

MINUTES
of the
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Abbey Inn Hotel
St. George, Utah
September 29, 2016

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Radisson Hotel
St. George, Utah
September 29, 2016**

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

ALASKA	David W. Schade
ARIZONA	Einav Henenson
CALIFORNIA	Jeanine Jones
COLORADO	James Eklund
IDAHO	Jerry Rigby
KANSAS	David Barfield
MONTANA	Tim Davis
NEBRASKA	Jeff Fassett
NEVADA	--
NEW MEXICO	--
NORTH DAKOTA	Garland Erbele
OKLAHOMA	--
OREGON	--
SOUTH DAKOTA	--
TEXAS	Jon Niermann
UTAH	Walt Baker
WASHINGTON	--
WYOMING	Pat Tyrrell

STAFF

Tony Willardson
Michelle Bushman
Sara Larsen
Cheryl Redding

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Jerry Rigby, Chair of the Executive Committee, called the meeting to order, and asked for introductions to be made around the table.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held in Bismarck, North Dakota on July 14, 2016 were moved for approval and the motion was seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

BUDGET AND FINANCES

Jeanine Jones addressed the topic of budget and finances as the new Secretary-Treasurer for the WSWC. She reminded members that the Committee opted to plan for a dues increase in 2018.

Jeanine noted that the WSWC has been making due with existing resources for the past ten years. The Assistant Director's position on staff has not been filled. The salary savings has enabled the WSWC not to increase our dues. That luxury will not be able to carry on. She reiterated that states should plan for a dues increase in 2018.

In reviewing the revenue side of the budget, Jeanine noted that Alaska had not been included in revenue projections in the FY2016-2017 budget.

Dave Schade commented that the Alaska Department of Natural Resources has had three new directors in the past year, which has made it difficult to get funding approval for WSWC membership. Dave has received approval to pay dues (from all the other departments) and he has a list of those who will likely be appointed as representatives on the Council.

Jeanine stated that the WaDE program and the funding support it receives through grants is good for a while. The WSWC staff will seek additional grant support.

Tab D in the briefing materials contains budget information. The funding support on the CDWR agreements with the WSWC will be forthcoming. Tony remarked that the staff did not

have the manpower to make use of the full amount specified in the two CDWR agreements which total about \$200,000.

There have been some cost savings to the budget from the office move. Over the long term, the amount for rent will be fairly close to the same, with more space. The new office space does not include janitorial services, although this service was included with our previous office space. Nevertheless, there will be some savings in the rent line item in the budget. There is more office space in our current location which allows room to house another member on staff, should the Council decide to increase the staff size in the future. The off-site storage unit is currently being maintained. The intent is to scale back on items stored, and eventually phase out the need to house anything in a storage unit.

Walt asked about the ability of those states that have not paid to meet their obligation. Tony responded that he anticipates receiving dues from the remaining states. No one has expressed an inability to meet the dues assessment this fiscal year. The dues level has been kept level given current WSWC staff, but also because of funding received from contracts, even though that is soft money.

Overall through the month of August, the budget is underexpended for the current fiscal year.

Sara mentioned the WaDE Exchange Network (EN) grants. The WSWC will be administering an EPA Exchange Network grant with the states of California, Nevada, and South Dakota.

The Chairman requested that the states anticipate and plan for a dues increase to about \$36,000 per year, but noted a final decision on this issue will be voted on next year by the Executive Committee.

SUNSETTING POSITIONS

Tony reviewed very briefly the four sunseting policy positions being considered for revision and readoption at these meetings.

Chairman Jerry Rigby stated that typically the Council has been readopting WSWC policy positions. He requested Council members to please review the list of current positions to determine if there may be any issues lacking on which a position should be taken.

Walt Baker brought up the issue of harmful algal blooms. In Utah, this summer two hundred people became ill, recreational activities were shut down, as was irrigation, due to harmful algal blooms. Walt offered to be a part of a workgroup or subcommittee to bring this topic to the Full Council. It was noted that an EPA Great Lakes harmful algal bloom coordinator

position has been approved to work with federal agencies, state, local tribal and foreign government to coordinate efforts to address the issue.

James Eklund suggested that aquatic nuisance species may be an item on which the Council wishes to take a policy position. He said he would be happy to serve on a workgroup on this effort. Tony noted the WSWC does not have a current position on aquatic nuisance species. He further stated he is not certain if WGA's position on aquatic invasive species is current.

Walt will talk about sunsetting Position #359, opposing requiring National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) discharge permits for pesticide applications during the Water Quality Committee meeting this afternoon. He will have some edits to the language to propose to the committee.

Tony mentioned sending a letter to support in concept the work at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). He also talked about tribal issues, particularly with respect to treatment of Tribes as States (TAS) status. EPA has changed the way they deal with tribes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT/WSWC ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Tony Willardson reported that WSWC activities and events are summarized in Tab J, which contains a list of our workshops, symposia, etc. The highlighted items are those that have been undertaken since the last WSWC meetings held in mid-July.

Tony further noted that he had been invited to attend and participate in the White House National Drought Resiliency Partnership (NDRP) meeting. Six goals have been identified and they are included under Tab O in the briefing materials. Michelle did a cross-walk between NDRP goals and our current positions. This document is also included under Tab O. Tony believes there may be areas the WSWC could work on with the NDRP. The WSWC has had a lot of input into the NDRP document.

Additionally, Tony addressed the workshops being done under agreements with Jeanine and the California Department of Water Resources. In particular, Tony pointed out the WSWC letter sent to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) expressing strong support for the the National Weather Service and Office of Atmospheric Research and their efforts to maintain and expand NOAA's observational capabilities, as well as to improve operational weather forecasting capability and advance research and development for improving sub-seasonal to seasonal precipitation (S2S) forecasting. He also noted that Jeanine may talk about the need for a federal budget subcommittee.

Tony also pointed out the work Sara Larsen has been doing with respect to the Water Data Exchange (WaDE) development, and referred to the information Sara shared during the Water Resources Committee meeting.

There has been a lot going on. We continue our coordination with many other groups and organizations. Tony met in Montana with the National Association of State Budget Officers, and addressed infrastructure needs. He met with the Council of State Governments–West and let the state legislators know we are here to help them.

Lastly, it was noted that the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) sometimes becomes a catch-all for other provisions, as the Congress works toward adjournment.

WSWC STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Jeanine Jones is chairing the WSWC Strategic Planning Subcommittee. This subcommittee was formed to discuss and formalize organizational priorities. It was noted that the WSWC cannot become everything to everyone. It causes us budget and staff issues.

Jeanine reported that the Subcommittee is still working through their tasks. The Council went through its “Vision” process, and this subcommittee does not want to repeat that process. The intent is not to produce a long document. Rather, they will create a short document that can guide staff on their priorities.

The initial work of the subcommittee was to determine the overarching priorities, which focus on; (1) providing opportunities for states to interact amongst each other; (2) providing for interaction with the federal government; and (3) interactions with other entities (like WGA, etc.). These topics would receive roughly a page each in the plan.

With respect to interactions among states, first address time management or logistics and tackle things that could be dealt with quickly. Regarding interactions with the federal government and with other entities, try to avoid entities wanting to come and simply “pitch their programs.” Additionally, Jeanine noted that the subcommittee believes it will be important to shift some of the work and attendance at various organizations’ meetings to Council members, and not expect Tony to attend all of the meetings.

Other specific suggestions the subcommittee is addressing include: (a) shortening the length of the briefing books; (b) involving appointed Council members’ staff to a greater extent, such as having someone on your staff review a particular WSWC matter and brief you on it ahead of time; (c) allowing for increased interaction among states during Council meetings, such as the interaction that typically takes place during state reports at the Full Council meeting.

The Subcommittee suggests each state be asked to submit a one-page state report and it will be distributed in advance of the meeting -- with the briefing materials. This is not intended to be a big task for any state. It is hoped this will facilitate networking and discussion. Furthermore, we will move these reports up earlier in the schedule of meetings, likely on the first day of meetings (usually Thursday), rather than on the last day of the meetings. This change will be incorporated into the agenda for the Spring 2017 meetings.

The host state reports have usually been presented on Friday. The Subcommittee proposes having one opening presentation from the host state on Thursday morning, first thing, and this would be attended by all Council members.

The group has also discussed how to eliminate inactive subcommittees. Each Committee Chair will pare back the committee's workplan to focus on those items they actually plan to accomplish. Subcommittees should be modeled as task committees, with a specific deliverable to be provided by a specific date, and should sunset once their assigned task has been completed.

Jeanine suggested forming a subcommittee to deal with the federal budget. This could be accomplished through working with the WestFAST agencies. Between the 2016 Fall meeting and the next meeting, the Strategic Planning Subcommittee will determine the scope of this and will follow up.

To foster more interaction among the states, the subcommittee is suggesting performing a survey of member states. Typically such surveys are generated by a state coming to the staff. The last such survey performed was likely on exempt wells. People find this information useful and interesting. The Planning Subcommittee is considering the potential of doing a similar survey. We would ask each state's Executive Committee member to specify what your state's top three areas of interest would be. An email reminder will be sent out requesting this information following the meetings. Additionally, a notice of the next Strategic Planning Subcommittee meeting or teleconference will be provided to the Executive Committee.

FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION TRANSITION AND WSWC PRIORITIES

The Committee briefly discussed the upcoming election and determined to prepare a document informing the transition team about the WSWC, so that it is ready to distribute once the election has been held. The Executive Committee will review the transition document.

FUTURE WSWC MEETINGS

The list of WSWC meetings is set forth in Tab K of the briefing materials. Jeff Fassett suggested that folks fly into Omaha for the Spring 2017 meetings being held April 12-14, in Nebraska City, Nebraska, as airfare to Omaha is usually less expensive.

SPRING 2017 MEETING SUNSETTING POSITIONS

The positions that will sunset at the Spring 2017 meetings are described on the Executive Committee agenda, along with the committee who has oversight. They are also included under Tab XYZ in the briefing materials for your reference. Unless there is a motion to continue the positions or absent any actions to revise and readopt them, the positions will sunset at the Spring 2017 meetings.

OTHER MATTERS

Jerry Rigby announced that J.D. Strong is no longer with the WSWC as he has taken a new job as the Director of Oklahoma's Department of Wildlife Conservation. He had just been installed as WSWC's Secretary-Treasurer in July. Given this situation, Tim Davis has been asked to fill that role.

James Eklund made it known that Carlee Brown is now with the Colorado Water Conservation Board, and he anticipates she will attend the April meetings in Nebraska.

There being no other matters, the meeting was adjourned at 1:20 pm.