

MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 28, 2009
State Office Building, Hearing Room 5

EQB Members Present: Jon Bloomberg, vice chair, Paul Eger, Julie Goehring, Mark Holsten, Gene Hugoson, chair, Dr. Sanne Magnan, Susan McCarville, Sheila Reger, and Glenn Wilson

EQB Members Absent: Randy Kramer, Dan McElroy, and Thomas Sorel

Others Present: Jean Colman (CR Planning, representing the Water Resources Center, U of M), Randall Doneen (DNR), Emily Franklin (Minnesota Environmental Initiative), Mary Ann Hecht (Legislature), Susan Heffron (MPCA), Joe Henderson (MPCA), Dave Leuthe (DNR), Susan Medhaug (Commerce), Robert Roche (Attorney General), and Jennie Ross (MnDOT)

EQB Staff Present: Princessa VanBuren Hansen, Jon Larsen, Bob Patton, and John Wells

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Chair Hugoson.

I. Adoption of Consent Agenda and Minutes

The board adopted the consent agenda and minutes.

II. Chair's Report

Chair Hugoson complimented the efforts of the EQB Working Group and invited any interested members, especially the citizen members, to attend and participate.

III. Legal Report

Robert Roche reported on the lawsuit by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy pertaining to the action of the Public Utilities Commission to permit the Enbridge pipeline. He reminded board members that the EQB is named in the suit, and said that he will be filing a motion to dismiss EQB's role in the lawsuit.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Bob Patton noted a handout before Board members on the Environmental Review Streamlining Project (Agenda item VIII). He also reported that two appointments for EQB citizen member vacancies were just closing, and new members could be appointed as early as the November meeting.

V. EQB Working Group and Work Priorities

Bob Patton gave a presentation on the first two meetings of the new EQB Working Group, comprised of high-level agency staff and vice chair Jon Bloomberg. Mr. Patton summarized recommendations of the Working Group:

- Proceed with two of the three actions recommended by the Land and Water Policy Project of the Minnesota Environmental Initiative (an effort to coordinate the timeframes for land use and water planning mandates, and an effort to integrate state assistance to local governments on land and water issues) and to set aside for future discussion the third MEI project recommendation (on development of a shared vision on land and water);
- Actively participate in the University of Minnesota statewide water sustainability framework mandated by the Legislature, and determine in the spring of 2010 whether the EQB should consider its own recommendations based on the project and its mandate to develop a state water plan every 10 years; and
- At future Working Group meetings, continue discussion of the EQB's role in state coordination and strategic planning as contemplated by the Board's Subcommittee on Future EQB Directions.

Mr. Patton noted that the MEI recommendations and the statewide water sustainability framework would be described and discussed further in following agenda items.

VI. Minnesota Environmental Initiative (MEI) Land and Water Policy Project – Informational Presentation

Emily Franklin of the MEI gave an presentation on the Land and Water Policy Project and events leading up to a July 7, 2009 meeting of state agency leaders, facilitated by the MEI, at which the EQB had been given the charge to implement the recommendations.

Princesa VanBuren Hansen and John Wells described activities of groups working under the auspices of the EQB to discuss further implementation of the Coordinated Planning and Integrated Community Assistance recommendations of the Land and Water Policy Project.

Jon Bloomberg commented that this is the type of activity in which the EQB should be engaged.

VII. University of Minnesota Statewide Water Sustainability Framework – Informational Presentation

Jean Coleman, project manager, provided a handout on the project and described the project organization, which will include a Headwaters Council of “creative leaders,” technical work teams, a Framework Synthesis Team, a citizen stakeholder advisory group, and a core management team. Ms. Coleman stated that the ultimate use of the project is to inform the use of Legacy Amendment funds. She asked that the EQB take formal action to allow participation by EQB staff in the Framework process. Gene Hugoson asked members if there were any objections and, hearing none, stated that the EQB staff would be authorized to participate. He requested that the University or EQB staff provide the Board updates at its quarterly meetings. He also noted the many efforts pertaining to water and stressed the need for coordination.

Susan McCarville noted that Ms. Coleman had worked on the State Conservation and Preservation Plan and asked about its legacy. Ms. Coleman responded that most of the content of the LCCMR request for proposals was based on the Plan, and that it is also being used by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

In response to a question from the Chair, Julie Goehring expressed concern that unique issues of the Red River Valley be considered, and Ms. Coleman noted that a representative of that region of the state was being asked to participate.

VIII. Environmental Review Streamlining Project – Informational Presentation

Joe Henderson, MPCA staff, described the process the MPCA is using to prepare a report to the Legislature, due February 15, 2010, on streamlining the state Environmental Review process. The report is required by legislation adopted in the 2009 Session. The MPCA is consulting with the EQB staff in the preparation of the report.

IX. DNR Groundwater Technical Work Group – Informational Presentation

Dave Leuthe, DNR, gave an audiovisual presentation on the Groundwater Technical Work Group process, which was established to follow up on the 2008 EQB report, *Managing for Water Sustainability*, and with which EQB staff has been actively involved. He provided a handout on interagency ground water/drinking water/sustainability coordination needs, and described some of the challenges, needs and concepts pertaining to understanding the groundwater system and sustainability. He discussed report to the Legislature on ground water monitoring needs in the 11-county metropolitan area due October 1, 2009. He also stressed the need for an integrated groundwater database.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55.