



Upper White River Watershed Alliance, Inc.
April 19, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM Wednesday April 19, 2006. Those present were as follows: Mr. Kenton Ward, Hamilton County Surveyor; Mr. Robert Thompson, Hamilton County Surveyor's Office; Mr. Larry Stout, Hamilton County ISSD; Ms. Summer O'Brien, Williams Creek; Ms. Jill Hoffman, Williams Creek; Ms. Lora Shrake, CEES-IUPUI; Mr. Angie Brown, White River Watershed Project; and Mr. Bob Meyer.

Approval of Minutes of January 18, 2006:

There were no changes made; the minutes were approved.

Water Supply Management Plan Proposal:

Ward stated that Jack Whitman gave this proposal to the Hamilton County Wellhead Committee last week. This is a proposal that Whitman put together on drought management or a water shortage plan and to look at Hamilton County and put together a report as to how Hamilton County would stand if we had a water shortage; what kind of inter-connectibility there is between the units; trying to get the idea set forth to the powers that be and start thinking about this. The Wellhead Committee is now going to contact the private water utilities and also the cities and towns and try to get their buy in into this study. Hamilton County will be the first in this State to do something about a drought plan. The State has decided to resurrect their team that was put together approximately 10 to 15 years ago.

Stout stated that he was not sure how they could do Hamilton County without including Marion County. There are probably more water utility customers in Hamilton County served by Veolia than all the rest combined.

UWRWA GIS Project Update:

Thompson stated that a couple of the glitches, as far as links on the website for the Upper White, were taken care of. Buechler has added some educational materials that have been forwarded to him on the Upper White Educational Resources Link, the Watershed Academy and then the 2005 Hamilton County Recreational Water Sampling results were added and various links to watershed management plans. The website has been updated and they are in the maintenance mode now at the Polis Center. The last time he spoke with Neil, he indicated that he would be working closely with the Upper White and said they would consider hosting in the future sometime.

Ward stated that Lenore spoke with John and John wants to move the site off their server now. They may need a new server for this to be posted on.

Hoffman stated that she doesn't know the technical details, but they just got a new server and she can look into what that would take.

Ward stated that he didn't have a chance to call John before the meeting, but wanted to talk to him about this issue. Ward stated that he would get back with Hoffman after he talks to John. At one time they talked about being able to host this at IU in their geography department. The other aspect is financial and where they stand with them on that. We don't know how much we have and who paid what; who has paid dues and who hasn't.

Thompson stated that as things are resolved we need to update the list of the current Board of Directors.

Ward stated that Lenore is the President; Tim Method is the Vice President; John Shell is Treasurer; and Jill is the Secretary.

Thompson asked if this is something that needs to be posted on the website.

Hoffman stated that they weren't going to do any of that officially until they resolved the 501C3 issue; apparently that status was allowed to lapse and her concern was that this gets rectified first partly because handling money outside of your tax status would be problematic and incurs a certain amount of personal liability for any Board members involved; if this was allowed to lapse there may be some tax issues to handle. Lenore is checking with some of the legal issues with an attorney and as those get resolved then it would be appropriate at that time and then go back to the bylaws and see about the elections.

Meyers stated that he would call Lenore this afternoon, but is not sure that he would be able to answer any questions because so much of that is what Bob Weaver did. He would think the thing to do is ask Bob to sit down with us and make sure that we have all the records he had, whatever condition those are in and piece together as much as we can figure out what happened. He asked if we had asked this of Bob?

Hoffman stated that Lenore asked Bob for whatever he had.

2006 UWRWA Golf Outing – Committee:

Ward stated that one thing Lenore asked that we try to do is a golf outing because it did bring a lot of funds last year. She suggested June this year.

Thompson stated that he is putting together a golf outing and has been at it for a month; last of June maybe; August probably.

Ward stated that they need to put together a golf committee and start looking at who's available, what courses are available and his suggestion is to get Anderson to help with that; or at least give them some ideas; she did it last year and did a great job.

Thompson stated that Josh Goode indicated in an email that he did not think they would be able to help them. Thompson stated that he could help in any way. The hardest part is the fund raising.

UWRWA Board Meeting:

Hoffman stated that with them trying to get the Board back together, she would like to get a better structure and rejuvenation. We talked about potential of other committees that might be necessary; something like outreach and communication; they talked about what the benefits are of being part of this, which went back to the website. One of the things that would be pretty useful in terms of offering some kind of service to whoever belongs to the Alliance would be to use that website to have all those hotspots that have been identified all pulled together in one place; potential mitigation sites available where developers or contractors would go for watershed objectives. To make this group have a marketable purpose that meets the objectives of the bigger watersheds. They talked about what they would do to create at least one more committee and figure out what the structure would be? The objective of this group needs to be cleared up so that the Board can figure out what other pieces are missing and create other necessary committees.

Meyers stated that on the agenda this group has evolved over the years; different things have come and gone; he doesn't know that we've written out a specific mission statement for the group. The general result has been that this has been the most active portion of the Upper White. There was once a policy committee. One of the problems they have had is that we seem to have a reason to get together, but an unwillingness to pay for it along with a technical inability to get the invoices to the right people and they lacked the ability to follow through and insure that those invoices got paid.

Thompson stated that a topic that was coming up a lot in the past was the Phase II program and now that the Phase II program is here and has been here, many of the communities in the Upper White directly affected their designated entities or trying to get started with their own programs. If you could find a way to take this need that they have and address some of those needs, whether it's education, monitoring, water quality sampling, or a combination of all of those and sell it to everybody so as an interlocal or as a cooperative effort; IDEM would be more than happy to see a watershed taking this on and then your annual report from an MS4 Community, you can say that we've been doing this through the Upper White; that is a big selling point since many of us don't have funding to do some of the programs. Funding is coming around, but how do you take that funding and get the job done; if you can do it through the Upper White it could be a real winner.

Brown stated that she hasn't been part of this group for very long, but one of the things that she was hoping for when she came into this position was to be a part of a larger group; to have a model or network and talk to people who knew what was going on. If an MS4 Community is where this needs to go then there are other areas where a watershed group would be thrilled to be able to be a part of what's going on in a larger watershed if it could be guidance and providing guidance.

Meyers stated that non-profits often struggle without paid staff; that is part of the problem here. It's hard to get people to carry the water outside of the meetings and we've drifted for a lot of reasons.

Hoffmann stated that there are non-profits that have paid staff; if that's the direction that this group wants to be in, it would be a fund raising question. There is a larger mission for the overall Alliance, but this Committee ought to have their own mission; that gives them an idea of where the holes are and what else might be put together. It may start with just a brainstorm session about what other benefits we could offer people.

Brown stated that she talked to the people from Eagle Creek last week about the history of this organization. Our watershed project needs to do strategic planning for our organization and our advisory group has suggested that we take that to a regional level; she immediately thought of this group to find out how they can fit in to the plan that is in place or work with developing a plan. She would like to find out a little bit of history and what was going on; there is interest in coming back together, but she knows from at least one person's perspective, who has been involved in watersheds in Indianapolis for quite some time, that he had no communication and had no idea what was going on. She doesn't know if that was his fault or if there is something that the group could do to communicate with groups that have paid dues; we paid dues in August, but wasn't sure what that meant when they did it.

Hoffmann stated that we could run a mini strategic planning session to figure out with a group this size what some of the major benefits are and what the strategies are to get us there.

Meyers stated that those benefits have changed over the years; the original things are different than what they are now and in another few years they will be different again. The group needs to be able to evolve.

Ward stated that this would be a great group, whenever you're trying to do a 319, in support of and put in the grant how this will fit in with the total watershed and have this group support those and in turn be a clearing house. You might want to do something that somebody else has already done in another watershed.

Brown stated that she spoke with IDEM when this whole thing came out of our advisory group that they should look at strategic planning, to find out what they knew; the alliance could write a 319 grant and have a plan for the larger watershed. This was done in the St. Joe basin and he thought that would actually be extremely useful for the smaller groups within our basin to be able to justify getting funding; they would be able to directly to implementation steps and in terms of getting funding from IDEM it seems to be that this is going to be the direction.

Meyers stated that one of the things that would be helpful is trying to decide who is the membership ultimately to be; it's buried over the years for a period of time and was desired to have all the engineering firms involved because they could bring money and maybe even pay for the whole thing; then there was the feeling that they didn't want to let engineering firms steer it because they might be using it to their own advantage; it was more for a long time governmental entities and there was a period of time when there was a real concern about letting advocacy groups get involved because they would be loud and dominate and make some of the governmental representatives reluctant to speak out and act candidly. Part of the whole strategic thing needs to decide who is this group for and they can't be too overt about that, but you have to come to some kind of consensus. This has set in the background and kept a few people out of the group over the years because they felt that I don't want to be a part of for whatever reason.

Thompson stated that at last year's golf outing they had several corporate sponsors which is great then he hears a comment that we're an engineering firm and we don't want to do this because we have other competitors over here inputting.

Meyers stated that Josh tried to get this started and through a period of time there is an appearance that maybe this was Goode's deal so that turned off other firms that might be competitive with them.

Hoffmann stated that they need to start over with some outreach efforts that are benign in who the focus group is and everyone is welcome.

Thompson stated that Dr. Tedesco taking the reigns will hopefully be behind us and a neutral place to come out of.

Meyers stated that he will call Lenore a call right away and try to report back by email. He stated that he only has the vaguest memory of what the 501C3 thing is, but he remembers that he paid for a bunch of signs and it got all mixed up in that so he said don't bother to reimburse me; some of that had to do with the fact that they were no longer 501C3 anymore. He went back to Bob and it was something he hadn't done and there was some other step that had to be done to pursue that and that had not been done.

Hoffmann stated that it is a critical component to the status of getting some help. Just talking to Lenore about this for Eagle Creek is that it is a real advantage to get people involved because you can get a lot of technical assistance; she gives a lot of assistance to Tippecanoe Watershed and the foundation sends her a letter for the time for the donation of service; while it's not cash in the door, if you want to be involved for some larger mission it helps. Is it worth taking a little bit of time to brainstorm potential benefits that they could go back to the board with and try to figure out what can be done by the Technical Committee or wait to see what happens with getting the Board and the funding restructured.

Ward stated that if they want to hit the ground running when they do get all this mess untangled it would be nice to have that in place and ready to go.

Meyers stated that he doesn't see how it would hurt as long as everybody has the time.

Hoffmann stated that what she is interested in is what the purpose of the group is and then what the benefits to being part of this group and then back in to how they offer those benefits to the membership and who is the right committee to start working on them.

UWRWA Mission Statement – The Alliance exists to improve and protect water quality in local watershed basins by acting as an advocate for it's members with State and Federal Agencies, consolidating data, integrating planning and priorities and encouraging the development of smaller watershed partnerships.

Brown stated that Delaware County wasn't included in that and anyone who wanted information for Delaware County had to go somewhere else. Is there potential for expansion in some of those areas?

Ward stated that the money was given to us for the fish kill so they concentrated on those three counties, but they wanted to, after this was done for the three counties, to expand this to the other counties and that is what Brown is talking about; that is something they need to start looking at.

Thompson asked how much Ball State had been involved in your groups; they have a nice natural resources department.

Brown stated that Ball State is involved in every sub-committee they have had as well as their steering committee. They have at least one representative and are also the contract holder for our monitoring.

Ward stated that right now the GIS Monitoring included Marion, Hamilton and Madison Counties and needs to be expanded to include all the counties in the watershed.

Hoffmann stated that if all the watershed plans were on our site and they had their priorities and they have identified restoration areas that should go hand in hand with whatever mitigation is being done. She would like to see a restoration/mitigation clearing house where you could target your work.

Ward stated that one of the things that they talked about, which would fit in with that type of action; one of our first projects was a BMP matrix for MS4s; that needs to be updated.

Hoffmann stated that she was at Eagle Creek this morning; they have to develop a cost share program for urban BMPs for that watershed so they can cost share on them, but they have to develop the whole program; you want those to be practices that help the MS4s meet their objectives, but don't run into what the Upper White ran into on 319s; they are also not paying for things that are minimum controls for MS4s.

Thompson stated that eventually, someday, IDEM will give us the Stormwater Management BMP Manual. Supposedly the manual was in review and at the printers. We might want to make sure that if they do decide to update the BMP toolbox that we look at the manual that the State is putting together and see if there are synergies or how those two relate to each other.

Ward stated that one of the items that they were thinking about on the GIS project was having those on the GIS as to location; putting attribute data to each location as to what's gone on there; what watershed project was done and all the information for that. On the GIS they need to expand some of those layers because there is a lot more data out there that can be put in there.

Meyers asked if those are layers that were not per the original job description to John?

Ward stated that they had to start shortening the list up because of time constraints. There were other layers that they wanted to put in, but couldn't be done.

Hoffmann asked about the rules of the agency?

Ward stated that he does not know if there was anything done in that regard.

Hoffmann asked if that was a need to focus on?

Ward stated 'yes'.

Meyers asked if advocacy was the risk with the IRS and taking too much for a 501C3?

Hoffmann stated that you can't lobby as a 501C3.

Thompson asked about changing the work advocacy to something similar; the Upper White could be a representative of some of the MS4 communities to the State and IDEM.

Meyers stated that they need to get some legal advice before they do something they shouldn't do.

Brown stated that advocacy could be 'while I'm talking to my watershed specialist to IDEM about my small watershed project; I might mention something about the larger group'.

Thompson asked if that would be in rule making? As a watershed group they are representing these communities that as rules at State level are being developed they could have a voice?

Brown stated that if they have a steering committee that they put together; maybe they come to the Upper White to poll a member?

Ward asked if instead of advocacy, use coordination?

Hoffmann asked if Ward was talking about a _____ Board; they could come to us if they are considering changing something.

Ward stated that as we mature it would be nice if you have some member that could be on this Board or this rule making group or study group.

Hoffmann asked if there were any action items that would get us to that as a purpose or is that a background item until they get stronger?

Ward stated that he believes that the group needs to mature.

Hoffmann stated that if you're going to get any sort of legitimacy with those agencies you do have to have regular meetings, accomplish things, have an active website, etc.

Stout stated that there was talk of a 319 Grant for this group; what kind of money are you talking about?

Thompson stated that potentially good money.

Ward stated that they do have an EPA Grant.

Thompson asked if Ward was talking about the Environmental Education for Region V; the one we haven't heard anything back from.

Stout asked what was supposed to be accomplished with that grant?

Ward stated that this particular grant would be coordinating with schools within the Upper White and teaching the kids about the streams, how you judge the health of a stream and maybe take some samples; show them some quick and easy tests then go back to the website and let the kids put the test results into the website and let them put the dot on the GIS map and give them some ownership of that.

Stout asked if there was a potential for grant funding that would support projects that an employee of the Upper White could actually execute.

Brown stated that Tim Crooker from IDEM seems to think that we would be able to get a 319 Grant to do planning and employ a person.

Stout stated that is the best idea for a way to fund the group to a level to support an executive director. A lot of those grants you can include overhead and if you're an executive director who is spending 80% of your time performing these functions and 20% kind of working with the group and keeping it together and building partnerships.

Thompson asked if the 319 Grant funded a watershed coordinator in Delaware for sometime?

Brown stated that Thompson was correct.

Hoffmann asked what kind of committees would need to happen and where does this committee fit into making some of these things happen and what are we missing?

Ward stated that the GIS Committee would need to happen.

Hoffmann asked if this group could handle figuring out what the priorities are; maybe take information from the plans that exist and show it all in one place.

Thompson stated that this ties in with the GIS.

Brown stated that the overall basin wide plan seems to be the other piece to the puzzle; would also have to set planning priorities and she is not sure if this is something that this group would want to take on or if it would be appropriate for them to take on.

Ward asked if they were talking about the restoration/mitigation clearing house the other day as far as identifying sites and then setting them out there?

Hoffmann stated that a lot of people would belong if their membership gave them insights to how to make the right connections.

Thompson stated that maybe this is the type of data that would be useful to a certain group of stakeholders like engineering firms that would make a selling tool for membership and maybe how you add it; I don't know how you charge for it.

Hoffmann stated that your members get certain access to certain agents of that website. Once you consolidate that data together you should start to get where your priorities are. My interest in this only came on strong lately because when she used to work at IDNR groups like yours we would try to coordinate funding, people would struggle to find \$5,000.00 to do a little demo project here and there; it's ridiculous to me that you have all this available money in mitigation that could be spent watershed priorities and people doing mitigation just tend to take whatever they can get because there's no networking; at the end of the day, not only is it frustrating for both parties, but you had those losses in that watershed that should have mitigated at a place where they could have made a bigger difference.

Thompson stated that one thing that they might be missing, obviously water quality is definitely in the mission statement, but there are also flood issues that the Upper White could look at also or has looked at or could be part of it. Various ordinances in some counties prohibit building in the floodplain for example.

Hoffmann stated that a great benefit for us would be an engineering firm tracking all the ordinances that keep popping up. So many of the projects across county boundaries and different ordinances; maybe we could store those somewhere as another benefit to members; here is a quick place to find all the ordinances or for those that are looking to build an ordinance here's some that are out there.

Thompson stated that groups like CILTE might be involved with this type of discussion.

Meyers stated that the new thing they are doing at 116th and Eller is 70 acres that probably could be a mitigation site real easy and I'm sure the money would be real handy at CILTE.

Hoffmann asked if they needed a separate committee to handle some of the networking stuff or gathering ordinances?

Thompson stated that ordinances could be part of the Technical Committee.

Brown asked if the Technical Committee had been surveying the Steering Committee for this?

Ward stated that it was set up originally where there is a Policy Committee, there is a Board Policy Committee; the Policy Committee would come up with these things and they were suppose to send it to the Technical Committee to see how it could be done. That never happened. When he took over, instead of sitting here all the time lets do a project and that is when they started the toolbox for the BMPs. Then they started the GIS project, the fish kill folks got the money for that.

Brown stated that at this point the structure for idea generation, where its technical or not, is either occurring here or at the Board level.

Ward stated that it's just here. The Board just kind of ran with things.

Thompson stated that maybe now with new leadership and a different group of leaders at the top I can see this changing dramatically.

Hoffmann stated that with the three of you in the room with a lot of technical knowledge I don't know as much as Bob likes to play golf that planning an outing like that is the best use of the Technical Committee. If you want to do that you could participate in that part; it just didn't seem like the best use of technical resources. We don't even have to have a technical committee we call it something else; we could b something else; a straight up GIS committee; one that really works on partnership stuff that is responsible for pulling together a list of all the contacts to get on the website; responsible for planning outings or advertising us. Somebody that is focused on partnerships; that is a whole effort; developing partnerships is a whole effort separate from data related technical stuff.

Ward stated that one of the things with the Board is that you only saw some of them at the Board meetings and if they had a mission of their own even more active and participate.

Thompson stated that a partnership seems like a Board mission also because they are promoting and marketing the organization.

Brown stated that there could almost be a separate committee for that; a marketing, outreach; they might develop some of those materials.

Thompson stated that there was talk at one time of a speaker's bureau that would go around to the various county commission meetings, city council meetings and do a little song and dance as an educational event.

Brown stated if people are willing to be on this committee or even this committee could identify people.

Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting was set for Wednesday July 19, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. in Noblesville.

Hoffmann stated that at the next meeting they may be able to talk about how to get two and three started.

Ward stated that they will know more about GIS and posting.

Thompson stated that if a subcommittee could form for the golf outing that probably needs to meet at least monthly between now and then.

Brown stated that the more activity that goes on with the few people that are not involved, not knowing what's going on, the more alienating that is; I don't know what can be done to address that issue, but it should be done as soon as logistically possible.

Kenton C. Ward
Hamilton County Surveyor

Attest: _____
Executive Secretary