

Drinking Water Advisory Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2010
Salem

Members Present

Ed Butts, Oregon Association of Water Utilities
Mel Damewood, Pacific NW Section, American Water Works Association
Jenifer George, Oregon Environmental Health Association
Todd Heidgerken, Large Water Systems
Mike Kurtz, Special Districts Association of Oregon
Gerry Meyer, Conference of Local Health Officials
Kathy Miller, Privately Owned Water Systems
Beth Myers, Oregon Environmental Lab Association
Brian Stahl, League of Oregon Cities
Ann Younger, League of Women Voters

Members Absent

Bob Fuller, American Council of Engineering Companies
Liz Redon, Watershed Councils

Guests

David Barnett, Oregon Business Development Department
Brenda Bateman, Water Resources Department
Del Little, Oregon Business Development Department
Jeremy McVeety, Oregon Business Development Department
Jim Ruef, Oregon Business Development Department
Mike Sheets, City of Portland
Doug Wise, Brown and Caldwell

Staff

Tony Fields Diane Weis
Dave Leland Cedric White

To Do:

- Follow up on Operator Certification DRC: Subcommittee

Welcome/Agenda Check/Roster Check:

Brian Stahl welcomed the group and led introductions.

Mel Damewood and Jenifer George are new members to the committee.

The roster was circulated for members to update information and check for accuracy.

April Meeting Minutes:

Todd Heidgerken made motion to approve minutes, Ed Butts seconded. They were voted on and approved.

Member Concerns:

Todd Heidgerken would like to discuss the future strategy of the new director of the Environmental Protection Agency at the next meeting.

Program Update:

Budget Status/update –

There is a \$570M general fund shortfall that will result in statewide reductions across the board. Department of Human Services General Fund budget was decreased by \$157M, but there will be no General Fund reduction in the Drinking Water Program. There will be some layoffs throughout the Department but most personnel savings will be by attrition. Travel and training will be looked at more closely.

Dave Leland reviewed the Budget Summary handout describing expenditures by fund and type. We are half way through the biennium and are just under 50% spent.

OHA Transition –

The new agency will go into effect next July and will be made up of Mental Health, Health Care, and Public Health. The organizational structure is still being developed. The Oregon Health Authority will have its own budget, separate from Department of Human Services.

EPA Proposed Revised Total Coliform Rule –

The rule will be changed to focus on systems that are vulnerable to microbial contamination to identify and fix problems, and to establish criteria for systems to qualify for reduced monitoring. The proposed change is out for comment. Any additional comments or changes from EPA will be forwarded to the Drinking Water Advisory Committee.

EPA Enforcement Response Policy –

The Environmental Protection Agency developed a system violation score formula to replace/improve the current “Significant Noncomplier” listing. The new formula is based on different types of violations and is on a 5-year rolling average. It will focus on returning a system to compliance rather than just addressing violations. This approach will make the compliance status of systems more understandable and transparent, and better target our informal and formal enforcement actions.

Principal lab issue –

States with Primacy must maintain a principal laboratory to perform testing methods for each regulated contaminant, and to serve as a referee and resource for the labs we certify. The Department of Environmental Quality served as our principal lab for chemistry but they are not interested in continuing since they do not use any drinking water test methods in their current core business, We are working on options to identify a principle chem. lab via contract with another state or private lab, or possibly the Region X lab.

Primacy program review results –

The draft findings are being reviewed and will be presented to the committee at the next meeting with recommended priorities for implementation.

Operator Certification DRC subcommittee update –

The subcommittee is working with several large utilities to look at ways to designate water system managers as direct responsible charge for the water distribution system. The committee will contact the States of Washington and California to find out how they are dealing with this issue, and then they will meet again.

Revolving Fund Update:

DWSRF –

The 2010 State Revolving Fund grant was approved for \$13.5 million. The Environmental Protection Agency grant award has a condition that Oregon will obtain Green Project Reserve (GPR) project information from prospective borrowers during the next Letter of Interest process and use this information to amend the project list. Once Oregon provides an amended project list that contains GPR projects or project components equaling 20% of the capitalization grant, the grantee will have met the requirement for Green Project Reserve. Oregon’s 20% target is \$2.7 million.

ARRA Stimulus –

Fifty-five jobs were created due to the ARRA stimulus. Several projects have already been completed with the remaining projects due to be completed July 2011.

Project Benefits Reporting (PBR) system reporting – There was a discrepancy in some of the data but it is being resolved.

Department of Labor Standards Training will be conducted in Salem via webinar. This staff training is related to Davis-Bacon regulations.

SRF borrower Interest Rates – The loan interest rate was 3.83% last year; this year it is 3.53%. The 2nd quarter interest rate was 3.55%.

Lean Process – Oregon Business Development Department is going through the lean process, which is finding simpler or better ways to conduct internal business processes. For example, the intake of project applications to project execution has been streamlined to shorten processing timelines.

Nominations are due by September 3 for future SRF projects. One possibility is an application from City of Bend for their water project.

Integrated Water Resources Strategy Development:

A drought in Klamath Basin, Merrill ran out of water because pumps were set at a shallow depth in the wells. This is an example of why the Integrated Water Resources Strategy is needed. The legislature asked Water Resources Department for strategy recommendations by end of 2012, then to update the plan every 5 years.

Water Resources Department has a policy advisory group to help come up with the plan. The committee wants stories of why people should care about safe water. They will look at private, as well as public, systems in preliminary information but the results may or may not be in the report.

The term "Clean Water" needs to be defined. Because some agencies look at water quality and other agencies look at water quantity, there is a need for agency collaboration.

It is hard to determine how much water is available because it constantly changes due to weather and other factors. Water reuse always comes up as an option so it will be looked at some more, as well as underground storage.

Any comments can go to the Integrated Water Resources Strategy general e-mail box or directly to Brenda Bateman.

Next Meetings:

October 27, 2010 - Public Utility Commission (Program Update, Budget Update, Legislative Update, SRF Update, OBDD Policy, EPA Directions from New EPA Director, TCR Rule Change Comments, Primacy Program Review, Operator Certification DRC)

January 19, 2011 – Public Utility Commission

April 20, 2011 – public utility Commission

July 20, 2011 – Public Utility Commission

October 19, 2011 – Public Utility Commission