



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Water Resources Board

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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Water Resources Board Meeting #544

Friday, May 20, 2016

RIDOA, Conference Room B

One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

I. Attendance

1. Members Present

Ms. Susan Licardi, Chair

North Kingstown Water Department

Mr. Daniel O'Rourke, Vice Chair

Warwick Water Division

Mr. Parag Agrawal

RI Statewide Planning Program

Ms. Karen Fuerherm

GTECH

Mr. Alicia Good

Representing Janet Coit, Director Department of
Environmental Management

Ms. Pamela Marchand

Bristol County Water Authority

Ms. Eugenia Marks

Public Member

Mr. Jessie Rodriguez, Jr.

RI Nurseries

Ms. June Swallow

Representing Nicole Alexander-Scott, Director
Department of Health

Mr. Michael Walker

Representing Stefan Pryor, Director RI Commerce
Corporation

2. Members Absent

Mr. Marc Petrowicz

Unilock

3. Staff Present

Ms. Kimberly Crabill

RI Statewide Planning Program

Ms. Kathleen Crawley

RI Statewide Planning Program

4. Guests Present

Ms. Soni Pradhanang

Assistant Professor, Geoscience at URI

Ms. Sue Kiernan

Department of Environmental Management

Mr. Hanna Abelow

Government Policy Office

Ms. Susan Ferreira

Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance

II. Agenda Items

1. Call to Order

Chair Licardi called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. Approval of March, 2015 Meeting Minutes – for action

Chair Licardi dispensed with the voting of the March minutes as there was no quorum at that meeting.

3. Chair Remarks – for discussion

Chair Licardi provide opening remarks:

- Introduced Parag Agrawal, the new Associate Director of Planning
- A successful Earth Day clean-up at the Big River Reservoir
- Positive meeting with Director of the Department of Administration – discussed communication
- Met with Parag Agrawal – discussed communication and the role of WRB
- Openings on the Board
- A few pieces of legislation that are directly related to the WRB
- The Board function and structure is being looked at to assess the operation within the Department of Administration, its mission, and how it works with other agencies

Discussion was as follows:

Ms. Good asked what the categories were for the openings on the board. Ms. Crawley responded that the vacancies include Water Supply Engineer, Hydrologist/Geologist, and Agriculture. Ms. Licardi noted that there was a submittal on the Agriculture opening which the Board is waiting to move forward.

Ms. Swallow asked if WRB had officially moved forward with the officers since there was not quorum in March. Ms. Licardi responded that they had not and that that would be an item for a future agenda.

Ms. Marks asked for the legislation bill numbers that are out for WRB which Ms. Licardi subsequently provided.

Ms. Marchand asked if Ken Burke's position had been advertised. Ms. Licardi responded that it had not. Mr. Agrawal also commented that the department will be looking forward to filling that position.

4. Agencies Reports and Updates – for action

Chair Licardi opened the floor for Agency updates:

- Ms. Good from DEM gave an update on the Wetland Regulation Revisions
- Ms. Swallow from DOH gave an update of what is happening in the Center for Water Quality which included the lead in drinking water, fluorinated compound health advisory, and lead and copper rules within schools. DOH is also doing a vulnerability study in our state.
- Mr. Agrawal from DOP reported that Planning and DEM are cooperatively working on the Water Quality Plan 2035 which has been recommended by SPC to go to public hearing. Ms. Kiernan from DEM provided an overview.

- Mr. Walker from Commerce shared that A.T. Cross is staying in Rhode Island, seven industry cluster grants were awarded, and introduced the Board to Wavemaker which is a grant to offset student loans geared to attract graduating students to work in Rhode Island.

In response to questions from Mr. Agrawal and Ms. Pradhanang, Mr. Walker stated that the Wavemaker applications are for the employees and that they can be found on the Commerce RI web site.

5. Water Use Data Grant Updates - *for discussion*

Chair Licardi introduced Ms. Crawley who overviewed the state's role in collecting and managing water use data, the long-standing relationship between the Water Resources Board and US Geological Survey and the current grant-funded project that is underway with the University of Rhode Island. Ms. Crawley introduced Soni Pradhanang Assistant Professor from Geosciences at URI who presented on data storage and reporting capabilities. Discussion was as follows:

Ms. Marks thanked Ms. Pradhanang for the presentation and asked if we have a sufficient gage system in Rhode Island and asked what kind of budget are we looking at to work with other agencies. Ms. Pradhanang responded that the idea is to stick to similar software that is already in house and upgrade that system.

During discussion Ms. Good raised several points related to the current deliverable, the cost of developing and maintaining the system, ownership, and how aligned it needs to be with the USGS system. The grant deliverable is a work plan which will include recommendations on a framework. The Division of Technology has been included in evaluating the prior WRB databases and moving forward with a new system. USGS is flexible as to how data is provided and currently receives information from WRB via excel spreadsheets.

Ms. Good asked if this would all be a water shed based tool. Ms. Pradhanang confirmed that it was.

Mr. Walker asked if the water use data is catching the withdrawals and returns of the water. Ms. Pradhanang responded that the ideal system would do this. But the question becomes whether or not that data is available.

Mr. Walker then asked if the various plans that are out for water quality, storm water and climate change that seem to be disconnected are going to be woven together with this application. Ms. Pradhanang responded that the database would be available to communicate whatever data is available.

Mr. Walker noted that that sewer water and gray water seem to be a missing element that needs to be considered in the overall scope to coordinate the data.

Ms. Licardi asked if information on waste water discharges was readily available. Ms. Good responded that it is not available on line but DEM has detailed information that they could pull if needed.

Ms. Kiernan asked when the next five year cycle on reporting would be for USGS. Ms. Crawley responded that WRB is expecting a request any time now.

6. Introductions for Committee Consideration and Future Board Action – for discussion

Chair Licardi overviewed the list of future board actions and asked Ms. Crawley to provide additional detail on the list of items that are active and will need to be addressed in the near future. There was general consensus that the Technical Committee could be used to develop recommendations to the Board for the items presented.

Mr. Walker indicated that moving forward with the bylaws requires legal input as to form. He also commented on the need for the RI Infrastructure Bank to move forward with implementing the surcharge funded program.

7. Public Comment

There were none.

8. Adjourn

Chair Licardi called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Walker made the first motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke. There was no discussion. The following members voted aye: Ms. Licardi, Mr. O'Rourke, Mr. Agrawal, Ms. Fuerherm, Mr. Good, Ms. Marchand, Ms. Marks, Mr. Rodriguez, Jr., Ms. Swallow, and Mr. Walker. There were no nay votes.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Kimberly Crabill

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Licardi
Chair