



SPRING MEETING Summary

**Tuesday, May 27, 2014
10:00 am to 3:00 pm
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor
3555 Timmons Lane**

Members Present:

Michael Bloom, Marilyn Christian (phone), Joe Clark, Tom Ivy, Scott Jones, Helen Lane, Michael Lee, Craig Maske, Becky Olive, Mitchell Page, Ray Pavlovich (phone), Linda D. Pechacek, Ceil Price (phone), Kathy Richolson, Jim Robertson, Brian Shmaefsky (phone), Linda Shead

John Blount was represented by Alisa Max
Catherine Elliot was represented by Robert Snoza
Carol Haddock was represented by Richard Chapin
Bruce Heiberg was represented by Steve Hupp
Jason Iken was represented by Carol LeBreche
Ann Olson was represented by Linda Shead

Members Absent

Michael Bloom, Teague Harris, Shannon Hicks, Helen Lane, Michael Lindsey, Ron Kelling, Cathy McCoy, Michael Mooney, Linc Wright

Guests Present

Sarah Bernhardt (GBEP), Linda Broach (TCEQ), Lawrence Childress (CoH), Danielle Cioce (HCPID), Tom Douglas (Sierra Club), Mary C. Edwards (SeaGrant), Bryan Eastham (TCEQ), Allison Fischer (TCEQ), Lisa Groves (CoH), Denise Hall (HC), Diane Humes (ABWP), Anita Hunt (HHEC), Andrew Isbell (Walker County) Brain Koch (TSSWCB), Kim Laird (TCEQ), Carole Lamont (HC), Nate LeBreche (BPA), Jason Leifester (TCEQ), Sonja Lewis (CoH), Lisa Marshall (GBEP), Valerie Marvin (MC), Carl Masterson (TX Coastal Partners), Chip Morris (TCEQ), Paul Morris (Exploration Green), Nwachmkwu Okonkwo (TCEQ), Rachel Powers (CEC), Nick Russo (HCPID), Taylor Sanford (GCHD-phone), Carol Serna (AEI), Dean Setions (CoH), Jennifer Wheeler (HC), Jasmin Zambrano (CoH)

H-GAC Staff Present

Steven Johnston, Aubin Phillips, Todd Running, Jean Wright

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions

Steven Johnston welcomed those in attendance. Members of the BIG and guest were asked to introduce themselves. The agenda was reviewed and the BIG was provided the opportunity to discuss.

Certification of Quorum

A quorum was certified during the meeting.

Approval of Proposed Alternates & Members

No changes were made to the BIG roster.

Approval of October 15, 2013, Meeting Summary

BIG members reviewed the draft October meeting summary. Comments and edits were provided and the changes accepted. The BIG approved the summary with the accepted changes.

Public Comment

No public comment was made.

Discussion: Draft 2014 Annual Report

H-GAC led the BIG in a discussion of draft 2014 Annual Report. As described in IA 9.4, H-GAC shall prepare a report and the BIG shall review the report to determine whether identified milestones and bacteria levels in waterways indicate whether any future changes should be made to the I-Plan.

BIG members provided comments during the meeting. Comments included:

- Clarify the progress indicator by providing distinctions between some, moderate and significant progress
- Include timeframe with the indicator for each strategy and activity
- Use a checkmark system instead or along with the progress indicator
- Qualify how to read report in the Executive Summary
- Updated members and alternates (e.g. Mike Turco no longer with USGS)
- Have work groups approve each section
- Say wastewater professionals or providers rather than authorized agents
- Include web address for Harris County BMP database, and
- 5.1 – is the first sentence wrong? Is this from Harris County?

BIG members decided to table the vote to approve the annual report as additional time was needed for the BIG to provide a thorough review and to give H-GAC staff the time to revise the draft report. H-GAC staff will email the draft report to the BIG and workgroup members to solicit comments and edits.

H-GAC staff provided observations and recommendations to the BIG based on the development of the draft 2014 annual report:

- Annual Report based on the calendar year (January to December)
- Move workgroup meetings to the fall for data gathering to build in sufficient time for drafting Annual Report and review by the BIG members and workgroups.
- Opportunity to move the fall meeting around the watershed to encourage broader participation
- Prioritize implementation and develop a project funding list
- Focus H-GAC implementation and tracking effort:
 - Collect MS4 Stormwater Management Plans for Phase II permit – Due June 2014
 - Survey WWTF Operators
 - Survey MS4 Operators
 - On-line Implementation Database
 - TCEQ Compliance Database – WWTF, SSS
 - Bring additional partners to the table
 - Finalize Non Ambient Monitoring QAPP
 - Develop Report on BMP Effectiveness Monitoring
 - Track Results - City of Houston Bacteria Research
 - Continue Geographic Implementation

Staff stated that the presented observations and recommendations would be provided and discussed during the next Coordination and Policy workgroup meeting.

Presentation by TCEQ: TMDL Program Update

Mr. Jason Leifester, TCEQ, provided an update on the TCEQ's TMDL Program. Mr., Leifester reported that sixteen new TMDLs were completed over the course of the year and a located within the BIG project area. These sixteen TMDLs are expected to be incorporated into the BIG I-Plan. The Armand Bayou TMDL technical support document was completed and is under management review. The BIG is discussing the option for joining the Armand Bayou watershed to the BIG project area. The East and West Forks of the San Jacinto River TMDL I-Plan is underway. The TMDL technical support document was completed by the contractor, Tarleton State University and is under review. The watershed group is meeting and will be deciding whether to join the BIG or develop an independent I-Plan this summer. Similarly, Mr. Leifester reported that Jarbo Bayou TMDL study and I-Plan are underway. The University of Houston is conducting the TMDL study. Watershed stakeholders are meeting to decide if they will join the BIG or develop their own I-Plan.

Presentation by the Texas Coastal Watershed Program (TCWP): "Putting Wetlands to Work in the Lower Galveston Bay Watershed"

Ms. Mary C. Edwards presented on 4 projects that are seeking to establish stormwater wetlands in lower Harris County, Galveston and Brazoria Counties. Ms. Edwards first reported on work with Clear Creek ISD at their Education Village campus to establish floating wetlands within a stormwater detention basin. Floating wetland cells with planting media and wetland plants were placed in the basin. Unfortunately, nutria ate many of the wetland plants. TCWP is currently reviewing the plants list to determine plants that nutria will not eat. The second project Ms. Edwards presented was on Exploration Green. The Clear Lake Water Authority purchased the Clear Lake Golf Course to convert the property into flood detention. Based on stakeholder feedback, there was interest to use the property for multi-use, including storm water quality, recreation and wildlife benefits. Phase I of the project is currently being designed with TCWP.

The third project is working with the city of Alvin to convert detention basins into multi-use facilities to improve water quality and provide recreational opportunities. The fourth and final project is coordinating with the city of Pearland to develop a nature center and trail system on a detention basin that would upgrade the wetlands on the property and potential treat waste water effluent in the future.

Presentation by Walker County: Water Quality Issues in Walker County

Mr. Andrew Isbell, Walker County, presented on the county's approach to tackling the failing OSSFs. Unlike highly urbanized counties like Harris County, Walker County is mostly rural with a large number of OSSFs. Managing OSSFs presents a challenge for rural counties to adequately track residential compliance with maintenance and repairs. To assist county compliance and enforcement staff, Walker County sought to contract with 26 professional companies to perform inspections, assist homeowners in determining repair issues, and completing and filing inspection reports. The county sought a level playing field by developing uniform inspection standards, requiring a processing fee for each report and implementing a late fee for overdue reports. Residents can choose from the approved list of companies. To maintain the list of approved companies, the county conducts random follow up inspections to ensure reports were accurately filled out.

Lunch and Visit Information Panels

Presentation by Harris County: "Harris County LID Projects"

Mr. Nick Russo, Harris County, presented Harris County's Low Impact Development projects. Mr. Russo reported that the county has adopted design criteria for low impact development (LID) projects for stormwater management. Harris County is the first county in Texas to establish criteria and the use of LID is considered optional. According to Mr. Russo, the county is interested in LID for use in road right of way detention and water quality due to cost effectiveness, reduced maintenance and improved water quality.

Mr. Russo reported on two county projects. The Birnamwood Drive was the first project located North of Cypresswood Dr. leading to Pct 4's John Pundt Park and is the first LID-roadway project in the region. The county used a median bioswale that was engineered to treat the first 1 inch of runoff and used engineered soils at two outfalls without the use of storm sewers. The county will be monitoring the water quality and runoff benefits over the next few years. The project cost the county \$2.6 million and saved \$100-\$200K when compared to traditional roadway construction, due to:

- elimination of offsite detention,
- reduced floodplain mitigation pond,
- reduced wetland impact,

- reduced right of way purchase,
- reduced storm sewer, and
- reduced mowing to 2 times from 10/year.

The second project is Sjolander Road. This project is located North of I-10 East near Baytown in Pct. 2. This project use LID during roadway expansion. The roadway went from two lanes to four and replaced roadway ditches with one bioswale. The LID design allowed for roadway expansion with minimal impacts to the 26 pipelines. Estimated traditional cost placed the project at \$18.55 million. The project with LID cost \$3.8 million due to avoiding pipeline realignments, a water supply canal extension, and offsite detention.

Presentation by TCEQ Region 12: “Bacteria Sampling Project”

Ms. Kim Laird, TCEQ, presented results of a WWTF Bacteria Sampling Project. Ms. Laird reported that under current permits, WWTF do not have water quality sample locations specified and WWTF are not consistent with where samples are taken. Ms. Laird stated that the final V notch is the preferred location since it is the last place the facility has control. The TCEQ decided to collect samples throughout facilities to determine if there could be an identified location. The project’s results determined that there were not any major differences between 5 identified locations, between different WWTF designs, aerated vs. non-aerated, and/or surface vs. column samples at the 27 WWTFs studied. Additionally, TCEQ did not find any regrowth after UV treatment. UV treatment was found to be as good as chlorine treatment so long as proper O&M was carried out. Based on the study, maintenance was found to be the most important issue and that there is a need for better education and training.

Action Item: Implementation Plan Updates

H-GAC staff presented the draft Addendum #1 to the BIG Implementation Plan which included:
 Revision to IA 9.4.5: “Expanding the geographic scope of the I-Plan as appropriate”
 16 additional AUs/TMDLs in the BIG project area
 Revision to IA 1.7: “Use of Treated Effluent for Facility Irrigation”

The BIG reviewed the draft Addendum #1 language. The BIG members requested additional language to watershed within the BIG project area. The BIG members were also concerned with expanding the scope without assurances that the original watershed can form the baseline for future comparisons. The BIG tabled any vote till revised language could be reviewed. For watershed outside of the BIG project area that request entry, the BIG approved that portion of the addendum. The 16 additional AUs were tabled until the language for watersheds within the BIG project area could be worked out. The final item related to treated effluent was tabled for the WWTF workgroup determine if the item is needed and to review additional guidance from the BIG. The BIG commented that they would prefer to not generalize the treated effluent rule with bulleted language and ensure that the I-Plan’s language reflects that the BIG encourages the use of treated effluent for irrigation but does not require.

Action Item: Formal Approval to expand the BIG project area to include Armand Bayou

H-GAC staff led the BIG in a review of the Armand Bayou TMDL/I-Plan process and present evidence of Armand Bayou watershed stakeholder’s support for integrating with the BIG. The Armand Bayou watershed stakeholders over the previous year, reviewed the work of the TCEQ TMDL project, review the BIG I-Plan and other similar bacteria implementation plans and determined that it was in their interest to join the BIG and implement the BIG I-Plan. H-GAC staff presented before the BIG, evidence that the coordination committee held a vote that resulted in a unanimous decision on behalf of the Armand Bayou watershed stakeholders to join the BIG. The BIG determined that the evidence was sufficient under the revised language agreed to under Addendum #1 to vote in favor of allowing the Armand Bayou watershed to join the BIG project area.

Action Item: Ground Rules Approval

H-GAC staff led the BIG in a review the revised ground rules. The BIG determined that they would like to see a mark-up of the changes prior to voting on the ground rules. H-GAC staff agreed to provide a marked up version for review.

Other Business/Roundtable

As time permits, H-GAC, BIG members, and stakeholders are encouraged to discuss implementation activities, related projects, and announcements.

Next Meeting Date

Tuesday, October 21, 2014
H-GAC Conference Room A (2nd Floor)

Adjourn