



Upper White River Watershed Alliance, Inc.
July 31, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 1:43 PM Thursday, July 31, 2008. Those present were as follows: Ms. Jill Hoffman, Empower Results; Ms. Lisa Bihl, Empower Results; Mr. Crist Blassaras, Watershed Coordinator; Ms. Summer O'Brien, R. W. Armstrong; Mr. George Peregrim, Samco; Ms. Angela Sturdevant, IDNR LARE; Ms. Amy Smith, J F New

Review of Minutes of April 17, 2008:

There were no changes made; the minutes were approved.

LARE Grant Updates (Morse & Geist):

Hoffman stated that we applied for funding to the Lake _____ Enhancement Program on their behalf. Those were approved. \$54,000.00 for Giest and \$47,700.00 for Morse; that is the State's portion and with the local match they'll come in approximately 10% higher than that. Those groups are meeting and will be sending out letters soliciting proposals to do the watershed plans. Our role will be to help them through this process and participate on the Steering Committee. Anyone interested in participating on the Steering Committee on behalf of the Upper White please let me know. The scope on both projects requires up to twelve Steering Committee meetings or other stakeholder meetings.

Blassaras asked what kind of LARE Grant was applied for?

Hoffman stated that we originally applied for a diagnostics study because we didn't have a lot of information, but things evolved and LARE agreed to use Lenore's data from 2003 as a good base line. Because of the public health scare related to the blue green algae last year IDEM got very active in the Geist project so they have intensive sampling of several sites. We realized that the group needed more of a watershed management plan.

Blassaras asked if Hoffman had seen the Little Cicero Creek Watershed Management Plan.

Hoffman stated that she has seen it when Morse came to the Upper White. Originally the Morse Group wanted us to sponsor an implementation grant for Little Cicero Creek. With the Upper White's perspective there was only 20% of the drainage coming into Morse from Little Cicero. There are a couple of other big tributaries that were unaccounted for.

Bihl stated that we had problems getting public involvement; no one showed up at most public meetings, but the meeting in Cicero was well attended.

Hoffman stated that she believes things have changed. Lenore and I went to a GEO presentation at Morse last week on blue green algae and the room was full.

INAFSM Conference & Possible UWRWA Abstract:

Hoffman stated that this is Indiana's Stormwater Conference. When Kent (Ward) and I started talking about strategies for the Upper White he suggested we get on an INAFSM program. I emailed the program manager and asked him to hold a spot for us. Does the Technical Committee want to get onto this agenda?

Blassaras asked if Lenore would specifically be talking about the Association. If she did the importance there is that this is a statewide meeting and perhaps it's more important to have more of a large scale upper sky limit on things you are trying to do and what we represent so we could potentially be replicated in other areas.

Hoffman stated that this was Kent's suggestion as a way to reach County Surveyor's and some of our other audience members.

O'Brien stated that one of our problems is being able to use alternative storm water treatment and having a form for MS4s to approve those designs.

Hoffman stated that this is definitely a forum that we would want to take our product to. I just don't know if we're ready for this. I'll talk to Lenore on what she has committed to. We might be able to talk about some of the products we are working on; what the Technical Committee has created and where we're going.

Website Funding & Planning Updates:

Hoffman stated that she took the information they worked on at the last meeting to the General Membership meeting and they brain stormed some ideas. I made a list of all the things we talked about here and then the feedback from the General Membership meeting. That created a lot of fodder to write a request for funds from the Laura Hare Charitable Trust. Monday I received approval from the Laura Hare Charitable Trust for our project and the amount of the award was \$70,000.00. When I send the acknowledgement letter the money becomes available immediately and we'll have to look at contracting with a web designer and database programmer, etc. This may mean a sub-committee of this Technical Committee.

Blassaras asked if Hoffman anticipates an RFP for the contract?

Hoffman stated that she assumes they will. There are a couple of people that I was going to get estimates from, but if anyone has ideas please let me know. I need to have a handle on everyone's expectations and that everything is covered. There was some push back at the General Membership meeting about the 'members only' section with a log in and that we shouldn't keep any information from the general public and that we should be educating the masses. If these were public funds we couldn't put resources in a separate log in site. The members liked the idea of focusing the tabs on audience groups so people could find themselves on a site. The members threw in the idea of a planning tab for lay people to understand zoning and ordinances and how that all worked. They also threw in the idea about other revenue makers like taking sponsors or allowing ads.

Blassaras stated that he believed this was a good idea, but you would have to be careful about how you went about it. Companies do want to get their names out; it may be nothing more than a logo with a link.

Peregrin asked if you've given consideration to a quarterly newsletter. You could sell advertising space in a quarterly newsletter, update the newsletter; White River Watchers have been sending out about 400 hardcopy quarterly newsletters and are starting to generate a much better email list so we can send it electronically. We always have a small page educational in nature geared towards children, an article on fishing, nutritional and medicinal properties of plants that grow along the river, we post our clean up dates, links to other organizations like Friends of the White River, IDEM, IDNR, etc. It takes time to do that and you must have people willing to volunteer. A lot of different groups probably would allow the Upper White to take articles from their newsletters and incorporate them. Where does the content come from? You can hide some of the menus, but they still be internally on your screen and upload only the ones that are ready to go. We could have the entire web page developed and actually only have half of the tabs active and as others become active you put them up.

Hoffman stated that the content is in this budget. There is professional time, database time, webpage development time. The content in a large part is coming from the Technical Committee.

BMP Resource Center Projects Update:

Bihl stated that she and O'Brien had been working on the planting plan designs for the website.

Hoffman stated that they set up a matrix of the kinds of planting plans we wanted; short statured rain gardens to low diversity rain gardens, butterfly rain gardens, parking lot islands, etc. The objective of the matrix is to let people sort out by those characteristics, but also keep it simple enough to install. A lot of nurseries only have certain plants. I'll be meeting with Heather Williams, consultant for Indianapolis, to coordinate fact sheets/design specs on green infrastructure.

River Clean Up Planning:

Hoffman stated that the Committee started working with the MS4s on public involvement and education and outreach and trying to pull them into a combined program where we pull resources and stop paying for \$5.00 septic brochures and have \$500.00 septic PSAs. The MS4s were planning River Clean ups at the time, so we started talking about a watershed wide clean up on the same day. All the supporting partners have already committed groups or resources; the idea is to get the river touched in as many places as possible and by large group clean up efforts and in between the large group clean up efforts having light clean up crews using kayaking clubs and small mouth bass anglers and their groups to spread out across the river so we can say we touched the river from point x to point y. The interesting marketing idea was to have a rubber ducky passed down the river as it met all these groups and then stage media opportunities; morning and mid-day, where's the duck; end of the day, where's the duck? Tim Stottlemeyer wants me to find someone to contribute \$2,000.00 so he can rent 10 foot inflatable rubber ducks for our media locations. We'll be meeting with the river groups to figure out some logistical issues. The role of the Upper White is the coordination; messaging, press releases and targeting media outlets.

Peregrin asked if there was a chance to educate people that there is more to cleaning the river than what we physically see? Could we pass out pamphlets that talk about some of the other pollutants (fertilizer, chemicals, etc?)

Hoffman stated that this would be a good educational tool. I'll check on funding.

Bihl asked about the Illinois-Indiana C Grant and DNR working with their aquatic and invasive species.

Future Meeting Locations:

Hoffman stated that we talked about moving the meetings to different locations. Kent (Ward) is amiable to that idea. This location is nice because it's not too far for our northern people, it's a haul for the Morgan County people and we haven't been able to engage Hendricks in the Technical meeting too much yet. How far do you think people would travel? We thought of coming here every other meeting and the one between go somewhere else to engage another partner.

_____ suggested one meeting north and one meeting south and alternate between the two locations.

Hoffman stated that she would look around if everyone is willing to move. We're trying to reach out to more people and seem more accessible to other places.

Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting date was tentatively set for Thursday October 16, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.

Kenton C. Ward, CFM
Hamilton County Surveyor

Attest: _____
Executive Secretary