

**RI Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team
Minutes of June 16, 2006 Meeting (APPROVED)
Department of Environmental Management
Conference Room
Providence, RI 02904**

Attendees: Michael Sullivan (DEM), Kevin Flynn (DoA), Saul Kaplan (EDC), Mike Walker (EDC), Jeff Willis (CRMC), Michael Tikoian (CRMC), Juan Mariscal (WRB), Paul Pinault (NBC), Tom Uva (NBC), Meg Kerr (Rivers Council). Others: Sandra Whitehouse, Bob Ballou, Kip Bergstrom, Terence Maguire, Sue Kiernan, Curt Spalding, Jane Austin, Chip Young.

Meeting began 11:03 a.m.

Michael Sullivan presided over the meeting. Purpose was to discuss how to best support Bill #8244 which would be heard the following week by House Finance Committee, and which would provide \$500,000 for Coordination Team funding.

Group discussion began. Need to establish priorities if bill passes. Indicated fixed station, streamflow gage and economic monitoring could be covered by that amount. There is a need for one voice in support of this bill, and a coordinated response to members of House Finance. It was suggested that first order of business must be to get the funding, and then concentrate on priorities.

Sandra Whitehouse of House Policy office was asked to provide an update. House would probably adjourn by following Friday, so there was a need to move now. Rep. Naughton was championing the bill as member of House Finance. There was a need to get a hearing ASAP.

There was a need to show statewide impacts.

Kip Bergstrom, chair of Economic Monitoring Collaborative stated that his collaborative be viewed as co-equal with economic monitoring efforts.

Tom Uva noted that Peter August, chair of the Environmental Monitoring Collaborative had suggested if CT does not get funding, work could be continued under a revived Partnership for Narragansett Bay. He also noted that DEM and NBC were signing a consent order that day, and that we should do a press event to show that we were all in sync with need for and benefits of monitoring. Agreed. Save the Bay's Curt Spalding offered his group's support in bringing pressure to bear of members of General Assembly to support the bill.

Agreed by all not to give up and all press for the bill's passage. After House, bill would move to Senate where it is believed it would pass easily.

Meg Kerr mentioned that we needed a chair as advocate, and that person's leadership to make all this work. Sullivan indicated that candidates had been approached, but were leery of saying yes without a budget in hand.

Kevin Flynn asked if any other fees besides OSPAR and underwater land (cross-Atlantic cables) fees were possible this year, such as previously identified septage and underground storage tanks fees. The latter two were viewed as having too much of a statewide impact to be included this year. Advice from many was to immediately begin looking towards next year with those sorts of fees.

A motion was made to have the CT agree to the following statement, the essence of which would be forwarded to House Finance and General Assembly leadership in a letter:

Motion: The RI Bays, Rivers and Watersheds Coordination Team fully supports the legislation # H8244, which will provide funds needed for monitoring of Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay watershed. We have solidarity on this bill, including its focus on both environmental and economic components. Upon passage, the Coordination Team will be able to assess the priority needs for this funding which will have statewide benefits, and properly allocate those funds.

Motion was unanimously approved. A copy of the wording will be circulated to CT members for approval. It was suggested that an op-ed for Providence Journal be written and that too approved by members.

Spalding said that Save the Bay would send a note to coastal community General Assembly members telling them they have to get active in supporting H8244. Save the Bay has already been pressing them to do so.

Meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.