



Meeting Summary
Tuesday, August 18, 2009

Members Present:

Michael Bloom
Pat Buzbee
Catherine Elliott
Teague Harris
Jason Iken
Tom Ivy

Ron Kelling
Helen Lane
Craig Maske
Michael Mooney
Becky Olive
Mitchell Page

Raymond Pavlovich
Linda Pechacek
Ceil Price
Kathy Richolson
Linda Shead
Melvin Solomon

John Blount was represented by Nick Russo.
Marilyn Christian was represented by Snehal Patel.
Carol Ellinger was represented by Sarah Metzger.
Mike Garver was represented by Jessalyn Ballard.
James Tynan Kelly was represented by Bruce Heiberg.
Jack Murphy was represented by Susie Cavazos.
Jim Robertson was represented by Dick Smith (phone).

Members Absent:

Robert Collins
Joe Ferro

Cathy McCoy
Brian Shmaefsky

Robert Stokes

Guests Present:

Steve Archer (Archer Environmental), Steve Barry (Jones & Carter), Tony Bennett (AECOM), Linda Broach (TCEQ), Bill Carter on phone (TCEQ), Richard Chapin (City of Houston), David Collins (Colorado County), Winston Denton (TPWD), Bryan Eastham (TCEQ), Rick Felan (TCEQ), Jedediah Greenfield (City of Houston), Nicole Hausler (PHA), Ruthanne Haut (City of Houston), Steve Hupp (HCPHES), Andrew Isbell (Walker County), Brian Koch (TSSWCB), David Kocurek on phone (City of Alvin), Bruce Krewinghaus (Southwest Houston, 2000), Gail Lindholm (TCEQ), Ward Ling (TCEQ), Heather Maloney (TCEQ), Trent Martin (Harris County), Ed Matuszak (URS), Maria Modelska (University of Houston), Philip Moore (Citizen), Allen Peach (URS), Tina Peterson (CDM), Carol Serna (AEI Engineering),

H-GAC Staff Present:

Erin Livingston, Carl Masterson, Rachel Powers, Andrea Tantillo

1. Welcome & Introductions

Rachel Powers welcomed and thanked everyone for coming. She initiated self-introductions of BIG members and H-GAC staff. Rachel then reviewed the agenda.

2. Certification of Quorum

Twenty-five members and alternates were present, achieving a quorum.

3. Approval of Proposed Alternates

No alternates were proposed.

4. Approval of July 21, 2009, Meeting Summary

Meeting notes were approved with two changes:

- Kim Williams was changed to Jim Williams.
- The description of the City of Houston's collection system renewal program was clarified, stating that the collection system work being performed is a requirement under an Agreed Order they have with TCEQ.

5. Public Engagement Plan Phase I

So far H-GAC has sent letters to counties, large cities, small cities, local and state legislators, and special districts. For Municipal Utility Districts letters were sent to the attorneys, operators, and engineers. Letters were not sent directly to the directors of MUDs, which would have resulted in approximately 3000 letters, but instead the public engagement letter was printed in the Association of Water Board Directors newsletter. Four public engagement meetings, for the small cities and MUDs, have been scheduled. This will give them an opportunity to learn about the project and ask any questions they may have. Presentations have been made to the Texas Environmental Health Association and at the MS4 conference. Staff will soon be giving a presentation to San Jacinto County.

Q: Are you receiving any comments back?

A: In total there have been four responses the public engagement efforts. Responses have been supportive with stakeholders wanting to know specifically how their community will be affected.

Q: You mentioned you sent letters to local legislators. Does that include commissioners and city council members? Or are you talking about local state and federal legislators?

A: State and Federal.

Q: Do you plan to get down to the next level of elected officials?

A: We started with the counties and the large cities. Those did not necessarily go to the commissioners and council members. We tried to consult with BIG members on who should receive notification for their agency. So it was customized for large cities and counties.

Q: Would it make sense to send letters to candidates in the upcoming elections?

A: Probably not. H-GAC does provide training to newly elected officials and information about the BIG and bacteria problem could be presented then. As soon as we know who has been elected information will be given to them.

Q: What will be presented at the public engagement meetings?

A: Presentations will include information about the bacteria problem and some possible solutions, IAs. Those in attendance will be asked to provide input on the possible IAs, whether they support them or whether they have a better solution.

6. Workgroup Report

No workgroups have met since the July BIG meeting. Once URS has finished their literature review workgroups will begin meeting again and will review the URS results. Workgroups that were determined to be one of the top priority sources or contained top priority IAs will meet first.

7. Staff Presentations

GIS

Watersheds to include on all maps

Carl Masterson reported on the progress made in the GIS efforts and requested comments on whether to include the following watersheds in the public engagement maps or not, giving his arguments on the matter as a jumping off point:

- Lake Creek
- Tarkington
- Luce
- Carpenter's Bayou
- Vince Bayou
- Armand Bayou

Comments included:

- Armand Bayou's Watershed Partnership is likely to get revived.
- It seems like the main question is not whether it is appropriate to address restoration of those watersheds or not, it's whether or not this body is empowered to recommend implementation actions for them and whether TCEQ would adopt an I-Plan that would include them or not.
- Counties and cities may want to implement some IAs throughout their jurisdiction, even if some areas are not within the project area. But should we communicate to the public that this is the area we are looking at?
- Labels would be useful to help clarify the status of the various watersheds.
- It is not uncommon for an I-Plan to prescribe control actions into a segment that is not on the 303(d) list in order to achieve goals. (TCEQ)
- We should include the extra watersheds but mark them differently on the map.

- An operator of a WWTF on Luce Bayou might not want to implement the IAs since the watershed is not impaired.
- It would be a mistake to leave out a stream that has a high potential for recreational usage like Carpenter's Bayou and Luce Bayou. They may not be impaired now, but if the area develops then they may become impaired.
- We are including the nine elements of a Watershed Protection Plan (WPP) into the I-Plan. It would be beneficial for these watersheds to be included, making them eligible for funding if an issue comes up or for prevention. Maybe they could participate voluntarily.

WWTF map

The WWTF map has been updated. The facilities were categorized and symbolized on the map by permitted flow levels. The number of facilities in each permitted flow limit category are as follows:

- 30 WWTFs >5 MGD
- 97 WWTFs between 1-5 MGD
- 115 WWTFs between 0.5-1 MGD
- 355 WWTFs at <0.5 MGD

Comment: I think those numbers should be given to the public.

Revisiting the worm map

The previous version of the map was normalized for stream miles as requested at the July BIG meeting. As a result, a short segment of Hunting Bayou is now the highest priority segment. The segment runs through older neighborhoods, Irvington and Ryan, with elevated bacteria levels possibly coming from older sanitary or septic systems. These results may be deceptive as the method used included the population within ½ mile of each end as well as along the segment. Due to the segment's short length this likely had a greater impact.

Rachel showed a graph of the risk level results to explain why splitting the results into standard quintiles does not work in this situation. Most results were low, but the highest result was more than double the next highest result. This same skewed spread existed when the analyses were based on population and geomean; population, geomean, and stream miles; and straight geomean.

Another thing involved in risk determination is where people are actually recreating. All present were asked to mark on available maps after the meeting locations where they had seen contact recreation, seen evidence of contact recreation, or heard of contact recreation.

URS

Rachel Powers reported URS is currently conducting a literature review for information related to best management practices for sources identified by the BIG. The list of

articles sent out to BIG members and alternates prior to the meeting represents the first phase of this review. The next phase is to pick out the ones that would have the most applicability, to our area and the IAs being discussed, and to review those more closely. H-GAC staff will do most of the narrowing down of relevant articles, but anyone interested in being involved in the process is welcome to do so.

Q: What will the output of this literature review be used for?

A: Some of the nine elements of a WPP that we are including in our tables will be answered through the research efforts. These include such items as expected bacteria reduction and cost.

Q: Is URS looking at a document's list of references to find other references?

A: We will be doing that.

Q: Are we looking at how much data is in the studies? There are a lot of studies that only have a small amount of data and they are making assumptions without enough information.

A: That is something that we will be looking at.

Q: Is there a way we could share the peer reviewed articles and not violate copyright laws?

A: We will look into that.

Rachel asked that thoughts on the article list presented and information on additional studies be sent to her. Initial suggestions included:

- Include Harris County studies
- Look at EPA and WERF documents and the 2007 and 2008 Expert's workshop, which are full of references
- When choosing relevant research choose peer reviewed research first and then published research

8. Other Business/Roundtable

- Bill Carter, from TCEQ, was unable to make it to this month's meeting. We hope to have him here in September.
- Ward Ling is leaving TCEQ to go to AgriLife extension. Chip Morris will be taking over some of Ward's responsibilities.

9. Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on September 15, 2009.

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 PM.