

Neuse River Basin Regional Council
Minutes
May 17, 1996 @ Goldsboro, NC

The meeting was called to order by Chairman George Wolfe and the minutes of the previous meeting were approved with minor corrections noted.

A proposal regarding adoption of By-Laws was tabled until later in the meeting

Rick Dove presented a video, with an overview of the Neuse River problems. Questions raised in the subsequent discussion included:

:

What are the real numbers of pounds of Nitrogen going into the river?

Given that there seems to be no very reliable way to estimate atmospheric contribution at this time, on what data should decision making be done?

How can any one rule be made to apply to the entire basin, given the diversity of land use patterns and the diversity of the natural landscape of the basin?

Following that discussion, the members present separated into smaller discussion groups to focus on three major committees.

The Research and Information Committee, chaired by Dr. John Costlow, reported back the following:

Joe Hughes will begin to assemble a list of potential speakers, to help members of the Council become more completely informed.

Terry Rolan was appointed to draft a statement for immediate delivery to state officials and legislative liaisons, expressing the Council's concern that it become the advisory body it was created to be, and expressing specific recommendations regarding funding proposals before the General Assembly. A copy of this Resolution is attached to these Minutes. Concerns were:

The APES Citizens Water Quality Monitoring Program, Streamwatch, etc. should standardize their data and incorporate it with DEM and other data into a publicly accessible water quality data base. The Council should be given the timely opportunity to review funding requests and projects within the basin. Basin Associations should be involved in recommending allocations within their basin segment for public water projects.

The Council expressed concern that the concept of pollution credit trading had not been thoroughly discussed and defined. This could be a powerful tool for basin wide management or a cumbersome

and expensive way to shift the problems from one area of the basin to another.

The Legislative and Public Affairs Committee, chaired by Margaret Holton, discussed the three versions of funding proposal (Hunt, House, Senate - see attached newspaper article) currently being offered and reported back that the Hunt Environmental Agenda seemed closest to what their discussion group felt would be most likely to be accepted by our Council. They are to prepare a written summary of their discussion for the next Council meeting. Among the concerns expressed by this group were these questions:

How to get the rule-making workshops more publicized? (It was felt that those in Smithfield were very poorly advertised and were very poorly attended).

If money is to be made available to grant-accepting organizations and agencies, how should it be proportioned across the basin, or across interest groups?

Especially, how can the impact of rapid population growth in the upper and lower ends of the basin be assessed and will the current proposal just be playing catch-up and always be behind development pressure?

What has been the historical increase in number of lagoons, and industrial run-off over the period 1985-1995? Is this simply a matter of a rapid increase over the short term, or a gradual building up to limits of the basin's tolerance?

What must be done to eliminate ALL straight-piping and illegal connections to the watershed?

What are the true economic costs of limiting the amounts of wastes in a lagoon?

The By-Laws Committee (chaired by Donna Wright) reported back the following recommendations, which were adopted after some discussion of the Council.

Adoption of By-Laws is absolutely necessary for the Council to proceed in a legal and orderly fashion. The Secretary and Staff will prepare a new draft of By-Laws with proposed changes as already discussed in the last several meetings. This draft will be presented as a Consent Agenda Item as the first item on the official agenda of the next meeting. It is requested that members vote for this draft set as written, with the full understanding that specific clauses and sections may be further amended at any time in the future. This process will thus establish the rules for a quorum, voting eligibility and free us to proceed with the real business of the Council. A written ballot on the consent resolution will be sent to each member, so that for this election only, those members unable to attend the next meeting will be granted the opportunity to review the By-Laws and vote upon them. The secretary requests that all members vote on this one issue, whether they vote by mail or in person.

Another issue of importance was whether members could vote by proxy or mail-in on issues, recommendations, and resolutions. It was the consensus of the members present for that discussion

that only those members actually present for the discussion of such issues should be permitted to vote, thus disallowing proxy and mail-in votes. However, those members unable to attend a given meeting would be encouraged to mail written questions and comments to the Chair, so their concerns could be addressed during that discussion. A further discussion of the issue of proxy voting came to the recommendation that alternate delegates would not be considered voting members. This position is reflected in the proposed revised by-laws.

The members present agreed that a approval vote on an issue or resolution would consist of a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.

The Finance committee presented a proposed budget for purposes of discussion. A copy of that budget is attached. DEM staff are to investigate possible ways to get reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses of the members of the Council and for the work of the Executive Committee and other standing committees. The Finance committee will be asked to report back on these questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wright, Secretary

