

Minutes from the meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the Baldwin County Stormwater Working Group/Baldwin County Watershed Coalition
Friday, February 20, 2009

In attendance: Joe Bullock, Tom Herder, Bob James, Stan Mahoney, Marian MacPherson, Rep. Steve McMillan, Sen. Trip Pittman, Dr. Melissa Pringle, Andy Reese, Roberta Swann

Agenda #1: The meeting was called to order by Andy Reese at approximately 9:10 a. m. It was noted that due to a local meeting with Governor Riley and Representative Bonner, SC members holding Municipal Office were absent, and no quorum was present. Therefore elections could not be conducted as scheduled, nor could adoption of by-laws and procedures, but the draft of by-laws could be reviewed and edited. Addition of an ADEM Representative from Montgomery could also be discussed and other agenda items, including “the roadmap of decisions”, meeting schedules, logistics and communications, Education and Technical Committee nominees, and potential “tag lines and messages” could be discussed without voting.

Agenda #2/3: With regard to nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair, Sen. Pittman suggested Stan Mahoney as a potential committee Chair. Mr. Mahoney indicated a continued dedication to the cause, but felt that the Committee should look elsewhere for a Chair. Ms. Swann suggested **asking members of the SC about their willingness to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee. Marian MacPherson expressed a willingness to consider taking on the role of Chair. Bob James voiced his willingness to consider serving as Vice Chair if needed. Ms. Swann indicated that she would query the Steering Committee members and report back to the Committee on all interested members.**

Agenda #4: Note: This item was discussed at the end of the meeting due to the lengthy nature of the subject matter.) Of note in the discussion, the SC felt that the committee should include representation from eastern/mid-central Baldwin County and extreme northern Baldwin County – as well as Chairs from the Education and Technical Committees, when selected. The By-Laws were reviewed and several other changes made. An edited version is attached for full committee review.

Agenda #5: Members were asked how they felt about adding an ADEM Representative from Montgomery. Sen. Pittman responded that the rep doesn’t necessarily have to be from Montgomery and that there are reps down here. Ms. MacPherson wondered what are the pros and cons with ADEM representation.

Sen. Pittman responded that **ADEM wants to understand why we need a stormwater utility.** He thinks that having them at the table would keep them invested. He thought that the position would be as a non-voting member. Ms. Swann agreed that ADEM is the regulatory agency and should be on board. Mr. Mahoney felt that they would be a resource for the Technical Committee and the **representative should be someone who could make decisions.** Ms. Swann felt that we could use **conference calls to facilitate participation by ADEM Montgomery personnel.** Sen. Pittman agreed to follow up with his contacts at ADEM.

Agenda #6: Postponed to next meeting

Agenda # 7: With regard to SC meeting schedules, committee members agreed to “stick with” **the third Friday of each month.** Members agreed that the **next meeting would be on March 20, 2009 in this same room (Daphne City Hall Executive Chambers) from 9-11:30 a. m.** **Minutes will be prepared and sent to the SC at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.** Mr. Reese asked Ms. Swann if she could **publish names and contact information for the Committee.**

Agenda #8: Ms. Swann notified the Committee that David Yeager’s contract with the MBNEP has expired but that he would still stay in the loop and volunteer if needed. Sen. Pittman suggested that we “keep him in our prayers.” Rep. McMillan took the opportunity to bring the **League of Women Voters of Baldwin County’s March 26 Forum on Critical Water issues** to the attention of the Committee. Captain Yeager is scheduled to speak on stormwater at this forum. Ms. Swann stated that the MBNEP office will continue its commitment to this program as coordinator/facilitator.

Ms. Swann raised the topic of whether SC meetings should be open or closed. Approximately six BCSWWG members expressed interest in attending the SC meeting, but since SC members expressed reservations about spontaneity and open discourse, the meeting was closed to non-SC members with assurances that minutes would be distributed to all BCSWWG members. Sen. Pittman felt that if the SC included representatives of the Technical and Education Committees, then a closed meeting format was acceptable. Dr. Pringle agreed. Ms. Swann expressed concerns over openness and transparency. Getting back to the idea of adequate Technical and Education Committee representation, Sen. Pittman asked if Chairs had been selected from those committees. His idea was that **the Chairs of these two committees would sit on the SC,** and there seemed to be general agreement on this idea. Ms. Swann responded that these committees had not yet met, so Chairs have not been determined.

Agenda # 9: The SC agreed to add the Chair of the Education Committee to the Steering Committee once a Chair is selected.

Agenda #10: The SC agreed to add the Chair of the Technical Committee to the Steering Committee once a Chair is selected. The discussion on roles of the Technical Committee was shorter and included mention of banking tools, land banks, and a fee for regional detention option for developers.

Agenda # 11: Dr. Pringle pointed out that the Education Committee is “raring to go” and is looking forward to the charge of the Steering Committee. Mr. Reese said that EC’s role is to prepare specific messages for distribution to the press and public. He said that the nature of these messages will be guided by the Steering Committee and will change as the campaign evolves. Dr. Pringle said that the two immediate objectives of the EC are 1) to select a chair, and 2) to develop a strategy and schedule for outreach activities. One necessary activity will be to develop “tag lines”. Mr. Reese said that the SC should develop a theme, then the EC could develop a tag line.

Ideas included:

Ms. MacPherson offered “**location, location, location**” or Think Before You Build, suggesting that developers/builders should think about *where* they intend to build. Rep. McMillan agreed, adding that such consideration has economic advantages and that **insurance actuaries look at and consider this**.

Other suggestions/ ideas included:

- Plan Smart, Build Smart
- Stay from “Green”, “Zoning”, “Flood Prone”, stormwater utility
- Focus on the positive- Watershed Management
- Define goals to achieve – include parks, recreation, greenspace, quality of life
- Make it local- Fly Creek- “That’s my Water, It’s everybody’s Water”
- Messages should name local creeks to drive home point and build ownership
- Use visuals to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the watershed and its tributaries
- We are all connected- demonstrate the interconnectivity of the resource with the inhabitants (humans to ants)
- **Appeal to the economics of good stormwater management- cost benefit analyses, ecosystem services**
- Be able to answer the question- What do I get out of this? (as in fresh seafood, property values, tourism, flooding...)
- Make sure that education committee is representative of different constituencies

Ms. Swann noted that existing outreach materials at the MBNEP included a PowerPoint presentation, “Stormwater 101” and is available for use. In addition, MBNEP has produced an informative brochure (which she distributed) that contains a similar message.

Mr. Reese addressed message **areas of caution**- fees, organizational structure, processes, and property rights. **He stated that the Outreach campaign should address these issues as well.** He suggested that the committees ask themselves “what would be the five most difficult questions to answer?” (How **much will this cost? What will I get? Bureaucracy?**) and try to provide the answers as part of the outreach campaign.

Mr. James raised **concerns about the name of the working group**- the Baldwin County Stormwater Consortium was not one that inspired action or support. He felt that instead of “Stormwater”, we should be thinking about managing a “Watershed”, at which point someone suggested “Baldwin County Watershed Management Consortium”. Mr. James was uncomfortable with including “Management” in the title or using the word “consortium.” The Committee agreed to go forward using the working title “**Baldwin County Watershed Coalition**”.

(The SC reviewed and edited the draft of by-laws.)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a. m.