

NEW JERSEY CLEAN WATER COUNCIL

**October 14, 2008
Meeting Highlights**

Location:

New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust Conference Room, 3131 Princeton Pike, Office Building 6, Suite 201, Lawrenceville, New Jersey

Attendees:

Members: Ferdows Ali, Bob Breslin, Stan Cach, Lou Neely, Jim Requa, Jessica Sanchez, Chris Sturm, and Dan Van Abs.

Others: Karen Cerra, Helen Heinrich, Rick Kropp, and Gerry Skrajewski.

The meeting was convened by Jessica Sanchez at 10:10 a.m.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 2008 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

Bob Breslin made the motion to approve September's minutes, and Dan Van Abs seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as distributed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Jessica said that Russ could not make today's meeting, but he had called her and requested that a "Save the Date" notice regarding the CWC Public Hearing which is scheduled for December 8th be sent out ASAP.

The hearing announcement entitled "A Financially Sustainable Vision for New Jersey's Water Infrastructure" which was prepared by Chris and subsequently revised to reflect comments from CWC Members was approved to be sent out to the public to notify them of the upcoming Public Hearing. The Council had further discussion about possible Speakers/Panelists for this year's Public Hearing. One speaker will be the DEP Commissioner who will address the environmental vision. Another speaker will give the National perspective, and Stan is following up with Dennis Hart from NJEIT and Steve Vida from EPA to get an appropriate speaker. It was decided it is inappropriate at this time to invite Commissioner Doria of the Department of Community Affairs as a speaker. Lou Neely recommended Ed McManimon of Scotland and McManimon. Mr. McManimon would speak on infrastructure financing and the challenges municipalities have financing environmental infrastructure projects. Also, we would ask him to address the state of municipal budgets; structural deficits; capitol market versus operating costs and what are the constraints. Lou will e-mail the CWC members a paper prepared by Messrs. Scotland and McManimon about "The Looming New Jersey Government Fiscal Crisis, Outline of Critical Issues and Long Term Strategies".

Howard Woods of NJ American was recommended to be invited to testify at the Hearing. He has vast experience in drinking water rate structure. It was also recommended to invite at least 2 people to address each of the 5 questions raised in the CWC Flyer. A "Save the Date" notice will be sent out with all the details except for the Speakers' names. A follow-up Notice will be sent out after we identify the Speakers.

Dan made a motion to adapt the existing document (A Financially Sustainable Vision for NJ's Water Infrastructure) with one change (than to that) and include the appropriate public hearing protocol so that it is a similar announcement to the one we sent out last year. Lou seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Discussion was held to identify individuals who would be best qualified to testify. A matrix will be developed and forwarded to the CWC Members identifying who should be invited to testify regarding each of the 5 questions.

It was recommended that at the Public Hearing, CWC members be seated in front of the public to accept the testimony. We hope to avoid the criticism voiced at last year's hearing and the frustration with the Council Members for not staying to the end of the hearing. To that end, CWC members are asked to clear their schedules and be prepared to remain for the duration of the public testimony.

Bob Breslin suggested that he could contact legislative offices to encourage staff to attend the Public Hearing.

It was also recommended that Russ open this year's public hearing with the recommendations from last year's hearing and summarize the letter that was sent to Commissioner Jackson and her charge to us.

DEP UPDATES:

An article on "Water - perhaps the most critical nutrient" was distributed.

Stan reported that there are 2 Divisions within Environmental Regulation without Director's presently.

Stan will follow-up with Tom Micai as to the status of the Wetland Rules.

NEW BUSINESS:

A new date for November's meeting needs to be chosen because November 11th is a State Holiday. After discussion, it was recommended to schedule November's CWC Meeting on either November 12th or 13th. (Note that the meeting was re-scheduled for the 12th at the Trust.)

Bob Breslin inquired about how the CWC measures it's effectiveness. A comment was made that the inter-agency communication is valuable. It was noted that the CWC was intimately involved in Water Quality Management Planning Rules and changed the direction of those rules. Also, the DEP uses this forum to educate the CWC members who can then take this info back to their respective officials/organizations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. with a motion from Lou Neely, and it was seconded by Dan Van Abs.

**** The next meeting of the Clean Water Council will be on Wednesday, November 12, 2008, beginning at 10:00 A.M., at the NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust, Building 6, Suite 201, 3131 Princeton Pike, Lawrenceville, NJ ****