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September 18, 2009

**Meeting Location: State Office Building, Hearing Room 5**

TO: EQB Members

RE: **ANNOTATED AGENDA FOR  
September 28, 2009 Board Meeting**

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**General**

This month's meeting will take place in the **State Office Building, Hearing Room 5**. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. Staff will be available for briefing and questions at 8:30 a.m.

- I. \* Adoption of Consent Agenda**
  - Proposed Agenda for **September 28, 2009** meeting
  - Minutes for **June 18, 2009** meeting
- II. Chair's Report**
- III. Executive Director's Report**
- IV. Legal Counsel Report**
- V. EQB Working Group and Work Priorities**

**Presenter:** Bob Patton, EQB Executive Director (651-201-2462)

**Materials Enclosed:** none

**Discussion:** Since the June EQB meeting, a new EQB Working Group has been convened, comprised of high-level agency staff and vice chair Jon Bloomberg. The Working Group has met twice. Its focus has been to discuss EQB work priorities for the coming 18 months. The Working Group is recommending that EQB:

- Begin work as soon as possible on 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

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*\* Items requiring discussion may be removed from the Consent Agenda.*

assistance to local governments on land and water issues. The Working Group recommended that the third MEI project recommendation, development of a shared vision on land and water, be set aside for future discussion.

The lead agencies for the coordinated planning core group are the MPCA and BWSR, and the lead agency for the integrated community assistance core group is presently the DNR. EQB staff (Princesa VanBuren Hansen and John Wells) has been assigned to orchestrate and facilitate the groups, and initial meetings have been held. Reports on these activities will be given under agenda item V.

- Actively participate in the University of Minnesota water planning project 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. An executive branch recommendation could be part of the budget process to set a focus for the biennium.
- Discuss at a future Working Group meeting the EQB's role in state coordination and strategic planning as contemplated by the Board's Subcommittee on Future EQB Directions.

## **VI. Minnesota Environmental Initiative Land and Water Policy Project – Informational Presentation**

**Presenters:** Emily Franklin, MEI staff (612-334-3388, ext.114)  
Princesa VanBuren Hansen and John Wells, EQB staff  
(651-201-2478; 651-201-2475)

### **Materials Enclosed:** Project Overview

**Discussion:** The Minnesota Environmental Initiative's Land and Water Policy Project was designed to bring focused attention to the importance of and interplay between land use and water policies in Minnesota and how they are implemented. MEI designed and facilitated a dialogue among stakeholders responsible for implementing and managing statewide land and water policies. Recent reports prepared by a variety of organizations had generated numerous recommendations on how to best manage Minnesota's land and water resources for the future. The stakeholder dialogue provided a forum for discussing, evaluating and prioritizing these many recommendations. The goal of the stakeholder work group was to develop strategies for actions resulting in improved coordination of land and water policies among state agencies and local units of government. Work group membership included representatives from state and local government, as well as the non-profit and private sectors.

Work group members identified three key areas in which to focus their efforts:

- Shared Vision – developing an implementation plan and action items that identify how a vision for Minnesota's land and water resources could be created, who should be involved, and what it might contain
- Coordinated Management for Improved Implementation – working to align planning schedules between state agencies to create efficiencies at all levels and enable more effective

- Integrated Community Assistance – developing, communicating and coordinating resources and approaches to enhance the effectiveness of outreach within and between all levels of government to improve land use decisions that affect land and water quality

Ms. Franklin will discuss the MEI initiative, while Ms. Hansen and Mr. Wells will summarize initial steps taken under EQB leadership to begin implementing two of the three MEI recommendations.

## **VII. University of Minnesota Water Planning Process – Informational Presentation**

**Presenter:** Jean Coleman, Project Coordinator (612-588-4904)  
Minnesota Water Sustainability Framework Project, University of Minnesota

**Materials Enclosed:** Project Organizational Chart and Project Overview

**Discussion:** The 2009 session of the Legislature adopted provisions directing the University of Minnesota to develop both a 25 year water framework and a 10 year plan. Since the EQB is also assigned responsibility by *Minnesota Statutes*, Section 103B.151 for developing the state water plan every 10 years, the board will need to consider how the two mandates might best be addressed (the EQB Working Group recommendation addresses this question). Ms. Coleman will give the board an overview of the new law’s requirements and the plans the University has for addressing them.

The Legacy Amendment appropriations law (2009 *Minnesota Session Laws*, Chapter 172, House File 1231) included funding for development of the University statewide water sustainability framework. The law identifies the framework’s goals to protect, conserve and enhance the quantity and quality of the state’s ground water and surface water. It calls for an implementation schedule and associated benchmarks for policy, research, monitoring and evaluation and it asks the University to “tap the knowledge, expertise, and existing plans of the Departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture, the Environmental Quality Board, the Pollution Control Agency, the Board of Water and Soil Resources, Clean Water Council, watershed management districts, watershed management organizations, soil and water conservation districts, and other federal, state, and local government and private nonprofits with expertise in water resources.”

The University project will proceed with the following general steps:

- Identify and describe guiding principles and values for water sustainability
- Identify major uses of water, water-related issues, and drivers of change in water resources
- Collect and analyze existing technical information on water issues
- Form a guiding committee, the Headwaters Council, to provide advice throughout the overall process
- Form a Stakeholder and Citizen Advisory Group to ensure that citizens and stakeholders are included and consulted throughout process
- Form Technical Work Teams around the major uses to define water needs over time, identify knowledge gaps, identify threats and impacts
- Form a cross-cutting team, the Framework Synthesis Team, to integrate information from the

- Develop the overall framework for sustainably managing our water resources

The University invites EQB and its member agencies to actively collaborate with it in developing the framework and plan.

### **VIII. DNR Groundwater Technical Work Group – Informational Presentation**

**Presenter:** Dave Leuthe, Department of Natural Resources (651-259-5709)

**Materials Enclosed:** H.F. 2123

**Discussion:** The Department of Natural Resources, Division of Waters, is leading a team of expert hydrologists to evaluate models and tools needed for managing ground water sustainably. This Groundwater Technical Work Group is the next step in the state's ongoing dedication to advancing water management. In 2008 the Environmental Quality Board established an interagency working group to consider water availability issues in Minnesota, devising a broader framework in which the state might evaluate current and future water uses. The EQB adopted its report, *Managing for Water Sustainability: A Report of the EQB Water Availability Project*, on November 20, 2008. Also at this meeting, the EQB directed the DNR to help begin to implement some of the board's recommendations by taking the lead to evaluate models and tools to assess water availability and sustainability.

In March 2009 the DNR created a Technical Work Group to pursue this charge, tapping assistance from a group of ground water professionals. The group will work in 2009 and 2010 to generate guidance with the goal of advancing sustainable management of ground water. As a project partner, EQB staff is participating fully in the process and supporting the group's project web page and discussion board. Mr. Leuthe will provide the EQB with an overview of the process and preview an October 1st report to the Legislature on ground water monitoring needs in the 11-county metropolitan area.

### **IX. Environmental Review Streamlining Project – Informational Presentation**

**Presenter:** Joe Henderson, PCA staff (651-757-2424)

**Materials Enclosed:** none

**Discussion:** Mr. Henderson will give an informational presentation to the Board regarding a report the PCA was required to prepare by the 2009 Legislature. The report concerns options for streamlining the state Environmental Review process. PCA is consulting with the EQB staff in the preparation of this report, which is due to the Legislature by February 15, 2010.

### **X. Adjourn**