

1/10/08

Time Start: 10:00 am

Time Stop: 11:05 am

Teleconference Call:

*Work Group 1 ~ Monitor Effectiveness of State Public Awareness Program & Develop Public Recognition Program.*

**Council Participants**

**Spokesperson Carole Baker**

Luana Buckner

Donna Howe

Jim Parks

Nora Mullarkey

Denise Hickey

Scott Swanson

Linda Christie

Jennifer Walker

**TWDB Staff Sitting In**

Holly Vierk

Vanessa Escobar

Laila Johnson

The meeting started at 10:00 am with a roll call and a brief introduction of a new staff member, who will be working with the public awareness program, here at the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). Carole began by discussing the action items from the previous teleconference and gave a quick overview of what the workgroup would discuss in this session.

Carole opened up the floor to comments about the public recognition survey and letter that was drafted by TWDB staff. A question was raised about a mailing list or database that the workgroup would be using to send out this survey. It was mentioned that the original thought was to go through TWCA, AWWA, TRWA, TAGD,<sup>1</sup> or other professional organizations & associations to have them send out the survey through their mailing lists. Someone pointed out that the Regional Water Planning Groups (RWPG) have set up extensive mailing lists as well.

There was another question as to who was going to be involved in sending these surveys out, as well as how is that going to be paid for. As far as assistance from the Board, there may be a staff member or two that could work on drafting letters and one-pagers, as well as handle the collection and compiling of surveys. For the most part we are under the assumption that these organizations would need to be willing to mail out the surveys at their own cost.

It was brought up that surveys are typically things that gets ignored, and would need some level of follow up to try to improve the response percentage that we get back from survey; This means that there may be a little more in kind labor involved in getting that out and getting that information back.

It was suggested that an email be created with a link to the actual document so that we get a greater response due to the accessibility of the survey online. It was agreed that this is probably the first route that the workgroup should pursue to getting started on this task. Someone asked if it should be a downloadable document or streaming online without any printing required. The TWDB will look into the capability and time frame for getting something like that done.

It was brought up that mailing has typically been the primary form of sending out surveys, and that utilizing emails for surveys may have its limitations due to the fact that many association databases may not include email addresses. A survey could be made available electronically as well as be accompanied by actual mailings which would incur costs.

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Texas Alliance for Groundwater Districts (TAGD)

Someone suggested that maybe a request could be sent into the chairs of the RWPGs letting them know that the Council is looking for programs to be recognized and if they know of any programs in their areas then they can contact that person and tell them to look online to fill out a survey. Most of the RWPGs also send out newsletters on a monthly or quarterly basis where it may be a good idea to have a quarter page informing readers about the survey.

Most of the associations are having meetings fairly soon, so we can probably draft up a one pager that can be included in their packets, or shared at some of their meetings. A one pager saying that this is what the Council is looking for or if you have a program that you want to brag about then go check out this online survey. Some of these professional organizations or associations may even be willing to link the survey from their website. Though the survey can be made more accessible by creating it as an online link, an important factor to keep in mind is promoting the fact that this survey is out there and we need people to go and fill it out.

There were some details, comments, and suggestions made about the survey as far as what to include or omit. The survey seemed to have more of a municipal focus but should include agricultural associations, livestock associations, and private industry if we want to indicate that this survey is open to more than just municipal entities.

It was suggested that this survey be broadened to include questions about awareness programs. There was some discussion as to the objective of the survey and whether it is targeting information on 'public recognition programs' or 'public awareness programs'. It was agreed that both 'awareness programs' and 'recognition programs' need to be individually addressed in a single survey.

Someone asked if our real goal is to gather information about the types of 'recognition programs' out there, or if our goal is to develop our own statewide recognition program. It was pointed out that in reading the task directly from the legislation that the charge is to develop a statewide recognition program. A side effect of that may be that we need to be able to know what recognition programs are currently being implemented around the state. A question was asked if whether the survey needed to be redesigned with the intention of gathering information for the purpose of rewarding these entities.

At this point Carole asked that the workgroup members send suggestions, revisions, and comments to Carole Barker and cc Vanessa Escobar in time for January 30 2008. Carole clarified that this workgroup has two separate tasks, one involving development of a statewide public recognition program, and the other involving monitoring the state public awareness program. The survey effort is for the charge: *Develop and Implement a Public Recognition Program for Water Conservation.*

Carole suggested that the following people contact these groups to share the survey and inform the organizations on how they can assist this effort. AWWA – Carole Baker, Donna Howe; RWPG - Board Staff; TWCA-Jim Parks, & Other Council Members; TAGD – Luana Buckner; TRWA – Ken Petersen.

Denise Hickey with North Texas Municipal Water District gave an update about their Water IQ Campaign. They are in the process of producing new outreach features and working with focus groups. They plan to lengthen their program from March – September with media ads and are trying to work on messaging that can help different areas of the state, can be built on, can be worked with, or can be co-branded.

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Nora Mullarkey said their Water IQ program will be focusing more on radio spots, bill boards, print ads etc., and their goal is to run their program from March – July. They will utilize Water IQ to complement the regulatory water restrictions outreach effort.

There was a brief update about the Water IQ campaign, the status of the trademark rights, and the status of the website updates. Denise Hickey said she would get a comprehensive update with Enviromedia on those other Water IQ initiatives that are already active across the state. It was brought up that it would be useful to have some funds for post brand research so that trends can be followed.

The interim hearings are still being held by Chairmen Puente and are set up to hear some testimony regarding the various councils and committees that were established.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.

<b>Immediate Actions</b>	<b>Long Term Actions</b>
The TWDB will look into the capability and time frame for getting an online survey created.	TWDB staff can draft a letter to the chairs of the RWPGs letting them know that the Council is looking for programs to be recognized and if they know of any programs in their areas then they can contact that person and tell them to look online to fill out a survey.
TWDB staff will draft out a one page letter that will explain and promote the survey. It is to be distributed via associations & organizations.	TWDB staff can contact the chairs of the RWPGs inquiring about newsletters where information can be included about the survey and link.
Workgroup council members will send suggestions, revisions, and comments, for the draft survey & letter, to Carole Barker and cc Vanessa Escobar in time for January 30 2008.	Workgroup council members will touch base with associations and organizations to have the survey linked to their respective websites.
	It was suggested that the following people contact these groups to share the survey and inform the organizations on how they can assist this effort. AWWA – Carole Baker, Donna Howe; RWPGs - Board Staff; TWCA- Jim Parks, & Other Council Members; TAGD – Luana Buckner; TRWA – Ken Petersen.
	Denise Hickey will provide a comprehensive update from Enviromedia on those other Water IQ initiatives that are already active across the state.

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