Muskegon River Watershed Assembly
Education Committee Meeting Minutes
May 24, 2010
FSU – Big Rapids

Education Committee Chair Cris DeWolf convened the meeting at 4:31 p.m. Those present were:

Cris DeWolf, Ed. Committee Chair
Cindy Fitzwilliams-Heck, FSU
Denise Mitten, FSU
Bill & Nancy Burmeister
Gary Noble, Executive Director
Terry Stilson, Program Coordinator

Agenda
No changes given.

Approval of Minutes – Fitzwilliams-Heck motioned to accept the April 12, 2010 minutes with B. Burmeister supporting the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business
Review “Get Wet & Wild” workshop 2010

• N. Burmeister stated that she felt the workshop went extremely well.
• B. Burmeister added that, from the evaluations, the workshop was a positive event.
• Budget
  o Stilson stated that this was mainly an FYI. The total expenses were $8,758.83.
• Review Workshop
  o Perhaps have no program the night before.
  o Could visit the observatory (north of Fremont) that evening – for people who wish to go.
  o Once a year workshop is enough.
  o Perhaps send a flyer in the fall to schools saying the workshop will be in the spring.
• Next Year’s workshop
  o Tuesday, May 3.
  o Perhaps have a video the night before for those interested.
  o No campfire/snacks will be planned.
  o Perhaps videotape some sessions or portions of the sessions for teachers to use in classroom.
• New focus and direction
  o River Days (Big Rapids) involvement?
    ▪ Maybe Kids Day event
      • Live fish in a tank or area of the river (problem with collecting them)
        o Fitzwilliams-Heck has a collecting license
      • Could have a macroinvertebrate activity
        ▪ Consensus was there is not enough time to plan an event for this year – maybe in 2011
    o To be discussed further at the next meeting (in September).
• Possible new members
  o Stephen Ross
  o Jean LaLonde
• Beth Storey
  • MAISD
    o Stilson will be meeting with MAISD in June to discuss their involvement in our workshop.
  • More thoughts about workshop
    o Rethink t-shirts (facilitators didn’t wear them and some have their own organization’s shirts)
    o Need definite deadline for cancelling and receiving registration fees – a week before
    o Perhaps have them send the fee for overnight stay with registration fee
    o Perhaps have different colored name tags for facilitators and staff
    o DeWolf will check in to obtaining presenter ribbons
    o Not as much funding was received from FACF so more funding is needed for the workshops
      ▪ Maybe charge $25 fee and not return it
      ▪ National Science Foundation grants
      ▪ Area businesses
      ▪ MSTA
      ▪ County foundations
        • Maybe ask each county for amount which equals the teachers who attended from their county this year times $200
        ▪ FACF monies could be used for match
        ▪ If all else fails, MRWA Board may allocate funding
    o SB-CEUs will cost next year ($25 fee plus $1 per teacher)
    o Perhaps survey teacher participants and see if they used the information in their classrooms that they gleaned from the workshop.
    o Next year we should try to get the Muskegon Lake boat trip as a session.

Other Sustainability Plan – Noble stated that this summer a professional (consultant), Conservation Impact, will be guiding the MRWA Board and staff through sustainability planning.
  • A retreat will be held for Board and staff
  • Conservation Impact will be interviewing constituents and creating a focus group
    o To see how they view the MRWA
    o Outside commentary on how we’re doing in our information and education (outreach)
    o 25 to 30 constituents will be interviewed
    o Focus group will have 6 to 12 people and meeting will be conducted via conference call
    o Conservation Impact has given guidelines to follow in choosing constituents and focus group
  • Mitten added that maybe Noble could let Conservation Impact know how important the focus and direction of our education strategy is to the Education Committee.

Next Meeting – The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 13 at 4:30 pm at FSU.

N. Burmeister motioned to adjourn the meeting with Fitzwilliams-Heck’s support. The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Stilson, Program Coordinator