what filter do we use to determine whether or not an event is appropriate.

Stu Shipman: Speaking of a rollout date, do we want to go ahead and establish a date? How about we give the Board a couple more weeks to review the site and make comments and then do the rollout shortly after that deadline.

Shawn Naylor: We could make the deadline September 25 for Board feedback and then establish an October 1 rollout date.

Several in agreement.

Jody Arthur: Let's move on to the Organization Structure Committee.

Stu Shipman: We have determined that obtaining 501(c)3 status is the best route and it shouldn't be too difficult to get this done. The biggest lingering question is whether or not we should incorporate with the Indiana Secretary of State before filing with the federal government.

Jody Arthur: From what I have read, we will need to incorporate with the State before collecting money. I have obtained some information from the Secretary of State, but Stu, Shawn, and I need to meet and figure out how we are going to move forward, in particular, what the proper sequence of action needs to be. We will plan on meeting before the next Board meeting.

Jody Arthur: Can we get an update from the Coordination and Collaboration Committee?

Scott Morlock: Bill has been very busy and plans to schedule a meeting sometime in October.

Jody Arthur: Do we have an update from the Resource, Education, and Outreach Committee?

Leighanne Hahn: Ruben has also been very busy lately and will also likely be scheduling a meeting sometime in October.

Jody Arthur: Do we have an update from the Resource Compilation Committee?

Ernie Johnson: We have several committee members that have recently started classes so I was unable to establish a meeting date during August as originally planned. We plan to meet in late September right now.

New Business

Scott Morlock: The recent National Water Quality Monitoring Council webinar primarily consisted of an introduction to the ongoing webinar series. Following each webinar, notes will be posted and I will send those to Shawn so he can distribute them to the Board.

Stu Shipman: Are these webinars to occur monthly?

Scott Morlock: They will be either monthly or bi-monthly and each one lasts for about 2 hours. There are a limited number of slots available for those planning to sit-in but there should be enough such that anyone from the Council will be able to participate.

Jody Arthur: Looking at the agenda, I think we've already addressed the upcoming events during the Communications Committee discussion. Is there anything else?

Jody Arthur: The next item is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Ohio River Basin Study.

Shawn Naylor: (gives overview of study - available here: <http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/pao/News/OhioRiverBasinStudy.htm>) The Army Corps has requested feedback from non-profit organizations and government entities. It seems with the September 30 deadline that we do not have a sufficient amount of time to provide feedback, but can we use this as an example for the future. The Council appears to be a likely organization that would provide feedback in these situations. In the future, how could the Council work to respond to this sort of solicitation for feedback regarding water resource issues?

Jody Arthur: This is another aspect of collaboration and coordination that we have yet to figure out.

Scott Morlock: I think Shawn is right that this solicitation for feedback is the sort of request that the Council should try to provide feedback for.

Shawn Naylor: I'll give the information to you Scott and then you can give it to Bill Guertal and see if he wants to present it to the Coordination and Collaboration Committee so they can think about an appropriate course of action in the future.

Jody Arthur: Right now, I think the Coordination and Collaboration Committee is focused on coming up with a state-wide monitoring plan, but to address other collaboration issues such as this, maybe we need to think about establishing a coordination strategy much like we are currently working on coming up with a communications strategy.

Stu Shipman: Along these same lines, there has also been discussion on who will do water quality monitoring to address the Gulf Coast hypoxia issue. Someone needs to also establish a work plan for this issue and there are other initiatives such as the Great Lakes coastal programs that we may, at some point, want to think about assisting with work plan development.

Scott Morlock: The Silver Jackets program is a good example for how a group can work together to facilitate interagency coordination to address a particular issue, which in their case is flood risk mitigation.

Wrap up / Next Steps

Jody Arthur: The final issue we need to address is whether or not we want to revisit the Board meeting schedule. Some individuals may have a hard time attending because Tuesdays don't work out for them. I know Bill Jones has indicated that Tuesdays are difficult for him.

Leighanne Hahn: That is likely due to a class scheduling issue and class schedules change every semester.

Stu Shipman: As long as we continue to have phone access, then we are trying to accommodate to those with scheduling issues. It seems like our main problem today is that we're meeting the day after a holiday.

Jody Arthur: Let's plan to stick with the current schedule then.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25am