

PUBLIC INTEREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PIAC) MEETING
July 15, 2002, 2:30 to 4:00 PM, WHOI Redfield Auditorium
FINAL MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Members Present: Patty Foley, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay (chair); Bruce Berman, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay (alternate); Sal Genovese, Safer Waters in Massachusetts; and Steve Tucker, Cape Cod Commission (alternate).

Observers: Cathy Coniaris, MADEP; Stephen Estes-Smargiassi, MWRA; Pam Harvey, MADEP; Ben Kelly, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay; Mike Mickelson, MWRA; Andrea Rex, MWRA; and Silvia Spring, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay.

Boston University students: Fahed Alzonoohi, Brenda Berasi, Irfan Budiswanto, Kullaya Chiammanisakul, Marc Core Claudio, Vicki Ann Frawley, Zack Gou, Tom Goucher, Tamim Jabr, Jessica Kelly, Laurie Lopez, Juan Pablo Mendoza, Mary Murphy-Phillips, Megan Newcomer, Gerry Poulin, Jessica Rosery, Herb Ross, Sunit Srisainsuchat, Jin Toppi, and Yu-Chi Wang.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

1. PIAC approved the April 2002 minutes with no amendments.
2. C. Coniaris will find out if the Massachusetts Open Meeting Laws would allow a web discussion among OMSAP members that could be viewed by the public.
3. P. Foley will draft a PIAC consensus document about what the group would like to see presented at the public meeting. PIAC will meet via conference call to discuss the content of this document.
4. PIAC suggests OMSAP host their annual public meeting after the two workshops, and to have the meeting scheduled at two locations.
5. C. Coniaris will find out if J. Montoya will present to OMSAP at their September 24 meeting.
6. P. Foley and C. Coniaris will report back to PIAC on the protocol of OMSAP response when there is an MWRA exceedance.

MINUTES

REVIEW OF DRAFT APRIL 29, 2002 MINUTES

ACTION: PIAC approved the April 29, 2002 minutes with no amendments.

PROCESS FOR EVALUATING THE MONITORING PLAN

P. Foley said that PIAC needs to determine its role during OMSAP's evaluation of the monitoring plan. PIAC has two important roles, representing the public and informing the public. A. Rex outlined the approach that OMSAP discussed during their meeting [see July 15, 2002 OMSAP minutes]. B. Berman suggested inviting the public to the OMSAP workshop in November instead of having a separate annual public workshop.

P. Foley asked S. Tucker if he thought the content of the workshops included what the Cape would like to see reviewed. S. Tucker replied that the Cape Cod Commission has not met to decide what is currently missing from the monitoring plan. S. Tucker is concerned that decisions will be made at a second meeting and that there could be important discussions behind the scenes. B. Berman agreed.

ACTION: C. Coniaris will find out if the Massachusetts Open Meeting Laws would allow a web discussion among OMSAP members that could be viewed by the public.

P. Foley said that PIAC will respond to OMSAP by sending a memo. She thinks that OMSAP will take their time to do a thorough review and that we will be able to count on them. **ACTION:** P. Foley will draft a memo to OMSAP outlining the opinions of PIAC members on the review process.

S. Tucker noted that the review schedule is very tight and we need to make sure that the review is done well. S. Genovese thinks that it would not be a problem if OMSAP members were asked to make decisions at the end of a workshop. He thinks that much of this review will be difficult to understand for his constituency.

P. Foley asked the PIAC members how they felt about having a public forum after each workshop. B. Berman suggested PIAC meet on the same day that OMSAP meets to deliberate on monitoring plan revisions so that PIAC members can attend both meetings. A. Rex is not confident that the first workshop will be held in 2002 given the amount of preparatory work that MWRA has to do. Since the date is not set in stone, it would be difficult to schedule a public forum on the same day. S. Estes-Smargiassi said that based on his experience it will be difficult for the scientists to summarize the workshop at the end of the two days and be able to commit to decisions. There needs to be some time between the workshops and any public meetings. P. Foley thinks there can be some flexibility with this. Perhaps we can have a public meeting by the end of the year, regardless of the review schedule. S. Tucker suggested providing a list of proposed changes to the monitoring plan to the public to get them interested in attending a public meeting. S. Genovese agreed in having a public meeting to update the public on monitoring, even if the technical workshops have not occurred, and give them a list of proposed changes that the public might be concerned about.

B. Berman liked MWRA's presentation to OMSAP on what they monitor, but MWRA should add more detail for each type of monitoring for a presentation at a public meeting. B. Berman thinks that could be covered by presenting the varying views of the PIAC members. B. Berman thinks that it would be better to have the public meeting after the two workshops. S. Tucker suggested PIAC draft a document about the monitoring revisions that members could distribute to their constituencies. P. Foley would like OMSAP to host a public meeting in two locations. She thinks that this time there will be more interest from the press. B. Berman suggested that a Boston public meeting be held at MIT or U Mass Boston. P. Foley thinks PIAC needs to make an outreach effort to promote the public meetings. She will set up a conference call to discuss what should be in the PIAC consensus document. B. Berman noted that OMSAP is to host an annual public meeting according to its charter. He noted that with the monitoring review schedule, it looks like the public meeting will be more than a year after the last one in October 2001 and wondered if that would be a problem. C. Coniaris did not think so.

P. Foley asked PIAC members what they thought about B. Beardsley's idea about MWRA posting their data on-line. B. Berman thinks if the results of the monitoring are on-line, at least in report form, then anyone can analyze the data. He asked if it would be possible for MWRA to post actual data. A. Rex replied that MWRA does not post their data on-line because of the complexity and size of their database, but all data are available to the public upon request. B. Berman asked if someone is reading a report on-line, if it is easy to request data from there. A. Rex replied that they can make it more obvious on the web pages that all data are available and who to contact. B. Berman thinks we should find out exactly what B. Beardsley meant by posting on the web. We want to make everything accessible to the public. M. Mickelson agreed to contact B. Beardsley.

S. Tucker thinks that the workshop agendas and summaries should be posted on the web. P. Foley agreed and suggested that the various PIAC organizations link to this page. B. Berman suggested Save

the Harbor/Save the Bay link to this page and also collect public comments. C. Coniaris will find out if there can be OMSAP email discussions on the OMSAP website.

ACTION: P. Foley will draft a PIAC consensus document about what the group would like to see presented at the public meeting. PIAC will meet via conference call to discuss the content of this document. PIAC suggests OMSAP host their annual public meeting after the two workshops, and to have the meeting scheduled at two locations.

OTHER TOPICS

B. Berman brought up the recent press on right whales and zooplankton. He was surprised and disappointed that the Center for Coastal Studies did not call Patty Foley to give the chair of a PIAC a “heads-up” before the press articles. Whenever there is a press release, PIAC members should try to contact one another. We need to keep each other informed. He appreciated that C. Coniaris kept us all informed. S. Tucker thought there was a lot of spin in the press. B. Berman agreed and said that the last time there was outfall press, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay worked with the Center for Coastal Studies to speak with reporters on the one-year anniversary of the outfall.

ACTION: C. Coniaris will find out if J. Montoya will present to OMSAP at their September 24 meeting.

P. Foley introduced the Boston University students in the audience. They are B. Berman’s students in a summer course that examines the history and public policy of the Boston Harbor clean-up. P. Foley invited the students to ask questions. There was a discussion about MWRA water/sewer rates, the cost of monitoring, and the review of the monitoring plan.

S. Tucker is still concerned with OMSAP protocol when there is an exceedance. We have made progress in the information we get after there is an exceedance but he would like to see more information on who invokes OMSAP and their response.

ACTION: P. Foley and C. Coniaris will report back to PIAC on the protocol of OMSAP response when there is an MWRA exceedance.

ADJOURNED

MEETING HANDOUTS:

- Agenda
- July 2002 OMSAP/PIAC/IAAC membership lists
- April 2002 draft PIAC minutes
- MWRA information briefings and copies of presentations

Summary prepared by C. Coniaris. Post-meeting comments are included in [brackets]. All such comments have been inserted for clarification only. They do not, nor are they intended to, suggest that such insertions were part of the live meeting components and have been expressly set-off so as to avoid such inference.