

**Joint Meeting of the NJ Commission on Environmental Education
and Inter-agency Work Group
February 28th Meeting Notes and Motions Made**

Attendees: Robert DeCicco, Mimi Dunne, Joe Eldridge, Joan Elliot, Frank Gallagher, Anne Galli, Rod Groff, Pat Kane, Kathy McLaughlin, Arthur Mitchell, David Nash, Tanya Oznowich, Barry Schlegel, George Schlosser, Jim Shissias, Karen Wintress

Absent: Rich Belcher, Emile DeVito, Erin Dougherty, John Dougherty, Don Haberstoh, Toni Hendricksen, Paul Kaleda, Lynn Keepers, Christine Keresztury, John Kirk, Ray Mueller, Sam Race, Barbara Rich, Helen Skerratt

Slots Open: Higher Ed./Env. Rep.; School Administrator; High School Teacher; Student

Guest(s): Dale Rosselet (NJAS)

- Welcome and introductions/did not have quorum present
- **MOTION #1:**
Motion to accept the joint meeting notes from November 23, 1999 (in last mailing). _____
- **Next Meeting:** (Frank G.) Discussed logistics for next joint meeting, to be held at Cheesapeake State Park on Thursday, March 23, from 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon. Distributed maps to the park site.
- **Membership:** (Tanya O.) Have 4 slots open: Higher Education, High School Teacher, School Administrator and Student. Four resumes were submitted: 1 higher ed. nominee, 2 high school nominations, 1 school administrator and no students. Discussion included inclusion of non-members. Commission and work group members are encouraged to bring non-members to the meetings, as they are open to the public. They can contact Tanya for directions and meeting information.
- **Committee Updates:**
- **Inter-agency Work Group:** (George S.) Received some survey responses and comments on the form. Needs to remind agency rep's to circulate and to get responses back in to George. Group should also focus on collecting links – group members should visit a site, write a short paragraph on it, and send the info. and URL to George. (Thanks to George for all of his work on this, so far!)
- **Network Committee:** (Frank G., George S.) Other NJ web sites have environmental education listings at their site and sometimes the list isn't accurate; our site should host a short similar list. Discussion included focus on ANJEE site and ANJEE newsletter and if full text should be available at the site (group decided no, since it's a membership benefit). The site could include bullets from it, or promotions for it. Dale offered to work on. Tanya will get Annual Report 1998 text to Bob Bonja to post at the site.
- **Legislative Committee:** (Dave N.) Dave set up a meeting with David Wolfe, Chair of the Assembly Education Committee. He will approach David W. to become a sponsor of the draft env. ed. bill II (distributed). The meeting is on 3/20 at 1:30 pm, for 30 minutes. David Wolfe is a representative in Monmouth County. Dave, Frank, Kathy and Pat offered to attend the meeting, possibly Jim, too. The second "target" meeting is to be with Senator Joe Palea, Vice Chair of the Senate Ed. Committee. Another possibility is Coredemus, a member of one of the Environment Committees. David N. is seeking co-sponsorship of the bill to be between the Education and Environment Committees.

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Dave distributed a copy of the draft env. ed. bill II and he reviewed it for the group. Changes to the text suggested by the group are as follows:

1. Add reference to “all ages” in the introduction of the bill.
2. Link the bill with NJDOE’s professional development initiative, in the text.
3. Mention “all ages” in #3.
4. Reference in #4 to “2001 annual report” – change to “in its annual report”.
5. Commission must establish a list of criteria or guidelines for how expenditures will be spent within each allotment, along with (strategic and realistic) examples of how this money would be spent. Tanya offered to create “straw horses” for these, for the group to review.
6. Add “targeted audiences” in (A) and (B) instead of clumping together in text for #3.
7. Discussion that educators on the committees will see the concept(s) as they are intended to be understood, we shouldn’t worry too much about their level of understanding.
8. Put “white paper” (Frank has) and draft EE bill II on EE site for public access.
9. If he sponsors the bill, it would be a good announcement at the Earth Day event (4/27, put onto calendar to hold open!)

At the same time, the Senate and Assembly will hold joint budget hearings and members of the commission should testify. The hearings are on 3/8, 3/15 and 3/22. Current plans are to have the commission pursue 2 tracks: to receive a funded bill; or, to receive annual funds through the state budget. In the best situation, the commission will get a funded bill passed; and, in documenting effective use of the funds, use findings and outcomes to ask for annual funds directly from the state budget. Frank, Jim and Dave each offered to take the lead or to provide testimony at these three hearings.

Dave also discussed the DOE’s professional development needs coming up. (Thanks to Dave Nash for all of his efforts!)

- **Program Committee:** (Tanya O.) Regarding stipend applications, Tanya received over 15 requests for \$1,000 stipends and about a dozen requests for the school stipends. The group agreed to consider making adjustments in the \$50,000 Earth Day spending plan if some more \$1,000 allotments are needed and the funds are to be spent in a reasonable and effective way. Tanya asked the group to review the applications again and asked for any comments or concerns about the process of awarding funds or the logistics (there were none). The DEP will do a press release to promote the funds. Tanya also distributed an article which was carried in the NJSBA newsletter, the NJSTA newsletter (2 issues), the ANJEE newsletter and possibly the NJEA review. Dave N. and Tanya worked together to get the info. to NJDOE management to see if the DOE would promote through a mailing to the school superintendents (no word on this yet).

The grant allocates \$2,000 to evaluate the expenditures. This will be discussed at the March meeting.

Tanya and Dave N. discussed the April presentation to the State Board of Education. Most likely this will be pushed back into another month. The meetings are held at the beginning of the month and we have 30 minutes. This was arranged through NJDOE management and largely through Dave N.’s “hustle.” (Thanks again, Dave. This is a great opportunity). Program may set up a distance learning link/experience with students at HMDC Environment Center. Why this presentation to the Board is important and historical was discussed. Group also discussed why a state board rep. is not on the commission (slot was removed when the env. ed. act was “guttled” before signing – FYI).

Due to lack of time, staff and resources to do everything well, Tanya recommended that the Legislative Forum be cancelled for this year and resumed next year. There is no operating Program Committee and Tanya’s time has primarily been spent on promoting, organizing and responding to the management of the two stipends, along with other Earth Day related activities. The group discussed putting greater emphasis on outreach to the State Legislature through smaller meetings and mailings this spring. As a result:

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- **MOTION #2:**
Motion to cancel Legislative Forum plans for this year and to formalize another Program Committee to begin work (much earlier) on Legislative Forum 2001. _____

Tanya also discussed that she is doing all of the work in developing the contents of the Earth Day 2000 web site for New Jersey. This is primarily because she is generating and maintaining most of the information. Because she is working closely with this and the site is being developed “in-house” by DEP to be placed at the Cook server, funds allocated for web site development do not need to be used in that manner. Frank then suggested that the group allow Tanya to use the funds to hire extra help or to save the funds for stipends, etc. As a result:

- **MOTION #3:**
Motion to utilize web site fund allocation in another way, such as for extra help at DEP or for whatever is deemed necessary by the commission at the March meeting. _____
- **Publications Committee:** (Anne G., Karen W.) The 1998 EE annual report is completed (bulk copies were available). Revisions to the Plan of Action are also coming along, but the prime responsibility of the committee right now is developing and finalizing the EE brochure and beginning to compile the 1999 EE annual report.

The committee suggested that the format of the 1999 report differ from the “sampler” approach used in the first commission report. The new version should accompany a letter from the Chair and be shorter, listing more broad areas of accomplishment. As a result:

- **MOTION #4:**
Motion to change the format of the annual report to a shorter version with cover letter, highlighting commission and work group accomplishments in 1999 and with less emphasis on the status and types of EE activity in the state. The format would be similar to our committee reports and accomplishments. _____

A reminder to all commission and work group members to take good notes (now) for the 2000 annual report and to submit all 1999 committee and individual accomplishments/updates to Karen Wintress for inclusion in the 1999 annual report.

Regarding the EE brochure, all of the photos have been obtained and permission to use them is being secured. Photo contributors include HMDC, PSE&G and Greater Newark Conservancy. It was recommended to use up the full amount in the Earth Day spending plan for printing. Since the brochure doesn't include dated references it can be used within the next couple years.

Group discussed getting the Earth Day calendars circulated in order to get press at these events. The DEP will try to get the Governor or Commissioner to attend some of these. If this could happen we would encourage commission attendance at these events as well.

- **Closing Remarks**
Tanya will get an e-mail out to all members with the 4 motions made, in order to gather electronic votes. Meeting notes will be included with this e-mail.

Unfortunate news that Dr. John Kirk will not be at our meetings for a few months. He was diagnosed with colon cancer and is pursuing treatment. Tanya will be sending him wishes and a gift, on behalf of the commission. Donations will be requested for the gift at the March joint meeting.