



Boater Waste Workgroup Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2011 2:00 PM

Workgroup Members Present: Scott Tuma (City of League City), Helen Paige (Marina Bay Harbor), Dewayne Hollin (Texas Sea Grant), Paul Fannin (Public), Jean Wright (H-GAC), George Guillen (UHCL- EIH), Steve Gammill (Green Marinas), Gene Cupples (Eco-Mode), Chip Morris (TCEQ, by phone), and Charlene Bohanon (GBF)

Discussion

Public Meeting: Charlene informed the workgroup that a public meeting has been scheduled for November 15th from 3-5pm at Armand Bayou Nature Center. She explained that based on suggestions from those experienced in holding public meetings, it will be designed to be informal and very interactive. Helen Paige agreed to speak on behalf of the BW workgroup for a few minutes at the meeting. Workgroup members received postcard sized handouts to pass out to advertise the meeting. Charlene will email out a one page PDF advertisement that is good for attaching to emails, as well as an e-invitation that can be forwarded to contacts.

Implementation Plan: Charlene informed the workgroup that the preliminary draft of the entire I-plan was submitted to TCEQ on September 30th. She will email the entire PDF document to them, as well as a Word file with just their section so they can give additional comments as necessary.

Charlene provided the workgroup with a handout of a load reduction calculation example from another I-plan. They didn't have time to discuss this, but the thought is that this can be used as a basis for calculating load reductions for boater waste. Variables that will need to be defined include, but are not limited to, total # boats in the project area, average # persons/boat, average # gallons of waste produced/person/day, % persons using onboard MSDs, % boats discharging sewage into water. Literature searches will need to be done in order to determine these and other variables. If workgroup members have source suggestions, they should send them to Charlene.

Funding: Charlene asked the workgroup for suggestions of who to talk to regarding cost estimates for various types of pump-out stations in order to prepare for applying for funding. She said she had already emailed Andy Goldbloom (TPWD), but was looking for more suggestions. Paul Fannin offered to send over the information he has.

Charlene informed the group that modifications were being made to the current grant cycle to include water quality monitoring and that another grant application had just been submitted for increased funding starting in 2013.

BWEC: Charlene provided the workgroup with updates on campaign activities/materials that have been completed since the last meeting. The waterproof pump-out maps developed by GBF and Boater's Directory containing 8 Pump Don't Dump ads were circulated and copies were provided to workgroup members. Around 1,000 bags of education materials (including coupons for pump-outs/MSD supplies, pump-out DVD, map, boater surveys, Clean Boater pledge brochure, Clean Boating Tips, and Scoop on Poop brochures) have been assembled, with about 2,500 left to be assembled. A presentation is scheduled on November 3rd at the monthly GCYBA meeting at Lakewood Yacht

Club and the bags will be distributed to the yacht brokers. Charlene also passed around a rendering of the external design that will be used to create the interactive kiosk. She informed the workgroup that trivia questions are being written and the graphic interface is in the design process.

Charlene updated the workgroup on progress being made regarding volunteer water quality monitoring to sample at marinas. She said that the idea has been well received from all of those she has talked to and many people are excited to get involved in volunteer monitoring. She attended the Meeting of the Monitors workshop to network with the folks at Texas Stream Team and to begin training on their protocols. She will complete the protocol training at a workshop being held in Baytown on October 22nd and then begin the process of becoming a trainer so she can train volunteers working through GBF. The logistics of bacteria testing in brackish/salt water were discussed with many helpful suggestions given by Jean Wright and George Guillen. Jean suggested contacting Kim Phillips with the City of Brazos lab to get training on the Enterolert protocol with Charlene and George mentioned the possibility of borrowing the equipment that UHCL-EIH owns.

Charlene requested to brainstorm with the workgroup what they think a marina partnership should look like. She reminded them that each partnership would be uniquely designed to fit the needs of specific marinas, so we need to come up with a list of activities that marinas can choose from to implement. The list that has been started includes installing pet waste stations, outreach and facilities/supplies for cleaning up marine debris, monofilament fishing line recycling bins (large one on the dock and individual sizes... can involve kids in making these), hold a pump-out instruction clinic, implement the use of dye tabs in holding tanks, apply for CVA grant funding to install a public pump-out station, encourage boaters to take the Clean Boater Pledge and marinas to work towards becoming a Clean Texas Marina, install storm water runoff BMPs around marina, and form a volunteer Dock Walker and water quality monitoring team. The thought is that a workgroup will be formed at each marina in order to decide which activities they would like to carry out. Water quality monitoring would be strongly encouraged before, during and after these activities over a long term period in order to learn more about how implementing these measures may/may not improve water quality. The purpose of water monitoring is not for incriminating anyone, and Jean explained that being that the sampling is not done by a certified lab, marinas can be assured that no legal action can be taken from these samples. The hope is that positive monitoring results can be used as a good PR opportunity for the partner marina, as well as encourages surrounding marinas to become partners with GBF.

The workgroup discussed ways to spruce up education booths by providing more hands-on activities and eye-catching visual displays/demos. The pump-out hookup display created by Paul Fannin was discussed. A repair will need to be made to it and we may want to figure out a way to make it into a game of some sort since booth visitors think it is a game when they see it on the table. George suggested creating a demo display showing a toilet on a boat discharging colored water into a fish bowl (or some sort of smaller, Enviroscape type demo) to grab attention. Charlene also mentioned that she will be designing an activity sheet that kids/teachers can take with them.

Next meeting: November 9th, 2:00pm