

Small Water Systems Technical Committee

May 16, 2006, 9:30-12:30

Seattle–KC Public Health Eastgate

Facilitator: Tamie Kellogg, Kellogg Consulting

Meeting Summary

1. Introductions—Housekeeping

- See the attached list of attendees.
- Agenda was reviewed. Attendees introduced themselves (see attendance list). Copies of groundrules were distributed electronically. No changes or additions.

2. Approve Summary Notes

- Notes for the April 3 meeting were approved without change.
- Notes for the April 24 meeting were approved with the following changes:
 - Changes made by Sheri Miller and distributed electronically before the meeting.
 - Changes proposed by Doug Rushton re exempt wells and irrigation wells were accepted.
 - Attendance list needs to have Jim Nilson and Dustan Bott from SPU added.
 - Jim Nilson also suggested two additional changes re the use of the word “substandard” re Group B systems (p. 2).

Clarification was sought re whether there were any restrictions on charging a Group B operating permit fee. Larry Fay said that there were no restrictions, only that an ordinance would have to be passed (p.3)

Action Items: Post approved summary notes on the Web site.

Distribute revised April 24 meeting notes.

Add Jim and Dustan and then distribute the attendance list from the April 24 meeting.

3. Updates: Technical Committees and Coordinating Committee

Kaleen discussed the process for convening a subcommittee to review possible uses of the \$250K in state grant money; meeting will be on June 1, followed by Executive Committee meeting June 15. Ecology guidance document is coming out. The expectation is that some of the money may be deferred until committees are farther along in their work and have a better idea of needs (e.g., for additional technical studies). Proposals need to include scope, deliverables, timeline, and cost.

4. Identify New Issues/Questions

Members suggested looking at intersection of work with other technical committees (e.g., source exchange). Kaleen is putting together a chart that will show possible intersections of such work. Further discussion deferred to end of the meeting.

Action Item for June 5 meeting: Kaleen will present the “chart” if it is ready.

5. Summary: Committee Progress to Date

- Tamie summarized the work done by the Committee to date following the process outlined in the charter and workplan. Tamie noted that the committee has engaged in data and information gathering since the first meeting and continues to gather relevant information/data. The committee discussed the legal, regulatory, and authority issues associated with small water systems at its 4/3/06, 4/24/06 meetings. Tamie noted that we have not done much work on identification of gaps in data and suggested that this is an iterative process. Identifying problems and issues has been undertaken at every meeting since the initial 3/13/06 meeting, and the issues list reflects the questions, concerns, and topics generated to date.
- Committee members suggested that if any issues are eliminated from discussion because of inability to substantiate the problem, that decision should be documented. Tamie pointed out that at this point in the process no issues were off the table.
- A question was raised about the possibility of legislative changes as a result of this committee's work. It was noted that some possibility existed that the Committee could produce legislative recommendations, including those for King County Code Title 12 (re private wells).

6. Committee Schedule and Timeline

- Larry reported that he had told the Coordinating Committee that a committee charter would be available for them to see in June. Members suggested that the original charter would be a starting point for each technical committee, and that each committee could revise it. The suggestion was that changes from the original charter would be taken back to the Coordinating Committee for its review. The Coordinating Committee could also be given a tentative draft charter, and the Small Systems Committee could reserve the right to change it in the future.
- The direction from the Coordinating Committee is that the work products—including recommendations—should be provided “sooner rather than later,” and that the timeline for producing them should be “reasonable and flexible.” The CC also said that the work of each committee should be “productive and meaningful.”

7. Draft Charter and Workplan

- Tamie led the committee in a discussion of the Charter and Workplan, which she had put together based upon comments from members and her own sense of how they meshed. It was noted that two members had distributed electronically their proposed changes to all members of the Committee, and a third set were hand written and not previously distributed. Tamie reminded members to follow the groundrule of sharing materials electronically in advance, and all members were given hard copies of the comments and edits to the previous versions of the draft Charter.
- Members made revisions to the Charter and workplan predominantly in the area of winnowing problems and sequencing. There was agreement that problems would be eliminated only if based on agreed-to criteria. Members felt the questions/issues list should be a separate working product/document and that the Charter and Workplan should be revised as needed overtime. Tamie suggested that the process described in the Charter/Workplan could continue to be an iterative one.

Action Items: Members should email Tamie if they had recommendations to title the “charter” and “workplan” sections separately, and on any suggested changes in wording to Items 4, 5, and 6 of the Charter/Workplan.

Action Items for June 5 meeting: Tamie will revise the Charter/Workplan (using Track Changes) based on today’s discussion and on comments received via email and then send the revised version to members. Tamie will overlay the issues onto a schedule as a springboard for discussion and add the discussion to the June 5 agenda.

8. Data/Information Gathering and Potential Problem/Issue Identification

- Ken Johnson (King County) did a presentation on data from Ecology re Notices of Intent (NOIs) and well logs. There has been increasing use of irrigation wells, clustered in certain areas. Of particular note is that although the full picture cannot be gleaned from just looking at NOIs or well logs, once the two pieces of information are linked, a better picture emerges. Ken’s presentation included a list of Group A systems within whose service areas new irrigation wells had recently been drilled, with the largest number in Covington Water District. Ken also circulated a couple of maps that showed the work that he had been doing for the Issaquah Creek Valley Groundwater Committee, which wanted better information on the use of exempt wells near Issaquah Creek that could be contributing to streamflow issues. The committee generally liked the information and discussed whether the same kind of presentation could be put together with a broader set of information. They suggested that Ken return at the next meeting, or at another appropriate meeting depending on the topics that will be discussed per the schedule Tamie is developing.

Action Item: Schedule Ken for a further presentation at a future meeting.

- Other agenda items under this topic were postponed until the June 5 meeting. Sheri Miller distributed information the Rimrock receivership and information from SENTRY on satellite-managed systems that will be discussed at the next meeting. She also showed a copy of the 1991 DOH report on Small Systems. She can make other copies available, but it’s a long document.

Agenda Item for June 5 meeting: Add carryover items from May 16 meeting.

9. Funding Subcommittee

The group returned to the question of how to use the \$250K in state money. It was suggested that a focus could be on developing better data that can “tell the story” of how small systems interfere with large water systems and water resources generally in closed basins (using primarily SKCPH data). Other suggestions for use of money included acquiring meters/gauges to volunteer monitoring of water use; doing further analysis of NOIs and well logs; and linking (crosswalk) DOH’s SENTRY and Ecology’s WRATS databases.

A question was raised as to whether the money had to be used in connection with a capital project. The guidance from Ecology should answer this.

Members agreed to create a subcommittee (Dave Monthie, Larry Fay, Ron Sheadel, possibly Jim Nilson) to develop some options for the June 1 meeting.

Action Item: Tamie to convene meeting (possibly via email) of group to put together a proposal or information for June 1 meeting.

7. Next Steps

Next meeting: June 5.

Abbreviations: DOH—Washington State Department of Health, DNRP—King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Ecology—Washington State Department of Ecology, PHSKC—Public Health—Seattle and King County, CWSP—Coordinated Water System Plan, SPU—Seattle Public Utilities.