

PBAC Citizens Advisory Group meeting minutes for Jan. 14, 2010

Members attending: Dan Boone, Ree Brannon, Michael Echanove, George Grader, Jim Mital, Mark Loaiza (vice chair), Julie Titone (chair), Joe Spoonemore

Guests: PBAC chair and vice chair, Paul Kimmell and Mike Leonas; PBAC executive manager, Steve Robischon

Minutes from December are unanimously approved.

Mark moves to change CAG leadership so there will be a chair and vice-chair, and that leadership be elected annually with no stipulations about succession. (Vice chair does not necessarily succeed chair.) Michael seconds motion. All vote in favor of the change. Motion passes.

Comments by Paul Kimmell: Thanks to all for serving. With respect to Palouse Basin leadership roundtable – it has nothing to do with PBAC, but is rather an initiative that myself, Jon Kimberling and Barb Cosens and Michael Bogert from DC are organizing. We are talking about cooperation and managing a regional resource. The roundtable will be held on a Friday afternoon, Feb. 26, and include a couple hours of facilitated discussion with CAG and PBAC members and our electeds. We will work on communication, relationships. The roundtable will be held in Pullman at the Belltower. We'll have about 50 people at the table. Allyson Beall will be there talking about groundwater system modeling project.

Sometimes PBAC and CAG could be better about sharing info both directions. Putting bylaws together will be helpful. You want to make sure there is a lot of value to taking people's time.

With the framework (research) project, we hope to take PBAC to higher level of funding as well as coalesce good work already done out there. We had to get creative about how we had to fully fund project. Funding looks good for the organization, so far.

Mike Leonas comment: It's a precious thing to have public input. Thanks to CAG for its efforts.

PBAC report from Steve Robischon:

Pumping in 2009 was higher than 2008 ... about 2% higher in aggregate. Summer was a little more warmer/drier than the previous year. It looks like the entities continue to reduce indoor use.

The basinwide aquifer test carried out Nov. 23 seems to be working well... University of Idaho shut down for the longest, 65 hours. Researchers plan to collect test data for entire year; they're trying to gauge storativity... how much water is stored in the Grand Ronde aquifer. If there's recharge, it's probably coming into Wanapum and then flowing into Grande Ronde.

PBAC pulled out some tasks from the framework research plan to make it affordable. PBAC will kick in \$50,000 to the restore pieces that the Department of Ecology cut out because of the state budget deficit. Regarding the tritium project, the scope of that was possibly drifting; principal investigator Jim Osiensky will talk with Mark Workman about that. ... The groundwater modeling project is in the phase of testing with people who developed it ... Moscow has surface water storage feasibility project under way ... TMDL (water quality study) is going on for South Fork of the Palouse River ... The Pullman/WSU wastewater reclamation project is on hold depending on whether Ecology funding will be restored. At the PBAC meeting, USGS visitors will discuss Columbia Plateau groundwater study. They have funding to update that, and how we might be able to partner with them. Idaho USGS will talk about possibly matching research funding with us.

Discussion regarding PBAC budget.

PBAC has \$80,000 for operations, \$80,000 for research. PBAC will use most of that if it wants to match a big grant, like USGS grant... It's not a lot of money in the realm of research. There's no reason CAG couldn't solicit funds for outreach if that wouldn't compete with our funders. PBAC is not set up to have a bank account, must work through the UI budget system. Each entity writes a check to University of Idaho, which goes into an account that PBAC directs. As soon as the check says UI, everything has to be in accord with university requirements. PBAC is discussing moving funds so it is more efficient.

Discussion regarding potential grants for conservation projects.

Many of PBAC entities are already into funding conservation measures. If there was money for that outreach, members PBAC members think it would be better that money should go to the entities. Everybody on PBAC thought education and outreach is good, but entities have their own education obligations. CAG observations: Moscow is able to fund position through funds that they get; grant writers usually pay for themselves.

Discussion of bylaws, which are being drafted.

Quarterly meetings are proposed, but there is concern that CAG would lose momentum without monthly meetings. The idea of having speakers at meetings is supported, as is the idea of a summer hiatus. There is agreement that the bylaws give chair the ability to adjust meeting schedule. There is also discussion of presence of ex-officio members via phone

The chair offers to revise draft bylaws and distribute revised version.

The next meeting is set for Feb. 11. Meeting adjourns.

(Notes taken by Julie Titone)