Sanitary Sewer Systems Work Group
Meeting Notes
Friday, March 8, 2013
2:15 pm to 3:00 pm
H-GAC Conference Room A, Second Floor

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions

Rachel Powers called the meeting to order and initiated self-introductions.

Notes from Last Year

Rachel provided the notes from last year in case they were needed for reference.

Update on I-Plan Approval Process

The TCEQ unanimously approved the BIG I-Plan on January 30, 2013. The approved version included the changes to the I-Plan that had been discussed at previous BIG meetings. Two of those changes included modifications to Implementation Activities 2.1 and 2.6.

Review Annual Report format

Rachel explained that the conceptual format for the annual report was developed in collaboration by the BIG and agreed to at the BIG mid-year meeting in October 2012. The report will consist of three main components:

1) At-a-Glance: The At-a-Glance section will be one 11x17 paper that includes cover page with a photo; a table of implementation activities, proposed milestones, and an evaluation of progress; and a sheet with background information, a map, and high-level review of progress overall.
2) A printed report: In addition to a narrative overview, the printed report will include information about progress and goals for each of the strategies in the plan. Each strategy will be described by a narrative description preceded by a tabular summary sheet, which will include recommendations from the workgroup to the BIG regarding progress, achievements, focus for the coming year, and revisions to the I-Plan.
3) Web-based support documents: If additional information, such as lengthy tables, are necessary, these will be provided in an on-line format.

Review Implementation Progress—The workgroup reviewed progress for each of the implementation activities, as follows.

Implementation Activity 2.1: Develop Utility Asset Management Programs for Sanitary Sewer Systems

- Progress
  - March 8, 2013—First annual Asset Management Workshop (CMOM) for Sanitary Sewer Systems in the greater Houston Region. 55 attendees.

- o SSOI participation—information requested from the TCEQ.
- • Discussion:
  - o UAMP plans are not required, but H-GAC plans to survey wastewater permit holders to determine which facilities voluntarily have UAMP plans. H-GAC does not yet have appropriate contact information. Rachel will get phone numbers from Kim, and billing addresses from the TCEQ, and use those to get email addresses. With those three contact forms, H-GAC will work to query the WWTF in the BIG project area.
  - o H-GAC, working with the TCEQ, Galveston Bay Foundation, WEAT, and other stakeholders, offered the first annual utility asset management for SSS immediately before the work group meeting. 53 people attended and evaluations were positive. At least six speakers have been identified for next year's workshop, which will be a two-day event. Raj Bhattaranji, who coordinates a similar workshop in Austin, was supportive and enthusiastic about the conference, which will be held in later February so as not conflict with the Austin CMOM conference.

Implementation Activity 2.2: Address Fats, Oils, and Grease

- • Discussion:
  - o The City of Dallas program looks great, and the Galveston Bay Foundation in particular is working to encourage adoption in our region.
  - o Operators have concerns about rags/wipes, and recommended piggybacking rag/wipe info and programs onto the FOG info and programs.
  - o Identifying appropriate contact information will be critical to gathering information identified in this activity (See I.A. 1.1)

Implementation Activity 2.3: Encourage Appropriate Mechanisms to Maintain Function at Lift Stations

- • Discussion: Chapter 217, which deals with design criteria, is open to suggestions as the TCEQ considers modifications. They may hold a public input meeting in June 2013. Subchapter B includes provisions relating to emergency power requirements. BIG members are encouraged to participate in the process.

Implementation Activity 2.4: Improve Reporting Requirements for Sanitary Sewer Overflows

- • Discussion
  - o Rachel reported that she has been told, by sources at the TCEQ who prefer to remain anonymous, that the TCEQ is working to develop an on-line reporting system. They may also be developing a uniform format for submitting/collecting/compiling SSO information.
  - o House Bill 824 / Senate Bill 584: These companion bills would limit SSO reporting requirements to spills 1500 gallons or more. The bills have influential sponsors. In general, participants recognized that such a change would reduce the burden on operators of sanitary sewer systems, but might make it more difficult to track the contributions that overflows make to bacteria loading. The

group discussed whether a lower limit might be beneficial, but did not reach a conclusion.

- o Connected Texas has completed its statewide inventory of broadband internet connections. It is now working to expand access to broadband for various purposes such as emergency services and economic development. H-GAC plans to participate in the process for various reasons, including to facilitate electronic SSO reporting.

Implementation Activity 2.5: Strengthen Controls on Subscriber Systems

- Discussion:
    - o H-GAC will request information about subscriber systems and subscriber system contracts when it contacts WWTF permittees to collect and share other information relating to the BIG, WWTF, SSS, and water quality.

Implementation Activity 2.6: Penalties for Violations

- Discussion
    - o This section does not include a specific activity. However, as funds are available, H-GAC (or other stakeholders) can track occurrence of and penalties for SSS violations, using data from the TCEQ Region 13 enforcement report data and from the TCEQ's Annual Enforcement Report.
    - o The TCEQ inspectors now have the ability to conducted focused SSO investigations. Among other investigations, during rain events they are be visiting facilities that have never reported an SSO.
    - o In December 2012, the TCEQ release a revised "Enforcement Initiation Criteria." This document includes criteria relating to sanitary sewer systems, grease blockages, power outages, etc. Michelle Bost shared information about the revised criteria during her conference presentation earlier in the day: http://www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/eic.html.

Identify Activities on Which to Focus Efforts

The workgroup recommended focusing on the following:

- Stakeholder participation in the Chapter 217 comment and revision process.
- SSO reporting system.
- H-GAC identifying appropriate contact information for tracking UAMP and identifying subscriber systems
- FOG education (GBF/regional collaboration and Cease the Grease)

Identify Possible Revisions to the I-Plan

The work group does not recommend changes to the I-Plan.

Confirm Recommendations to the BIG for Annual Report

The work group reviewed the draft Implementation Strategy Cover Sheet for SSS. There were 13 attendees including 2 BIG members and 2 alternates. In addition to the information included

in the handout, the workgroup recommended adding TCEQ's focused SSO investigations to the achievements, and FOG education as a focus.

Rachel will send meeting notes and a draft section for the annual report as soon as they are available, and workgroup members will be able to provide comments. Workgroup recommendations will be reviewed by the Coordination and Policy and Plan Revision Workgroups at the meeting on March 28, 2013.

Coordination & Policy work group meeting: March 28, 2013, 10:00 AM

BIG Annual Meeting: Tuesday, May 14, 2013

Tentative 2014 Utility Asset Management (CMOM) for Sanitary Sewer Systems Conference & SSS Workgroup Meeting: February 27 & 28, 2014

Table of Attachments

Strategy Cover Sheets for 2013 Annual Report

Recent Research

Excerpts from Plan

Work Group Meeting Notes

Drafts for 2012 Annual Report