

RI Water Resources Board  
RI Water Allocation Program Development Committee

Education and Outreach Subcommittee

Minutes of Meeting

June 23, 2003

University of Rhode Island, Coastal Institute, Hazard Room A/B

Members Present: Sandra Whitehouse, Meg Kerr, Lori Urso, **Tom S\_\_\_\_**, **(OTHERS?)**  
Guests: Art Gold, Alyson McCann, Chip Young, **Marty \_\_\_\_\_** and **Jack \_\_\_\_\_** from New England Rain Barrel Company **(WHO HAVE I LEFT OUT?)**

Sandra Whitehouse called the meeting to order at 10:40am.

1. Approval of Minutes, May 12, 2003

As of this date, minutes had not been completed, and as such their review and approval was tabled for a future meeting.

2. Interfacing with Joint Advocacy Committee Merger with Joint Advocacy & Funding Committee

Sandra Whitehouse explained the function of the Education and Outreach Committee as it compares to the Joint Advocacy Committee. Potential interfacing of the two committees was discussed. The primary concern expressed by the committee members was the lobbying aspect with regard to specific legislation, and how that would affect committee members who are affiliated with non-profit and educational institutions. Sandra suggested the committees might not formally merge, but rather work closely on projects, with a joint meeting occurring bimonthly. The big picture of funding is key.

3. **Website update and DEM press support**

**Connie McGreavy gave an update on contact info on WW for other states.**

4. Update on freelance reporters

**TS** reported on freelance reporters that had been invited to the meeting: Bill Roderick did not reply; **Brian Jones and Steve Syces from the Phoenix** – Chip Young will inquire again.

Sandra Whitehouse reported on continued communications with Peter Lord regarding Metcalf Institute interns, who get to decide their writing subjects. Ideas for topics were discussed. **She has additional contact information.** She indicated that RIDEM and the Governor's Office has offered to work with the committee on press. Chip Young has met the intern and suggests thinking of ways to engage them. He will follow up with **Jacqueline.**

**Art Gold is mentor to a student named Edward Artis who is with Metcalf Institute and is looking for stories of interest.**

## 5. Research: Education Efforts by Other States (LU)

Lori Urso presented findings of her research on this topic. In general she said there is not a lot of available educational program information specific to water allocation. She presented information regarding programs in New Jersey, Connecticut, and California. Much of what is available is through existing Cooperative Extension programs, as well as educational curricula for elementary and secondary school students. The AWESome curriculum was briefly discussed for RI, which WPWA staff teaches to area educators on a fairly regular basis.

Sandra Whitehouse pointed out that funding is key here, and drought may be the hook to getting that money for outreach programs.

## 6. Water/Wastewater Committee: Brochure and Pilot Project

Connie McGreavy gave an update on the proposed brochure, its purpose and use. Sandra Whitehouse emphasized the brochure is a background piece only.

Chip Young suggested a summer focus. **He offered the Jamestown Golf Club for the water magazine.**

Committee members discussed the alternatives of doing a few things this summer, or launching a media campaign in the fall. Sandra Whitehouse expressed concern about sending mixed messages. We need to determine a message and stay on it.

**TS** suggested the brochure go before the full committee. Meg Kerr suggested that even without a specific recommendation there is still plenty of news to put forth. She reported that Chip's article will be published in the next issue of The Water Front.

Sandra White suggested the education message be brainstormed at the full committee meeting. Each subcommittee could provide a **summary of its own education message.**

The committee discussed the following programs: Healthy Landscapes in North Kingstown, and the search for appropriate pilot sites; the issue of water availability for fire fighting; wastewater treatment and municipal golf courses. The marketability of each as press stories was considered.

## 7. Rain Barrel Distribution Program

**Marty \_\_\_\_\_ and Jack \_\_\_\_\_** from New England Rain Barrel Company gave a presentation on their wholesale rain barrel distribution program. They discussed costs, logistics of sales and delivery, and their experiences in other communities.

The committee discussed somehow merging this program with the RI Resource Recovery Corporation's compost bin distribution program. They also discussed the feasibility of launching this in the short term, given the tight time line. Another idea was distributing them at the RIDEM's EcoDepot sites where hazardous wastes are disposed.

The meeting adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_ .

Minutes electronically submitted,  
Lori Urso