

MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday, January 18, 2012
MPCA Room Board Room, 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul**

EQB Members Present: Dave Frederickson (Chair), Kristin Duncanson, Julie Goehring, Brian Napstad, John Saxhaug, Tom Sorel, Erik Tomlinson, Bill Grant (for Mike Rothman), Paul Aasen, Aggie Leithheiser (for Ed Ehlinger), Paul Moe (for Mark Phillips)

EQB Members Absent: Mike Rothman, Ed Ehlinger, Mark Phillips, Tom Landwehr, Jonathon Bloomberg, Spencer Cronk

Staff Present: EQB Staff: Bob Patton, Princessa VanBuren Hansen, Mary Osborn

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Chair Frederickson.

I. Adoption of Consent Agenda and Minutes

The motion to adopt the consent agenda and minutes was made by Kristin Duncanson, seconded by Brian Napstad, and carried unanimously.

II. Introductions

Members of the Board and others present introduced themselves.

III. Chair's Report

- Jerry Heil, retired MDA employee and friend is, along with his wife, among the missing from the cruise-liner accident off the coast of Italy.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was recently signed by the Governor Dayton, the USDA Secretary, and the US EPA Administrator to engage a state and federal partnership in support of a Minnesota agricultural water quality certification program. This program has four goals: 1) to accelerate on-farm adoption of recommended management practices on agricultural lands in Minnesota; 2) to establish a technical advisory committee to develop a certification program that will support state water quality standards and goals; 3) to work to initiate development of a program designed to provide certainty to producers that their attainment and maintenance of certification meets water quality goals and standards of the state and, where applicable, maintains consistency with federal water quality goals; and 4) to coordinate and prioritize state and federal resources and funding to the extent state and federal appropriations are available to support the development and implementation of a certification program, including technical assistance and cost-share to program participants for on-farm recommended management practices.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Patton thanked everyone for their hard work in getting the work plans for implementing Executive Order 11-32 drafted and revised.

V. Project Work Plan Approval for Implementing Executive Order 11-32

Princessa VanBuren Hansen and Randall Doneen went over the changes made to the draft work plans based on EQB direction received at the December meeting.

Changes/Additions to Environmental Review Improvement Work Plan Tasks

- Examine the fundamental purpose/intent of environmental review and, if needed, recommend fundamental changes.
- Assess the existing environmental review process, and define areas where improvement is needed. This subtask should consider the broader context of project delivery.

- Think about how our understanding of environmental effects has evolved over time.
- Consider how our increased uses of technology can be used to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of environmental review.
- “Stakeholder” (as opposed to “public”) engagement should occur earlier in the process.
- Define strategic points in the process to engage the Governor’s Office and the Legislature.

Comments/Questions

- Tasks do not appear linear. Make it understandable that stakeholder input is not last.
- Putting a Gantt chart together might be useful. (That is in process)
- A discussion took place on how best to communicate information to the public. (No “magic bullet”)

Changes/Additions to Improved Environmental Governance and Coordination Work Plan Tasks

- Engage the Governor’s Office and the Legislature in the early stages.
- Maintain big-picture awareness to the various overlaps, opportunities, and gaps that come from the four projects.
- As we look at statewide governance, we have to consider federal mandates/oversights and considerations, and how they will fit into that framework.

Comments/Questions

- How will the work groups communicate with each other to avoid overlap, as there is much “cross-pollination” between the work plans?
Princesa explained staff’s thoughts on how communication will take place between the four groups.
 - It has been proposed that EQB staff act as liaisons between the work groups to look for those opportunities.
 - Have each project team engage with tech reps on a monthly basis.
 - Get the broader perspective of the EQB through monthly updates to the Board.
 - The communications team, that serves all four groups, might also see opportunities.

Changes/Additions to Environment and Energy Report Card Work Plan Tasks

- Clarified the purpose and desired outcome to better reflect what we are trying to seek.
- Added a task to engage the EQB mid-process in looking at the identified matrix and helping to approve those moving forward.
- Separated the Environment and Energy Report Card and Environmental Congress into two separate work plans/work group projects.
- Text was added to include wildlife, health, etc. so as not to limit the goals to air, land, and water (as worded in the Executive Order).
- Two aspects of technology have been added to the text of this work plan – how data and data collection has been impacted, and how to use current technology to our benefit.
- An amendment was proposed to add language to engage the public, Governor’s Office, and the Legislature at strategic points in the project.

There were no comments or questions on the changes to this work plan.

Addition of the Environmental Congress Work Plan, separate from the Environmental Report Card

Princesa summarized this work plan.

Chair Frederickson asked the Board members what their visions of the congress would be.

- Unveiling of the report card.

- The first congress would be a kind of conversation about the state of our environment, and then following congresses might revolve more around “hot topics.”

Comments/Questions

- Is there money for this - marketing, etc?
Money will likely come from individual departments/agencies once the congress is planned and the budget is known.
- Utilize existing organizations to get the word out/advertise.
- A huge challenge will be to determine who the participants will be; by the participants, we really control what direction it might go.
- A discussion took place on whether stakeholders should be defined before adopting the work plans. It was felt that defining them now might limit who takes part as others may become obvious to team members after the projects get started; others may also come forward later in the process, as word of the project circulates.

Princesa clarified the edits discussed today that will be made to the work plans. A motion to adopt the work plans as amended and presented was made by Kristin Duncanson, and seconded by _____ . There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Project Staffing for Implementing Executive Order 11-32

Princesa went over the staffing that was dedicated to each team by members of the Board.

VII. Tracking Minnesota’s Clean Water Legacy Effectiveness

Suzanne Hanson (MPCA), Andy Holdsworth (DNR), and Tannie Eshenaur (MDH) discussed the multi-agency team whose goal is to develop a clean water tracking framework that will help clarify the connections between funds invested, actions taken, and clean water outcomes achieved. This presentation described the framework and the related “Clean Water Performance Report,” to be released in February 2012.

VIII. Adjourn

Chairman Frederickson adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.