

Pure Water Forum Board Meeting

February 6, 2015

DEQ Valley Regional Office

Attendees

Joe Lehnen (DOF)	Mary Gessner (LFSWCD)	Anita Riggleman (HRRSA)
Otis Bilkins (HWSWCD)	Erin Yancey (CSPDC)	Stephanie Chapman (USFS)
John McCloskey (Merk)	James Moneymaker (DEQ)	Charlie Newton (SVSWCD)
Jean Andrews (ACSA)	CJ Mitchem (URRR)	Chris Anderson (WHFF)
Paul Bugas (DGIF)	Wayne Webb (FOSR)	Jeff Rinker (MillerCoors)
Bruce Rinker (VCC)	Megen Dalton (SVSWCD)	Beverly Pearce (Denizen Media)
Laura Naftel (PATB)	Tara Sieber (DEQ)	Tom Benzing (TU)
Tammy Stone (HRS)	Nesha McRae (DEQ)	Stephanie Langton (NSVRC)
Brad Fink (DGIF)	Wyatt Pearson (NSVRC)	

Approval of meeting minutes

Tom Benzing began the meeting by noting that Ben Craig had a family emergency and was unable to attend today's meeting. As past president, Tom said that he would step in and lead the meeting in his place. Tom asked for approval of the board meeting minutes from December 2014, Mary Gessner made a motion to approve, Joe Lehnen seconded and the motion carried.

Correspondence

Nesha McRae shared two items under correspondence:

- River Rally in New Mexico (May 1-4), scholarships are available
- Environment VA is coming up at VMI in Lexington

Treasurers Report

Otis Bilkins distributed a financial summary for 2014 along with a financial report for January 1, 2015 through February 5, 2015 including information on the Peak at the Bay Program sponsorship. Otis noted that the funds from Merck were received this morning. There are some outstanding membership dues that still remain. Otis will be following up on this. Joe Lehnen made a motion to approve the financial reports, Charlie Newton seconded and the motion carried.

Presidents Report

The Executive committee has met twice since the last board meeting. The final report for the 2014 DEQ grant has been submitted along with the Pure Water Forum's 2015 grant proposal to DEQ for grant funds. Nesha updated the group on this grant contract. It is having to go through the sole source procurement process which has delayed award of the funding. As a result of being a sole source contract, the agreement cannot cover any pre-award costs. This includes partner project activities supported under the grant. The contract is currently being circulated through DEQ for final approval and should be sent out to the Forum later this month. Suggestions were offered regarding ways to speed up the award process so that this lag period in the award will not occur next year including issuing the RFA earlier in 2015. A \$5000 contribution was received from MillerCoors. Ben Craig submitted a letter to the company summarizing PWF's activities for the year, which was instrumental in getting the funding. Tom Benzing shared a summary of accomplishments by the Forum in 2014 compared to 2013

(Shenandoah Valley Pure Water Forum by the Numbers). Tom noted that on average, 69% of board members attended board meetings in 2014. Attendance at board meetings remained the same between the two years. Bruce Rinker asked about the number of voting board members that are allowed based on the bylaws, Tom said that the cap is 15. Bruce asked what the board composition looks like and how this relates to the Forum's mission and objectives. Tom explained that there are a series of categories for board member representatives based on interests identified in the bylaws in order to ensure a diverse and representative board.

Small Grants Committee

Nesha presented the revised small grants program materials and requested approval of the revisions by the board. The materials have been revised to increase flexibility of the program so that proposals can be continually reviewed and evaluated. Review dates were removed from the request for proposals. In addition, the materials no longer include a reference to a board approval requirement (instead, approvals will be made by the Executive Committee). Otis made the motion to approve the materials. Jean Andrews asked why tree plantings are specifically called out under supplies in the materials and suggested revising it to be more general (e.g. materials for BMP implementation). Charlie Newton seconded and recommended approving the new materials with the potential for making adjustments next year. The motion carried. Tom asked whether it was clear in the revised request for proposals that board approval is not necessary (only Executive Committee approval), or whether a separate motion is needed to give the Executive Committee that authority. Nesha noted that this is clarified and that a second motion should not be necessary.

Nesha reviewed proposals submitted to the Forum in December and January. A proposal submitted by Valley Conservation Council still needs board approval in order to move forward. Nesha explained that this proposal was for funds to hold the Kites and Critters Day on a farm in Staunton again in 2015 (PWF supported this event in 2014). It was a great success last year with a wonderful turnout. Otis made the motion to approve the Valley Conservation Council small grants proposal for the Kites and Critters day, Tom seconded the motion to approve. Charlie Newton asked how repeated requests for recurring events should be handled. Nesha suggested handling them on a case by case basis. The motion to approve the funding in the amount of \$500 carried. Megen Dalton asked how the period of the award is determined, is it based on the calendar year, or a year since the application was received. Tom said that they can be awarded on a rolling basis so we are not bound by the calendar year. Bruce Rinker noted that Kites and Critters is going to change each year and build on other events. This year it will follow Earth Day. VCC would like to really build on the community aspect of the event. Otis suggested submitting the invoice to him electronically to get a faster turnaround rather than mailing it.

Education Committee

Tammy Stone noted that there is interest in replicating the Peak at the Bay Program in other schools in Rockingham County. Laura Naftel provided an update on Peak at the Bay activities. Montevideo Middle School has set a date for their canoe trip (May 28th). They will be floating a portion of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, and Laura is interested in having a biologist come out and talk to the students about the river. They have had a difficult time narrowing down a date for a trip to the Bay for 7th graders. They are looking at taking the trip sometime in mid September. Laura wanted to thank the Friends of the North Fork for their donation of two Shenandoah River Atlases to Montevideo Middle School so that they could learn about the history of the Shenandoah River. They are considering doing a Cub Run clean up. They are struggling to find a large enough property for everyone to clean up. Laura is working on coordinating something for this spring, but this will depend on finding a property. Laura has been looking at difficulties with the program from last fall. The greatest challenge has been getting

permissions from parents and failure to complete forms correctly. Laura would like to develop a website with forms to fill out. Megen Dalton said that the SVSWCD could help with this. Tammy Stone noted that forms could be put on a Google drive since all middle schools have one now. Tom noted that the Forum now has a Constant Contact subscription and that perhaps this could be used to assist with distribution of forms.

Website Committee

The committee met on February 5th. They discussed the possibility of having a form on the website that people could fill out to receive information about the Forum. There is a membership form up on the site right now. Jean asked that people look at the existing form and see if there are any changes that they would like to see made. Previously funded projects are currently listed as a drop down under grants. This looks a little funny as it is now and the committee suggested splitting this up. The employment opportunities page is receiving a lot of attention. Jean's biggest issue is trying to get old postings taken down once they have been filled. Jean noted that the site could use new pictures as well as other new stories that will help keep the site up to date and relevant. Bruce Rinker asked if the Pure Water Forum can accept donations on their website. Tom said that this is currently not an option. Otis noted that doing a pay pal donation button on the website had been discussed but not pursued due to the cost. Other means for soliciting donations like simply providing an address and a compelling statement could be considered.

Board Development Committee

Tom noted that this committee is listed as a standing committee under our bylaws. In the past, this committee has put together a slate of officers for each year. The Executive Committee has been discussing the need to make this a standing committee. Ben Craig put together a draft charter for this committee. Tom asked the board to look at the charter and provide feedback. Joe Lehnen stated that he thought that the formation of a standing committee makes good sense and recommended proceeded. Tom asked Joe if he would be willing to serve on this committee. Tom explained that the Executive Committee proposed having members of the nominating committee from this past year serve on this committee (Joe, Tom, Hobey and Dawn) and add another member. Bruce Rinker offered to serve on this committee and share his experiences from VCC, who is going through this right now.

Watershed Hero Award

The award is typically made at the last board meeting of the year, but was postponed until the February meeting. Tom noted the wonderful work that Paul has done surveying trout streams in Virginia and noted how Paul is featured in a book by Chris Kamuto. Paul has served on the PWF board since it was founded, served as the treasurer for several years, organizes annual float trips, helped lead the fish kill task force, serves on the South River Science Team, and has been an excellent partner in public outreach for the region. The Pure Water Forum will donating \$200 to the Headwaters Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists in Paul's name. Paul thanked the Forum for its recognition.

Board Meeting Venues and Presentations

The Executive Committee is looking for ideas on meeting locations and potential presenters for this year. The dates have been set for the meetings and the White House Farm has been suggested as a good location for the meeting on May 1st. It might have to be held outside. Tom suggested putting up a tent in case of bad weather. John Eckman noted that Friends of the North Fork has expanded their office in Woodstock and could probably handle 25 people. If the RSVP list was greater than that, we could look at other facilities in the area. Someone from Friends of the North Fork could present on what the organization is working on. Paul Bugas noted that if there is a small group, the DGIF office in Verona

could work. JMU could also host again in December. Last December we met in the Highlands Room at the Festival Conference Center. Otis could also check on the Augusta County Office Building, though food could be an issue. Jean Andrews suggesting renting the kitchen and the meeting room next to it (the training room). Wayne Webb suggested looking for a spot at Shenandoah University when the students aren't there. This could be coordinated between FOSR and FONFSR. Tom asked about potential topics of interest for presentations. Joe suggested having Kathy Holm talk about Smith Creek and partner activities in the watershed. Megen noted that several large projects have recently been completed in the watershed. That meeting could be held at the 10th Legion Ruritan Hall. Beverly Pearce asked about potential meeting venues in Front Royal. Paul noted that the Smithsonian Institute might be a good location for either a board meeting or the annual meeting. They have a new state of the art facility. There is also a history museum that could be a good location. Erin Yancey noted that the JMU Arboretum might be a good meeting location, especially with plans for streambank restoration in place. John Eckman suggested the JMU farm as a potential location as well. Andy Guest State Park has a conference room as well. Elizabeth Furnace (on Passage Creek) has an outdoor pavilion that might be an option. The HRCAA has a meeting room and could do a tour of the WWTP featuring upgrades. Blandy Farm might be another option. John Eckman suggested requesting that DCR give us a tour of Seven Bends State Park.

Annual Meeting Planning Committee

We will ask Ben to send out an email requesting volunteers for the planning committee. Paul mentioned that a tour of the Smithsonian could be arranged as part of the meeting to see the work that they are doing in conservation biology. Paul or Joe could help with a contact at the Smithsonian Biological Institute.

Partner Updates

Presentation: 2014 WQ Assessment (Nesha McRae DEQ)