

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
Lansing, Michigan
Thursday, February 18, 2010, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Members in attendance: Jon Allan, Sandra Batie, James Clift, Jeffrey Haynes, Chuck Hersey, Mindy Koch, Larry Merritt, Del Rector, David Rinard, Rhonda Ross, Lee Schwartz, Ray Scott, Mike Shriberg, Gildo Tori and Paul Zegger.

DNRE Staff in attendance: Jerry Avers, Lynn Boyd, Liz Brown, George Bruchmann, Bill Creal, Lynn Fieldler, Gary Hagler, Vince Helwig, Jim Kasprzak, Russ Mason, Lynelle Marolf, JoAnn Merrick, Ron Olson, Frank Ruswick, Sharon Shafer, Julie Sims, Jim Sygo, and Bob Wagner. Kevin Rogers, a student interning with the DNRE, was also present.

OPENING

Frank opened the meeting by welcoming the EAC members and DNRE staff, including many resource management Division Chiefs . The EAC members and DNRE staff introduced themselves. Frank shared regrets from Director Humphries who is on a field visit in the Upper Peninsula.

CURRENT ISSUES

Frank Ruswick provided an update on transition activities. Key positions have recently been posted including the Deputy Director of the Stewardship Bureau and several Chief positions including Water Resources Division, Law Enforcement Division, Groundwater Division, Remediation Division, among others. Division Chiefs for Divisions that remained intact were not posted and were filled with the existing Division Chief. Additionally, other key positions have been filled including the Upper Peninsula Regional Director, Stacy Welling; Lake Erie Regional Director, Rodney Stokes; Deputy Director of the Resource Management Bureau, Mindy Koch; and Deputy Director of the Environmental Protection Bureau, Jim Sygo. There are still positions that need to be posted including the remaining Regional Directors for Lake Michigan and Lake Huron.

Jim Sygo provided an updated on Kennecott mining issues. The DNRE has issued environmental permits for the Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company's proposed use of the Humboldt Mill Facility near Marquette. Kennecott plans to reopen the mill and use it to treat ore from its nearby Eagle Project Mine. The permits issued include an Air Use Permit for new sources of air emissions, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit for the discharge of treated process water to surface waters, a Nonferrous Metallic Mineral Mining Permit for operation and reclamation of the facility, and an Inland Lakes and Streams Permit for placement of tailings into the Humboldt pit.

Mindy Koch provided an update on an issue related to cross country ski trail grooming at the Black Mountain Recreational Area. The DNRE has stopped grooming cross country ski trails except in limited circumstances. A volunteer group is interested in grooming the Blank Mountain trail, but union issues limit the Department's ability to use volunteers in some circumstances. The Department has negotiated an agreement with the union that will allow volunteer grooming for this ski season.

A member asked for updates on the Asian Carp issue. Frank shared a response from Ken DeBeaussaert, Director of the Office of the Great Lakes. There is not currently an estimate available for the impact of closing the locks specifically for Michigan. There is some information

available on the economic impact to Illinois. Frank will forward Ken's response to the EAC members.

CHARGE TO THE EAC

Frank discussed a handout that requests the EAC to review, advise, and help formulate how the Roadmap can be incorporated into the operations of the new DNRE during 2010. This request recognizes the challenges ahead but also provides an opportunity to implement ideas and recommendations from the EAC's Roadmap. The request includes six specific tasks:

1. Identify a small number of benchmarks that can be conveyed to staff and outside parties as goals of the transition process to be completed by December 2010.

The goal is to find tangible benchmarks that we all agree will be indicative of progress to get the new Department up and running. This item will be discussed in further detail during the remainder of the meeting.

2. Review the DNRE's current use of outcome-based performance measures, advise on the improvement of those measures, and recommend a process for development of further outcomes-based measures.

The goal is to have the EAC help with this task and identify where we are now, improve our evaluation of these types of tools, and recommend a process for further development. This needs to not only be done by agency; but needs input from various constituent groups. There is currently a Leadership Academy team working on looking at outcome-based performance measures. Members of the Planning Committee will meet with the Leadership Academy team to get sense of what they are doing, where they are going, and if their project will be of any benefit to addressing this item.

3. Advise on identified DNRE process re-engineering efforts.

The Transition Report highlights the need for process re-engineering as a means to improve program efficiency and effectiveness. However, the language is broad. The concept is discussed in Transition Report in the context of program redesign and reevaluation. The Department will be undertaking these efforts as part of the transition and Director Humphries has specifically requested this item be part of the 2010 EAC Request. One possible way to approach this item is to periodically bring issues to EAC for their review and assessment.

4. Recommend a process for increasing public involvement related to environmental programs.

This item arises because of the established role of the Natural Resource Commission (NRC) in providing an open forum for public discussion of natural resource issues. Creation of DNRE raises questions about the potential need for an analogous forum for environmental issues.

A member asked if the creation of Citizen Advisory Councils would address this need. Frank shared that this is part of the discussion that we need to have to address this item.

5. Advise on specific efforts at program integration.

This item is in regard to the need to enhance communication and coordination across organizational boundaries in the DNRE. The new DNRE structure creates opportunities

but further efforts are needed. One possible mechanism to address this item is to bring forward examples of specific efforts to the EAC and ask for feedback on how they could be improved.

Members discussed the value of having an example presented at monthly EAC meetings. It was also suggested that EAC members share their experiences within their organization. This would allow both DNRE and EAC members to see different perspectives.

Additionally, a member questioned what role the district's multi-media coordinator may have in addressing this item. Frank suggested that the new Regional Directors may provide that same cross disciplinary role.

6. Identify, evaluate, and prioritize innovative mechanisms for encouraging improved environmental performance.

This item is in regard to the need to consider new tools and continue our discussion about how to encourage improved environmental performance.

Frank discussed how this request is different than previous projects in that it is not one big project; rather a list of interrelated items that need to be considered over the next year while taking the Roadmap and transition to the next level. Some items may be lengthier and time consuming than others and may consider creating subcommittees of the EAC to focus on them and bring to back to the full EAC.

TRANSITION BENCHMARKS

Frank provided EAC members and DNRE staff with a copy of the Proposed DNRE Benchmarks dated February 18, 2010 (see attachment). Frank discussed that the overall task is to identify a small number of benchmarks that can be conveyed to staff and outside parties as goals of the transition process to be completed by December 2010. The goal is to have an agreed upon set of benchmarks by next month's EAC meeting.

For ease of discussion, Frank organized the suggestions he received by EAC members and DNRE staff into categories. Considerations for how benchmarks will be selected were also proposed and discussed including:

- Broadly represent direction of Roadmap and/or Transition Report
- Objectively measurable
- Significance understandable internally and externally
- Aggressive but realistically achievable by December 2010

Members suggested considering timeliness, contribution to success, balancing process and outcomes, and the need to not only be understandable, but also marketable so that people will invest in them. A member suggested using SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely).

Members and DNRE staff discussed some potential categories of benchmarks that may be missing including program performance and public involvement. It was also recommended to stick with the categories outlined in the Roadmap to maintain consistency between this process and the Roadmap.

In order to have enough time to review all of the proposed benchmarks, Frank proposed reviewing proposed benchmarks by category.

Organizational

Members suggested combining 1 and 2, incorporating the last sentence of 3, and adding reference to communicating with stakeholders.

Members discussed the role of the EAC in the benchmarks and Frank clarified that these benchmarks should be for the DNRE to complete, not a task for the EAC.

Regional Structure

Members suggested and agreed that 2 and 5 stand out as the most important and consider combining.

A member also suggested that there should be a timeline to prioritize when the DNRE will inform stakeholders of these benchmarks and should include a plan for announcing integration of the department so that stakeholders know what to expect and what is going on with the transition.

A member also suggested including the role of other agencies such as the Department of Agriculture. Frank noted that he will try to weave that concept into the organizational category.

Outcomes

Members discussed combining 1 and 2 and adding a statement about strategic direction.

This is a category that the EAC will likely be more involved in regards to the second item in the charge to the EAC. But, for purposes of establishing benchmarks, we need to focus on what can be done by December 2010.

Funding

Members discussed funding as both a challenge and an opportunity. Some were hesitant to get wrapped up in the funding problem while others wanted to focus on developing a strategic direction while living within our means. Another alternative discussed was to focus on agreed upon outcomes and then show the need for funding to support them. It was also suggested that a benchmark could focus on the assessment of funding models.

Due to variability in options and opinions of members and limited time, this category was tabled with three possible directions: 1) say nothing, 2) incorporate funding into the strategic direction, or 3) adopt a benchmark that focuses on assessment of models.

Program Integration, Re-engineering, and Redesign

Members discussed combining 9, 10, and 20 and removing the reference to a specific number of programs to complete process re-engineering. This benchmark could focus on the ones that are not the hardest per se, but could be used as a good example of short-term success. Another suggested benchmark was to identify the programs that do not need process re-engineering. Members also suggested that all programs should be prioritized for review and then determine a number that is reasonable to accomplish this year.

Members also discussed the importance of maintaining performance in addition to accomplished recommended benchmarks. Members want to be sure that the quality of performance is maintained during the transition.

Transparency

Members did not identify a benchmark in this category.

Workforce Development

Members discussed the importance of staff development, including skills needed in facilitation and collaboration, and the anticipated loss of inherent knowledge with future retirement.

Members also discussed the importance of many of the proposed benchmarks (in this category and beyond) and agreed that much of it could be contextualized into an introduction of some sort.

Members did not identify a benchmark in this category.

Partnerships

Members did not identify a benchmark in this category.

Roadmap conversation

Members did not identify a benchmark in this category. However, members did highlight the importance of getting the message out to the public.

CLOSING

In closing, Frank recapped the benchmarks that were agreed upon and the need to develop an introduction that captures the cautionary statements (e.g., planning with considerations of the Roadmap, maintaining performance, etc.). Frank will bring a draft proposal to next EAC meeting for discussion.