



Regional Environmental Managers Technical Committee

FY22 CZM & FY22 WIP Phase III

November 15th, 2022

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Digital Meeting and Conference Call

MEETING MINUTES

In attendance (17): Mark Kilgore (DCR), Mike Crocker, Lauren Linville, Jeff Flood (DEQ), Scott Adams (DOF), Bryan Hofmann and Adam Lynch (FOR), MacKenzie Bellimam and Scott Rae (City of Fredericksburg), Alexis Butchers and Chris Clarke (King George County), John Saunders and Emily Torrey (Stafford County), Holly Chichester (University of Mary Washington), Luke Peters (Berkley Group), Kate Gibson and Meredith Keppel (GWRC)

Meeting Notes

DEQ Septic grants and updates to the WIP and CZM programs and structure of REMTC meetings going forward.

Outcome 1: Presentation from Lauren Linville, DEQ, on the SLPP and other septic programs:

- DEQ has received about \$1b in ARPA funds. Some have specific uses and others do not.
- DEQ set up 5 programs for water/wastewater programs.
- Septic Local Partners Program: \$65MM for sewer collection and \$5MM for mostly residential septic projects.
- No maximum amount a locality can apply for. Any government entity can apply. Owners of private wastewater facilities (like mobile home parks that need to remain on septic) can also apply.
 - No one locality will likely get the whole \$5MM.
- SLPP – applications close at the end of December.
- No match required.
- 35% allowed for administrative costs.
- 50-100% of costs can be paid for depending on income.
- Replace straight pipes, upgrade drainfields, connect to public sewer, etc. However this is not for extending sewer service.
 - That is the job of the other \$60MM for sewer extension program.
- Includes funding for advanced/alternative septic systems.
- If project owners are up to or under median income, can get 100% reimbursed up to \$40k.
- Localities receiving funding from DEQ adopt the program design and then choose residences to deliver to.

- Funds can be extended to whole locality or limited to certain neighborhoods.
- Locality can decide to only offer funds to residences at or below area median income.

- GWRC is planning to apply for the grant and administer it to localities.
 - Need to give a rough estimate of how much money they need.
- Where localities are since the 2018 septic report; what septic difficulties are they having, how many compliant/uncompliant residences, CBPA unregulated areas, etc.:
 - Scott Rae: Tyler Gelles was handling septic pumpout, has moved on to Colorado.
 - Fredericksburg has about 40 systems – Scott doesn't know where they're located or what their needs are.
 - John Saunders: 42 systems is about right. Tim Bahre has been working on pumpout compliance as an additional duty.
 - Adam Lynch: best bang for one's buck RE nutrient removal?
 - Lauren Linville: Connecting to public sewer. With septic maintenance problems, shifting ownership of homes, etc. centralized is better for nutrients.
 - If localities have *any* knowledge of where straight pipes are that haven't been able to keep up with maintenance would be good, too.
 - Pilot run spent \$5MM very quickly.
 - VDH SWAP program was not able to find contractors – if localities can have contractors already on-call and can match them to homeowners, that would be the easiest.
 - Kate Gibson: ARPA is one-time funding – what's the time dimension?
 - Have to be spent by the end of calendar year 2026; DEQ wants those funds spent well before then.
 - After ARPA there are 319 dollars available all the time. The struggle is that they are geographically limited and often don't line up with localities.
 - Justin Williams is the one to reach out to.
 - MPPDC has cobbled together many funding sources together (including the revolving loan fund) to get septic upgrades done. Many loans receive principal forgiveness, which they distribute in the form of grants. Requires a lot of effort.
 - Alexis Butchers: County just switched over system; were housed in Excel file, still figuring out how to track in the new system. There are some areas that would benefit – e.g. Fairview Beach has a mobile home park.
 - Lauren in the KG office has been tracking septic.
 - Bryan Hofmann: 319 money is available for Fairview Beach. Only for areas with approved TMDL implementation plan. RFPs go out May/June and applications are due later in the year. DEQ has taken it upon themselves to gut that department so communication may be difficult.
 - Jeff Flood: CZM is not responsible for 319 money. CZM just gives them a short report on non-point-source nutrient reduction they've done.
 - John Saunders: doesn't have a pulse on the compliance rate, but it's likely much better than in 2017. Explored the issue almost a year ago through a VDH (?) grant.
 - Have septic owners on a pump & haul permit because the systems are failing. These would be priority. Stalled out because connecting them to sanitary service

wasn't feasible because they were too far out. ~50 or so households that were part of the pump & haul program.

- Not a foreclosure situation, just LMI households with old systems.
- Stafford generally just lacks resources to apply to these septic programs, i.e. no staff at this level.
- Stafford has thousands of septic systems.
- Adam Lynch: geographic areas in Stafford that have potential to connect to sewer? Failing or otherwise?
 - John: utilities/public works handles pump & haul. Not sure which areas besides that will work.
- **(Caroline & Spotsylvania not present)**

Outcome 2: Meredith Keppel – GWRC update:

- Big thing is how to achieve septic compliance and set programs up to be well-positioned for future grants.
- Resiliency: urban heat islands
 - RAFT is a program that UVA administers which enhances staff capacity to conduct outreach and get community buy-in on a resiliency plan.
 - Having resiliency plan opens one up to CFPF funds and there are also capacity grants available to make that happen.
 - Will there be pushback on RAFT coming to the region? No one is sure.
 - Will get someone in 2023 to discuss the purpose of RAFT (i.e. drafting resiliency plans).
 - Adam: can MS4s who participate in RAFT get points for the MSMs?
- Will separate out the REMTC – resiliency group that will meet quarterly and then the smaller locality meetings.
- Urban heat islands: earlier this year Sarah from FOR presented to the group on research. GWRC is hopeful that they can take the study and hold stakeholder meetings in the spring. Will involve 1-2 listening sessions; look for email in ~January.
- WIP and CZM: scopes are changing for FY22/FY23. Mapping may be changing to focus on urban trees and other efforts will help increase SWCD capacity.
 - Want to update the Environmental Services Strategic Plan.
 - Toolbox will be taken out. Rappahannock Roundtable is already doing a good job at providing that service better than GWRC could.
- Stormwater and “toolbox” are changing directions somewhat, focus on giving localities capacity.

Outcome 3: Luke Peters & Jeff Flood – State and Regional Updates

- RRBC solar discussion breakdown:
 - Michael Volpe of Open Road Renewables, Scott Foster of Gentry Locke, and Brian Stuver of Dominion spoke on solar regulations and permitting at the last Rappahannock River Basin Commission Technical Committee meeting.
 - Rooftop solar is 3-4x more expensive than ground-mounted on a LCOE basis.

- In Virginia, there is the Virginia Clean Economy Act, but really data centers built by companies with their own 100% renewable procurement goals are what is driving solar development.
 - There are 150-200 projects in the PJM queue that were grandfathered into the “fast lane” because they do not trigger infrastructure upgrades or overloads, whereas other projects take years to move through the queue.
 - Tree clearing can be limited during certain months, such as from November to April, which is part of the reason utility-scale solar construction can take 2-3 years.
 - Dominion has 3 sites using sheep for agrivoltaics.
 - There are concerns about solar taking up agricultural land, but, because 40% of corn in the US is grown for ethanol production and solar is helping offset fossil fuel use, solar is helping to free up certain farmland.
 - There are new techniques for ground mounted installation that use telescoping poles with rotatable flanges that will allow panels to be installed without significant grading.
- Meredith Keppel: CBPA regs are still looking at mature trees.
 - Jeff Flood: CZM Project of Special Merit – looking at regulations as they were pre-2020 General Assembly and applying SLR projections to RPA (Resiliency Assessment). Then the 2020 Assembly happened and CZM did not have a lot of say, and CBPA regulations (including mature trees) were being updated.
 - New rules say that there isn’t much you can do in the RPA. Can’t bring in fill or topsoil unless there are extra green solutions involved.
 - Resiliency Assessment is phased in 2 parts. Localities will have 3 years to update their local regulations before DEQ Office of Watersheds and Public Assistance (and Justin Williams) start trying to force compliance.

Outcome 4: Discussion of future meetings and other updates

- No meeting in December; meeting in January, 3rd Tuesday 1-3pm. If localities have additional staff they want to involve, please do.
- 1st quarter larger resiliency group meeting [might] meet in March – details TBD.
- GWRC Board meeting this month is November 28th – items on the agenda relevant to the group. Eldon James with RRBC and DEQ with the Regional Water Plan requirement will be speaking. Virtual or in-person.
- Jeff Flood: IJA funds being funneled through NOAA for shovel-ready and land acquisition projects. CZM has applied for 2 projects but it will be going for the next 5 years. DEQ would be 100% pass-through to government entity (including tribes), and possibly private entities (will need to talk to NOAA).
 - Coastal VIVA showing screenshots of biological diversity can make localities eligible for \$3-5MM of funding (DEQ happy to apply on their behalf).
 - Jeff is happy to give 1-on-1 presentations to localities to let them know how CZM works.