

WPCAMR
Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2008
Moshannon District Mining Office
Philipsburg, PA

In attendance:

Greg Phillips, Westmoreland CD
(Treasurer)
Bruce Golden (Staff)
Andy McAllister (Staff)
Anne Daymut, Indiana CD
Mario Carrello, DEP Moshannon DMO
Bob Ritchey, Cambria CD
Bernie Hoffnar, Bedford CD

Hank Webster, Clearfield CD
Eric Rosengrant, DEP Moshannon DMO
Bill Gongaware, Gongaware Env. Svcs
Tom Koptchak, DEP Moshannon DMO
Eric Cavazza, PA DEP, BAMR
John Stefanko, PA DEP, MRM
Carl Undercoffler, PA SEC
Aaron Furginele, Clearfield CD

WPCAMR Business Meeting:

Meeting chaired by Greg Phillips and called to order at 10:40am. Everyone present introduced themselves.

Greg welcomed attendees and asked everyone to review the minutes of the past meeting. While minutes were being read, Greg asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Secretary's Report (Greg Phillips for Jim Panaro):

Review of past meeting minutes. No comments on the minutes.

Motion (Webster/Ritchey) to accept the minutes. Passed.

Treasurer's Report (Greg Phillips):

See treasurer's report.

Motion (Hoffnar/Daymut) to accept the treasurer's report. Passed.

Bruce quickly went over the audit and said that it would be posted on the website. Afterwards, Bruce and Greg went over the proposed General Fund budget. Greg asked that everyone look at the proposed General Fund budget so at the next WPCAMR meeting, the board can take it up for a vote.

Bob Ritchey asked about earned interest. Bruce responded that there is just a little interest. ***Ritchey suggested the PA Local Government Investment Trust as a place to invest Operation Reserve funds. Bruce said he will look into that.***
Greg asked Bruce to let him know which Conservation Districts haven't paid their dues yet.

Greg said that since the group is on the topic of a budget, we would begin with New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Authorization to Apply for a Growing Greener Grant for more “Quick Response” funding.

Bruce explained the Quick Response program and the process for requesting “Quick Response” funding for emergency repairs of passive treatment systems and other “Growing Greener eligible BMP’s”.. Bernie asked if an OM&R plan is required for recipients to get Quick Response funding. Bruce said no, it isn’t required. Bernie said that in the application; suggest that DEP consider that Quick Response recipients should develop an OM&R plan for that particular site.

Hank and Bernie said the Quick Response applicants should develop an OM&R plan if they don’t already have one and if they don’t, then future Quick response funding should be denied them. Bernie suggested that on the application, Bruce cite some instances on how quick the grant process was for program recipients. Bernie amended his motion that WPCAMR apply for Growing Greener funds for the Quick Response program for \$250K and if we couldn’t find suitable match for that increased amount, to specify our reserve fund, although we don’t intend to use it. Hank asked if Bruce could provide a synopsis the Quick Response requests to date. Bruce said will do. Greg asked Andy to put this on the agenda for the next WPCAMR meeting for a vote on the budget. Andy said he will do that.

Motion (Hoffnar/Webster) to have WPCAMR apply for \$250,000 from Growing Greener for the Quick Response III program; add a provision to require an OM&R plan to be developed if not already; and, if needed, to specify our reserve fund as a last resort for required match. Motion passed.

Authorization to apply for an AmeriCorp member.

Andy talked about the success and positive responses to WPCAMR’s outreach work, particularly with Abandoned Mine Posts and the video diaries. Andy also talked about the need for an AmeriCorps member to help with all forms of outreach which will allow WPCAMR staff to be more effective in their work and make efficient use of travel funding. Greg said that it’s important to build specific outreach to member districts, especially since we have some member districts who haven’t paid their dues.

Motion (Hoffnar/Webster) to have WPCAMR apply for an AmeriCorps member. Motion passed.

Replacement of WPCAMR automobile.

Bruce explained that we have gotten our money’s worth out of the existing vehicle and it may be time to get something more reliable and bigger. Greg said that Bruce is proposing \$6,000 to pay for a “newer” used vehicle and asked if there was a motion to approve that. Bernie suggested that maybe Bruce could inquire at the county offices for

vehicles. Bob Ritchey said that last week, Cambria County had announced their sheriff's sale.

Motion (Ritchey/Webster) for WPCAMR to spend \$6,000 for a WPCAMR replacement vehicle. Motion passed.

Placement of WPCAMR Ad in "Landmarks".

Greg said that we don't have to consider this.

Hole-in-One Prize Insurance.

Bruce explained that it would cost \$150.00 to sponsor a hole in one prize at the lower level (Prize of \$10K goes to the golfer who gets the hole in one at that hole) for the Robindale tournament that benefits WPCAMR.

Motion (Hoffnar/Webster) to sponsor the "Hole-In-One Insurance" for the Robindale Tournament. Motion passed.

Proposed Hollywood and Barnes & Tucker Active Treatment Plants.

Just before lunch, Eric Cavazza began his update on the proposed systems and continued his update after lunch. He did an overview of why the systems were proposed and where the projects are with respect to garnering necessary funding for construction and operation and maintenance. The proposed ***Barnes & Tucker Active Treatment Plant*** is a high priority with required funding in place with near certainty of being built in the near future. The Hollywood Plant is designed, but until funding issues can be resolved, that project is on hold.

Break for lunch.

After the update on the treatment plants, Eric talked about the work done by the DEP internal *Treatability and Site Selection Workgroup*, whose charge is to develop a prioritization methodology for selecting treatment methodologies for AMD and for AMD site selection criteria. He said that the DEP is looking for measurable goals in guiding the process. He said that at the beginning of June, a draft guidance document will be released for comment, followed shortly thereafter by an invited focus group of interested individuals to provide comments. Eric was hopeful that a final version would be able to be presented at the

John Stefanko distributed draft versions of 3 DEP documents that were undergoing final revision for general release. They are:

- 1. Comment and Response Document: Reauthorization of Title IV Funds Town Hall Meetings and Written Comments;*
- 2. PA DEP BAMR Position Paper: AMD Set-aside Program*
- 3. Set-aside and AML: A Balancing Act*

Brief discussions occurred for all three.

Conservation District/Agency/Watershed Association reports (All present):

Those in attendance reported on current and future activities within their respective organizations.

Watershed Coordinator's report (Andy McAllister):

See report for details. Report on meeting webpage. Bob Ritchey asked if Andy had been to the Super 7 sites and that Andy should visit those. Bruce said he'd like to go along too.

Regional Coordinator's report (Bruce Golden):

See report for details. Report on meeting webpage.

New Business (continued).

Bruce talked about the contractual challenges with a DEP Innovative Grant (*In-situ treatment of AMD using sulfate reducing bacteria*) with Winner International as the contractor and WPCAMR as the formal sponsor. Bruce believed that an acceptable solution had been tentatively reached whereby DEP, but not WPCAMR, would receive progress reports that contain information that Winner deemed sensitive. Bruce reported that Bill Barbin, a Johnstown attorney, represented WPCAMR (on a *pro bono* basis) who came up with the compromise.

Bernie suggested that, as an organization, WPCAMR should thank Bill Barbin for being the Pro Bono Attorney.

Motion (Hoffnar/Daymut) to thank Bill Barbin from WPCAMR for his assistance on the Winner situation.

Bob Ritchey said he would like WPCAMR to be more involved in the Cambria County Super 7 project. Bruce said we had given the letter of support to the Cambria CD.

Bernie said, with all the new gas drilling in PA, that the DEP isn't adequately staffed to do oversee these activities. Bernie said that if this happens without regulation, then we'll have similar problems like what happened over the years with the mine problems. Anne said that in Indiana County, they have their PASEC folks look for E&S problems and then report back to the tech who can go talk with the operator.

WPCAMR Get-together.

Greg talked about a possible WPCAMR get together maybe this fall and asked if anyone wanted to help, to get with him. Bob Ritchey suggested a possible venue: Carrolltown Fire hall, he said to have Sandy call Ellie.

Other Comments:

Hank said that the Clearfield County triathlon would be this Saturday. The money goes to their Environmental Education fund. Also, the CCCD established an endowment and are in the early stages of a capitol campaign.

Carl talked about planting American chestnut trees at a reclamation site.

Bernie asked about the 2008 AMR conference funding. Bruce said that DEP has the request for funding letter in hand now.

Motion to adjourn (Ritchey). Meeting adjourned at 1:59 PM.

Minutes taken and prepared by Andy McAllister