

MEETING SUMMARY
NC Mountain Resources Technical Advisory Council
March 18, 2011 / 10:00 AM - Noon
City Operations Building, 305 Williams Street, Hendersonville, NC

Members Present: James Fox, Bill Yarborough, Karen Smith, Paul Muller, Rick Wooten, Marvin Hoffman, DJ Gerken, Bill Eaker

Others in Attendance: David Gantt, Judy Francis, Michelle Lovejoy

Call to Order

Chairman Fox called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and welcomed all in attendance. He asked everyone to look over the agenda and add any other business that needs to be covered. Judy Francis said she had been asked by Andy Brown to read an email from him regarding the report card project. Andy had to be out of town on a business trip and can't attend this meeting of the TAC. Bill Yarborough also asked to have a moment to discuss a letter from Haywood Waterways Association, Inc.

Approval of February 14, 2010 Meeting Summary

Chairman Fox asked everyone to look over the summary of the February 14, 2011 meeting and suggest any necessary revisions. Marvin Hoffman ask that his name be corrected on the attendance list. DJ Gerken made a motion that the summary be approved with the correction to Marvin Hoffman's name. Marvin Hoffman gave a second to the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Slope Issue

Chairman Fox thanked Karen for putting the current draft of the slope recommendations together. He said they were well written and send a very cohesive message. It pulls together a lot of information and sets priorities that communities can actually use. Bill Eaker and DJ Gerken complimented Karen and the work group for putting it together. There was a brief discussion over whether or not this version could be forwarded to the MRC for their consideration. Judy Francis said the soonest it could go on the agenda would be May, since the information would need to be distributed prior to the meeting for members to look over. She asked if the current format was what the TAC wanted to forward. Rick Wooten said he would have to recuse himself from voting on anything that may differ from the Governor's budget because agencies are in the Executive branch and therefore, in support of the Governor's position. Paul Muller made a motion to approve the content and format of the current version of slope recommendations. Rick Wooten provided a second to the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Judy then mentioned that there was a possibility that the General Assembly would be considering legislation to ask the Environmental Review Commission to review the slope issue over the next calendar year, so there is very little likelihood that there will be any slope policies considered until after they report back next year. David Gantt said the MRC is focused on

getting outreach presentations done at all the Councils of Government right now so people will understand the MRC has no regulatory authority, but provides recommendations only. Keeping the MRC viable is an important consideration that affects the timing of the slope issue. It is important not to contribute to misinformation. The issue will move forward, but in a timeframe that works for everybody.

Chairman Fox then showed the latest iteration of the map that was reviewed at the last TAC meeting. Discussion about how scale depends on the question being asked. Rick Wooten is still working on Henderson County landslide hazard maps and consulting with county staff and Raleigh staff. They are clarifying language, but the maps are usable now. Jim Fox said that hard copies of the slope map have limited utility, especially a regional map. The danger of putting out a map like this is that people think there is duplication going on. He said we have to communicate data sources and what types of decisions can be made using these maps. There needs to be a discussion about what types of disclaimers and information should be printed on the map itself. Bill Eaker said putting the date they were prepared and web address for on-line versions where more details will be available. Jim said there is no web address. Bill Yarborough said the map could cause political controversy too. We should be cautious about putting it out right now to avoid misunderstandings.

Multi-Hazard Planning Tool Update

Chairman Fox provided an update on the multi-hazard planning tool that the TAC reviewed earlier in the year. He said the Buncombe County version has been released after approval from county staff and management. The counties then own the tool. RENCI just provides the technology, but the county owns the data. Other counties are in the process of being compiled. Bill Eaker asked if the counties are feeling good about have the information because it is very useful for hazard mitigation planning. Jim said they haven't really focused on that right now. They are trying to make sure data is as accurate as it can be. The Buncombe County staff first approached us to help them with do the mapping tool to help with multi-hazard planning. John Dorman is working on a tool at the state level that incorporates data about all structures (HAZUS data) and climate change issues like sea level rise. That tool measures risk and property value (real property and personal property).

Discussion of Future Presentations to the Commission

DJ volunteered to outline the recommendations in a presentation. We should be ready with "next steps" suggestions. There is also the need to make sure it says "Draft" on the top because it is not MRC approved. DJ Gerken made a motion to approve this approach. Bill Eaker gave a second to the motion which was approved unanimously.

Bill Yarborough said that Haywood Waterways has a guy that will come out and work with property owners about what development would work and what wouldn't on a piece of property. He would like him to come and talk to the MRC at some point in the future. It helps to get ahead of the problems, rather than react to them. It's voluntary and can be done privately. DJ said that the TAC recommendations say *what* should be done – not *how*. It would be good to have this guy come and show how regulatory approaches can be avoided. Jim Fox asked when

an appropriate time would be to invite him to present his information. It will have to be coordinated with the MRC. DJ suggested that a panel discussion might be helpful and ensure that the development community is represented.

Discussion of Regional Sustainability Report Card

DJ explained that a work group composed of himself, Bill Yarborough, Todd Cherry, and Jim Fox had developed a preliminary list of indicators. Judy Francis put together a request for funding from the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area (BRNHA) that was passed around so the TAC members could review the request. There was discussion about the Importance of including criteria helpful to BRNHA about regional economics and the management plan focus areas. Judy read an email from Andy Brown regarding his concern that the BRNHA priorities were very focused and the report card indicators being discussed are too broad. He wrote that he felt his ideas were not being given adequate consideration by the group and that the report card, as currently being discussed, was not the right tool for the BRNHA. Jim Fox said Todd Cherry has been very helpful in assisting with the economic data for the report card. He said we have to satisfy all sectors and sources of funding to make a product they can use. Judy described her conversations with BRNHA staff and the presentations done for the BRNHA Board of Directors. She said that there should be representation from the BRNHA Board on the project work group and an MRC member should attend project meetings as well. She will see if there are any volunteers from the MRC. Bill Yarborough and Jim Fox discussed the best way to obtain and incorporate agricultural data. Bill Yarborough mentioned the need to make sure that agricultural data is accurate. Agriculture needs to be at the table during these discussions..

NEW BUSINESS:

Bill Yarborough presented a letter from Haywood Waterways Association, Inc. to the MRC regarding their funding concerns and the elimination of the western region soil scientist positions within NCDENR. Jim Fox said that, from a TAC standpoint, we can say what reasonable technical resources are needed. It is problematic for many members who can't vote against Gov. Perdue's position because they are state employees. Rick Wooten said those positions are really useful for providing data and interaction for our work. Jim Fox and DJ Gerken said it is okay to make a comment that any removal of technical experts such as these is not good for the region. We can't make this political. The MRC doesn't have the weight for that right now anyway.

Determine Next Meeting(s)

There was agreement that the work groups will meet before next joint meeting date on May 20. Karen Smith and DJ Gerken will work on the slope presentation. Karen has a conflict on the next regular meeting date, so DJ will deliver the presentation. Jim Fox and Judy Francis will continue to move the Sustainability Report Card funding issues forward. Bill Yarborough will help coordinate a possible presentation from Gordon Small on the slope development outreach issue. Jim Fox and Rick Wooten will coordinate on comments from the NC Geological Survey on the landslide hazard map layers in the multi-hazard risk tool.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.