

COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT (COE) MINUTES
Commissioners Conference Room
Minutes of August 1, 2007

COE Members present: Barne Wheeler, Chair; Susan Blake, Bill Shreve, Frank Allen, Marta Kelsey, Troy Hansen, Sue Veith (Environmental Planner) and Jada Stuckert of LUGM was the (Recording Secretary).

COE Members excused: Sandy Neville, Daryl Calvano (SMCHD), and Caroline Miller.

WPTF Members present: Rebecca Schofield, Dennis Roth, and David Kelsey.

- I. **Call to Order:** Mr. Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
- II. **Review/Approval of June 26, 2007 minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes with amendments. The motion passed by a 6-0 vote.
- III. **Continuing Business:**
 - Discussion on large Commercial/Industrial uses of Aquifer water (WPTF issue)
Mr. Wheeler introduced Dave Kelsey stating he is interested in becoming a member of the WPTF. **After discussion a motion was made and seconded to appoint Mr. Kelsey as a member of the WPTF. The motion passed with one abstention.**

Mr. Wheeler referred to Steven King of METCOM's letter to the Water Management Administration in regards to Industrial Groundwater Appropriations dated July 22, 2007. Mr. Wheeler asked if the Commission wants to add support to the letter with a letter from the Commission. Mr. Shreve gave an update on the La Plata Industrial Groundwater Appropriations as well as other projects in regards to this same issue. After discussion Ms. Blake recommended sending a letter citing the studies on this issue and expressing the Commission's concerns. Ms. Schofield agreed.

Mr. Shreve stated the letter should state "St. Mary's County Commission on the Environment strongly supports the notion that any large Industrial or Commercial or other large users of water in the State of Maryland for non-drinking purposes be required to exhaust all opportunities for using reclaimed water or other sources prior to being given permission to take water from the aquifers which supply all our potable water needs." Mr. Allen stated the letter should also state "Some things that need to be done in order to encourage this would be to ensure the State Plumbing Code to allow for Grey Water Systems to be installed and all water appropriation requests are reviewed to see what the uses are for and is there a possibility for them to use reclaimed water or rain water."

It was asked if this initiative should be a BOCC letter or a COE letter. It was also asked if the letter needed to be endorsed by the BOCC. After discussion it was the decision to draft the COE letter as well as another letter for the BOCC. It was the decision to send both letters to the BOCC and say we are going to mail the COE letter by a specified date unless notified otherwise and also give them the option to send the BOCC letter if they so desire.

Mr. Allen stated he would be willing to draft the letter for the next meeting. **A motion was made and seconded that the COE draft a letter of support and an additional BOCC letter for their review. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.**

- Update on proclamation for Nancy Smith & thank you letters to Forum participants
Mr. Wheeler stated he has shipped the proclamation to Delores Lacey and as far as he knows it is winding its way to a presentation. Mr. Wheeler stated he would find out when the proclamation would be read and pass that information on to the members.
- Update on Commissioners briefing, July 31 – WPTF issue & Dyson letter
Mr. Wheeler stated the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) voted to move ahead with sending the letter to Senator Dyson. Mr. Wheeler stated the BOCC also made a decision to send a letter to the head of the Maryland Dept. of Environment (MDE). Mr. Wheeler stated the BOCC would like to have a sit down with some of the important players regarding these water issues.
- Status of Feedback on COE Goals & Objectives
Mr. Wheeler stated the goals and objectives are now with the BOCC. Mr. Wheeler stated there may be some word smithing that the Commissioners may want to do. Mr. Wheeler stated small changes are fine however; he does not want the BOCC stripping the COE of the power to look into issues. (at the meeting, we can decide if this should go in)Mr. Wheeler asked if sending an email to the BOCC informing them that redefining our priorities is fine but this charter gives us the right to speak out about our observations. **After discussion it was the decision of the Commission to wait and see what the BOCC has to say in regards to the goals and objectives before sending anything.**
- Update on location of next COE Forum & further refinement of Forum Agenda
Ms. Kelsey gave an overview of the Airport facility versus the College facility. **After discussion it was a motion was made and seconded to hold the forum on February 23, 2008 with a snow date of March 1, 2008 at the Airport. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.** Ms. Blake stated she would contact Bill Scarafia, President of the Chamber of Commerce in regards to using the Airport for the forum dates.

Ms. Veith stated that a member of the Commission needs to contact Shawn McGuire and have him come and speak with the Commission members in regards to the Forum vendors. Ms. Veith stated Mr. McGuire is knowledgeable in the area of green building and has many contacts in this field. Mr. Wheeler stated he would contact Mr. McGuire and request his attendance at the next meeting.

➤ **Time Permitting**

➤ **Update on Menhaden investigations to date, discussion of priority as COE objective**

Mr. Wheeler gave an update on the Menhaden fish stating the problem is there is not definitive data as to how much a Menhaden filters and how much a Menhaden needs to filter. Ms. Veith asked what the purpose was of this investigation. Mr. Wheeler stated the investigation is to get the information out there and send a letter to the State of Virginia requesting the Menhaden be protected. Ms. Veith stated this has already been done and there is now a cap on the amount of Menhaden that can be fished while there is a study on the fish being completed. Ms. Veith all this information is located on the Atlantic Coast Fisheries Commission. Mr. Kelsey stated the problem is that there is not enough plankton for the Menhaden to eat due to the condition of the bay water. Ms. Veith stated there is virtually nothing this Commission could do related to Menhaden and this

probably should be the answer to this inquiry. No action was taken on the Menhaden issue.

- Discuss the new Chamber of Commerce 2.25% growth proposal – This item was not discussed.

IV. New Business

- Discussion of COE web site: approach, content; Climate Change web site – something to post – This item was not discussed.
- Networking & discussion of contact list – This item was not discussed.

V. Announcements - None

VI. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Mr. Wheeler stated he would find out when the proclamation would be read and pass that information on to the members.

Ms. Blake stated she would contact Bill Scarafia, President of the Chamber of Commerce in regards to using the Airport for the forum dates.

Mr. Wheeler stated he would contact Mr. McGuire and request his attendance at the next meeting.

Mr. Allen stated he would be willing to draft the letter on “large commercial/industrial water users” for the next meeting.