

West Virginia Water Gaging Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday March 6, 2008

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Kanawha City
Room 1125 (Dolly Sods Room)

Council Membership Representation

Organization	Present	Absent	Proxy	Represented By
WV Conservation Agency	X			Russ Campbell Edward Cox
U.S. Geological Survey	X			Hugh Bevans Ron Evaldi
WV Department of Environmental Protection	X			Mike Stratton Nick Schaer
WV Division of Highways	X			Doug Kirk
WV Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management	X			Jim Steele Bill Wood
WV Division of Natural Resources		X		
WV Water Research Institute		X		
National Weather Service	X			John Sikora
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		X		
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service	X			Dick Judy
WV Rivers Coalition	X			Shanda Minney
Canaan Valley Institute	X			Todd Miller
Michael Baker Jr., INC.	X			Mohiuddin Shaik

Other Representation

West Virginia University Natural Resources Analysis Center	Professor Jerry Fletcher, Director
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Administration

The Secretary conducted a Roll-Call of the member organizations. Upon conclusion of Roll-Call, the Secretary notified the Council Chair that a Quorum had been established.

Call to Order and Introductions

Russ Campbell, West Virginia Conservation Agency and Chair (WVCA and Chair), called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. The Chair, started off the meeting by introducing two new representatives of member organizations for the West Virginia Water Gaging Council (Gaging Council).

Mr. Bill Wood of the Division Homeland Security Emergency Management (DHSEM) was introduced. Mr. Wood is the Acting Flood Warning Program Manager located in the Elkview office and can be reached by phone at (304) 965-3172 or by email at bill.j.wood@wv.gov .

The next introduction was Ms. Shanda Minney of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC). Ms. Minney is the Executive Director and can be reached by phone at (304) 637-7201 or by email at sminney@wvrivers.org .

Agenda Review

Campbell, WVCA, asked if there were any additions to be added to the Agenda. Hugh Bevans, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), asked to add discussion on the issue of possibly trying to form a subcommittee to seek outside funding for gaging upgrades in the gaging program.

Campbell, WVCA, stated that this item would be added to the new business.

Approval of 12/6/07 Meeting Minutes

Campbell, WVCA, asked if there were any additions, corrections, or comments to the minutes. Hearing none, Campbell, WVCA, asked if there was interest in accepting the minutes.

Action: Mike Stratton, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), moved to accept the minutes. Doug Kirk, Division of Highways (DOH), seconded. Motion passed.

Unfinished Business

Status of Switching Station to WVVGC Webpage

Cox, WVCA, indicated that a meeting had taken place between Ron Evaldi of USGS, himself, and the Information Technology (IT) staff of the WVCA. The IT staff is currently developing the links to the West Virginia Water Gaging Council's web page. Upon completion, the "Switching Station" will provide an index of links to other web pages that contain individual gaging information of interest.

Ron Evaldi, USGS, indicated that the "Switching Station" would have to be updated as we add new gages or web addresses change for those gage links.

Cox, WVCA, stated that the WVCA IT staff requested that all updates be funneled through the Gaging Council to Ron Evaldi who will report changes to the IT staff.

Action: Hugh Bevans, USGS, moved to have the data for the “Switching Station” link on the webpage overseen by Ron Evaldi and Edward Cox and updated on a quarterly basis to the WVCA “IT” staff. Mohiuddin Shaik, Michael Baker Jr., INC., seconded. Motion passed

Campbell, WVCA, asked if there were any unfinished business to discuss. Hearing none, Campbell, WVCA, stated that the Council would move to new business.

ZedX Presentation

Russ Campbell, WVCA, asked Nick Schaer, DEP, to introduce the guest speaker for ZedX Incorporated (INC). Professor Jerry Fletcher, Director, West Virginia University Natural Resources Analysis Center was introduced.

Professor Fletcher stated that his center had worked closely with DEP in the creation of GIS tools for DEP concerning hydrology and in the development of hydrologic models. To develop the models, a company by the name of ZedX, INC., out of State College, PA was contracted. This company produces weather modeling and has previously developed a 20 gigabyte weather data set with 1 hour precipitation and 1 hour temperature for the West Virginia University Natural Resources Analysis Center. The goal was to provide historic data on estimated stream flow for a selected place and time.

A goal of ZedX, INC., is to be able to deliver weather information in real time in a web based interface. A requirement would be for it to provide weather data for a specific place and time as it is requested. This would be provided at a reasonable cost to the consumer. Professor Fletcher stated that this presentation was to open discussion as to the potential use of data produced by ZedX, INC.

Current Status of the Water Resources Protection and Management Act

Mike Stratton, DEP, provided the Council with the current status of the Water Resources Protection and Management Act. It was reported that Senate Bill 641 (SB 641) (Water Resources Protection and Management Act – an amendment to the Water Resources Protection Act) has passed through the West Virginia Senate and is on its third reading in the West Virginia House of Delegates. The act calls for the development of a water management plan. Stratton, DEP, indicated that the report presented to the State Water Resources Oversight Commission prior to the 2008 session that led to SB 641 identified all the council members’ agencies had a part in the development of the plan.

Hugh Bevans, USGS, asked how this would affect gages. Mike Stratton, DEP, stated that there is a provision for funding of gaging. A fiscal note attached to the bill would allow us to install two stream gages the first year and to provide O&M for those gages. These gages could be placed in the central-western part of the state where there are a limited number of gages.

Cox, WVCA, stated that the WVCA had been contacted by Delegate Tim Manchin, 43rd District (Marion), concerning gaging in the northwest counties of West Virginia. From this, USGS was contacted to produce list of gaging in this area and to make it an item on the agenda. The third item on the agenda is “Gaging of Northwest Counties in West Virginia”.

Mike Stratton, DEP, stated that Delegate Tim Manchin, 43rd District (Marion), was the Co-chair of the State Water Resources Oversight Commission to which DEP made its report. It was also stated that Delegate Manchin had worked with DEP on the agency's concerns with SB 641 to get the bill in its final version.

Ron Evaldi, USGS, stated that the list that was given to WVCA came from the recommendations of the statewide flood taskforce in the statewide protection plan.

Mike Stratton, DEP, stated that if there are areas that the statewide flood taskforce recommended for gaging and it fits the needs for DEP we could place that gage in that area and use it for the dual purpose. This is all contingent upon funding of the fiscal note for SB 641.

Gaging of Northwest Counties in West Virginia

Campbell, WVCA, stated that he had been contacted by Delegate Manchin during the 2008 West Virginia Legislative Session and asked if there was a need for gaging in the Northwestern Counties in West Virginia. Campbell stated that he would have to go back to the Council and investigate if there was a need in that area.

A handout was provided to council members of gage site recommendations based on the West Virginia Flood Protection Plan. Campbell, WVCA, asked the council what was its pleasure in responding to Delegate Tim Manchin, 43rd District (Marion).

Mike Stratton, DEP, stated that the council should only provide Discharge gaging as this is what is needed by DEP for a water management plan and not to confuse the issue with stage gaging for the delegate.

Further discussion among council members was conducted on what needed to be presented to Delegate Manchin. Campbell, WVCA, as chair of the West Virginia Water Gaging Council would be the one to respond to Delegate Manchin.

Action: John Sikora, National Weather Service (NWS), moved to approach Delegate Manchin in support of gaging based off the recommendations made by the statewide flood taskforce in the statewide protection plan. Dick Judy, U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, seconded. Motion passed

Rescheduling of June 2008 Meeting

Campbell, WVCA, indicated that the Council needed to reschedule the June 5, 2008, meeting to June 3, 2008.

Action: Hugh Bevans, USGS, moved that the Council change the next meeting date to June 3, 2008, at DEP at 1:00 p.m. Mike Stratton, DEP, seconded. Motion passed

External Funding

Hugh Bevans, USGS, discuss the possibility of seeking outside funding for the gaging program. He also indicated that he would sit on a sub-committee to seek this external funding.

In council discussion it was noted that this would be going after new money for gaging and not just state funds already being provided.

Mohiuddin Shaik, Michael Baker Jr., INC., stated that he would contact his corporate headquarters to see what support he could generate.

Mike Stratton, DEP, stated that the council should go after financial support from different foundations such as the Heinz Foundation of the foundation set up by Bill Gates.

All council members indicated that this needed further discussion and should be discussed at the next meeting.

Further Business

Dick Judy, NRCS, indicated that this would be his last meeting as he was retiring. He also indicated that a new representative for NRCS would continue to be part of the Council. The council memberships wish him well and thanked him for his many years of service.

Russ Campbell, WVCA, Chair, asked if there was any additional business, none heard

Action: Mike Stratton, DEP, moved that the Council Adjourn. Hugh Bevans, USGS, seconded. Motion passed Meeting concluded at 3:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Edward G. Cox Jr.
Secretary