

Colorado WaterWise Board Meeting

Thursday, January 14, 2021

Conference Call

10 a.m. to noon

P: Called-in via phone
X: Attended in-person

Board:

P	Alyssa Quinn	Platte Canyon W&S District	alquinn@plattecanyon.org
P	Amy Volckens	Brendle Group	avolckens@brendlegroup.com
P	Brad Brady	Yearout Energy Solutions	brad.brady@yearoutenergy.com
P	Courtney Black	Intera	CBlack@intera.com
P	Diana Denwood	Aurora Water	ddenwood@auroragov.org
P	Don Drew	Courageous Marketing	d.drews@courageousmarketing.com
P	Eric Olson	City of Fort Collins	eolson@fcgov.com
P	John Berggren	Western Resource Advocates	john.berggren@westernresources.org
P	Katie Helm	City of Fountain	khelm@fountaincolorado.org
P	Lance Ackerman	Colorado Springs Utilities	lackerman@csu.org
P	Laura Wing	City of Thornton	laura.wing@cityofthornton.net
P	Lindsay Rogers	WaterNow Alliance	ler@waternow.org
P	Lyndsey Lucia	Northern Water Conservancy	llucia@northernwater.org
P	Quint Redmond	Agriburbia	qredmond@agriburbia.com
P	Ruth Quade	City of Greeley	ruth.quade@greeleygov.com
P	Thomas Riggle	Centennial W&S District	triggle@highlandsranch.org
P	Tyler Kesler	Town of Erie	tkesler@erieco.gov
P	Melissa Brasfield	CWW Board Staff	admin@coloradowaterwise.org

Guests:

Zakri Siegel – Brendle Group

Call to Order

Diana called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM

Board Business and Action Items

- Approval of December Board Minutes. Ruth motions, Alyssa seconds. December minutes are approved.

Action Plan Update

Diana is still working to finalize the 2021 Action Plan. Diana will send out the final Action Plan to the board for a vote and approval. She should be sending it in the next few days and will give two weeks to review.

Membership & LLYLI

Alyssa discussed that the LLYLI committee met earlier this week and has started to create new drought materials for the toolkit. We are also working on the rollout of the new LLYLI video. Diana, Melissa and Alyssa will work on adding the LLYLI video to the CWW website. Alyssa will be uploading the video to Dropbox for full board access.

There was discussion on the membership messaging meeting earlier about morphing the LLYLI toolkit into a membership benefit for CWW. Alyssa felt that by merging the two, we would eliminate some confusion between CWW and LLYLI. Alyssa mentioned that this was brought up on the last LLYLI meeting to get consensus from the committee. Next steps will be to

meet with the membership committee to brainstorm and discuss details. Part of the reason that we were keeping LLYLI separate was to keep funding from partners into the toolkit and not coming from CWW budget and savings. Laura also added that not all members would be interested in the toolkit so there was a need to keep it separate. Diana supports the LLYLI committee moving forward with pursuing the idea and asked if everyone agrees with that approach. The majority of board members were okay with that approach. Melissa will send out a working document to gather any board of directors' thoughts and questions. Thomas added that as we look at the scope and as we look at other industries for membership, we could be more attractive to those new member groups. Amy asked how we would recover the loss in LLYLI revenue and if that has been discussed yet. Alyssa mentioned that it has not been discussed and is part of why we need to discuss this with the membership committee as well. Brad added that we can bring LLYLI more into CWW but we can also continue to track financials separately.

Annual Report

Katie asked that if you have any quotes or materials to include, please add them to the Dropbox folder. Katie will be sending out a link to a Dropbox folder. Board members should add all materials by Feb. 12. We aim to have the report done in March. Katie will send out a calendar event for the Feb 12 deadline to all committee chairs.

Legislation on PRS

In 2019, legislation was passed on regulating sprinkler heads to require pressure reducing heads. HB 19-1231 "New Appliance and Water Efficiency Standards" legislation became effect Jan 1, 2021. Aims to reduce energy and water waste. A sprinkler head must include integral pressure regulating stem. Penalties for knowingly selling non-compliant products could be up to \$2,000 per violation. Diana is bringing this up to share the information and wondering if there is anything that we want to do with this new information/regulation. Eric said we should at least have it on the homepage of the website. Eric is also working with the sponsor of the legislation to get answers to common questions. Eric also mentioned that if you have a rebate for these you may want to pull them since there is no other options for sprinkler heads. Amy asked if this is most helpful to irrigation professionals or the public. Ruth said she thinks it is worth educating the public. Ruth asked if Eric would do a Q&A in the Spring Newsletter. Eric agreed to contribute to an article development. Eric also acknowledged that we should have this information and information on HOA turf requirements on the website. Eric mentioned that we need to be mindful that some HOAs have put up legal battles on the turf requirements. Eric also mentioned that customers can still order sprinkler heads online that do not comply. Don added that educating the public would be a good thing.

Legislative Involvement

Thomas mentioned that this conversation was started following the Symposium Happy Hour and whether CWW should get more involved at the state legislature. We've been discussing an ordinance for certification requirements for landscapers. If we do promote this, we need to look at changing our non-profit status from 501(c)3 to 501(c)4 because there are limits as a 501(c)3 on the number of hours that you can spend lobbying each year. Amy asked if Colorado Water Congress is a 501(c)4. An organization can be a 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 but it would require a little more work on the accounting side of things. The main difference between the two is how the organization can spend their money, 501(c)3s are more focused on education and 501(c)4s can spend money on pretty much anything. The other thing to consider is that a 501(c)3 donation is a tax write off where a 501(c)4 donation is not a tax write off. We would also have to create a lobbying arm to the organization that focuses on this work. Amy is in support, but she recently had talked with Kevin, from CWCB, that there have been pieces of legislation that he wasn't even aware of before it got passed. She asked if anyone knew the process and how we would keep tabs on these things as they come out. Thomas would be willing to play the role of bringing attention to pieces of legislation that could be beneficial for CWW to promote. Thomas mentioned that it would take a few years in order for us to gain recognition. Another piece of this is the education of legislators on why pieces of legislation are beneficial which can help things get passed. Because we would be focusing on water topics we would not have as large of a lobbyist scope. Diana asked what we have done in the past. Laura said that we have generally stayed away from advocacy in the past. We did have legislative updates to the board which was helpful. We have signed onto letters of support but that's the extent that Laura is aware of. Alyssa said it's always been tough with all the different utilities and organizations and how representation is looked at in doing something like this – is the work coming from CWW as an organization or showing support from organizations. Thomas asked if we got involved in the original CO Water Plan development. Ruth said we likely did as individual utilities but not as CWW. Thomas said that most of the groups involved in water policy lean more conservative and this might be an opportunity to get more conservation measures approved. Amy asked that next steps could be to keep better tabs on the pieces of legislature that are applicable, and we can start to do some research on changing non-profit status. Thomas added

that it's probably a few years until we would need to transition status and wouldn't really be necessary until we want to promote our own legislation. **Thomas will start providing legislative updates to the board.** Ruth added that it might be helpful to recruit a lawyer to the board who could be a liaison between CWW and a lobbyist. Tyler asked if it might be helpful to identify other groups that are doing this that we could learn from early on before jumping in. Thomas agreed that we might look at coalitions as well as talk with the legislators. Diana noted that it would be helpful for those board members representing organization to have a discussion internally.

CO Native Landscape Coalition

In December, Laura met with a group called the Wild Ones as a part of the CO Native Landscape Coalition. The goal of the group is to promote native landscape plants in Colorado. They are creating resources currently. Laura was thinking that Thornton might partner with them and was thinking CWW might be interested in partnering with them as well. They are creating a recommendation document which should be ready in March for stakeholder review. This could be a facilitated meeting to provide feedback. This document could be included on the website to educate the public. **Laura will create a strawman proposal to help the board determine CWW involvement.** Jessica said they are also working on some resources for native landscaping and stormwater as well and would be happy to share resources. The coalition has talked with Resource Central about the Garden in a Box and did an analysis and found that 33% of their plants are native. They would like to encourage utilities to request 100% native garden in a box to encourage more native species. Fort Collins has already made the request for their programs and Thornton will be requesting that as well.

Committee Updates

Diana discussed committee size limits to better distribute committee member participation. We will decide changes for committees at the February board meeting.

- Website – limit of 3 members
- Membership – limit of 8 members
- Newsletter – limit of 7 editorial members but a limit of 10 to writer pool
- LLYLI – limit of 10 members
- Symposium – limit of 9 members
- Educational Events – limit of 7 members
- Tools – limit of 12 members

Katie mentioned that the membership committee is the one committee that has the lowest participation. Diana mentioned that the number of committee seats is much larger than the number of board members so we may need to reach outside of the board. Lindsey mentioned that some of these committee are more conducive to having non-board members on them that we may consider more external promotion. Melissa added that we could include more specific information on each committee that we are seeking outside participation on to drum up interest. Alyssa said it might be helpful to have more overlap between committees that work closely to be able to share information more easily. **Diana asked that everyone think about their committee commitment and which committees they would like to be a part of in 2021.**

BMP Updates

Alyssa discussed that the last BMP updates were done in 2010. This was done through a CWCB grant. It has been brought up recently if we need to update these BMP documents and how we go about doing this update. We might need another grant to help with this update through CWCB. Courtney was going to be taking the lead on the outdoor BMP updates for the Tool committee. Jessica asked where it is so she can look at it to compare to their handbook which covers more on green infrastructure and stormwater. Diana added that if we do not have information to update on that topic, we could look at adding the information in the BMP format. Lindsey mentioned we need to do a comprehensive literature review of what has been developed over the last 10 years by other organizations. Courtney also mentioned that we need to think about our end format, is it web-based to make it easier to update vs. hard cover based. Amy suggested going through each plan one by one and identifying contributors. John added that we want to plug into the Water Plan update happening this year as well. Diana added that this also ties into our updates to the Case Studies Library. Diana also added that the Management Team has identified the BMP and Case Studies as key projects to allocate additional resources to those updates. Amy asked about the availability of 2021 grant funding. John said that they probably would not know about CWCB grants until their board meeting in March. Alyssa asked if it would be helpful to reach out to Kevin Reidy on the update to gauge the interest in having CWCB grants or

if we are better off pursuing this on our own. Alyssa also asked if this is something that the Tools committee will run with or is it pulled out into a different committee. Courtney mentioned that it may depend on who is interested in helping. Laura asked if we would be doing a strawman for this as well. Diana said yes, it would be necessary. Katie wanted to acknowledge that this becomes a living document, and we want to continue to keep it current. Courtney will reach out to Kevin Reidy.

Round Robin

- Courtney – Municipal Drought Management Plan guidance document has been updated and is out from CWCB.
- Diana – working on a lot of new projects this year. For Diana they are copying Castle Rocks video competition. They will have a social media campaign on why they should get a free waterwise front yard makeover. Then a panel of judges will narrow to 5 videos. The public will vote on the winner to do a waterwise landscape. Hopefully this should be installed by the end of June. The goal is to get the message out about conservation and how beautiful a waterwise landscape can be. Ruth asked about any legal issues they have come across. Diana has not faced issues yet.
- Thornton is embarking on “Naturally Thornton” by doing some native conversions of approximately 15 acres across multiple locations most transitioning away from stormwater detentions. Eric mentioned doing a lot of outreach to the neighbors of the parks to educate them of the work and what’s expected.
- Eric discussed the Greeley Sprinkler Audit App and we will be doing a pilot program with similar code requirement municipalities. Fort Collins will be working this year with the app and looking for other municipalities that may be interested. Fort Collins is also incorporating water budgets for their customers.

Wrap Up and Adjourn

Diana adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Submitted by:
Melissa Brasfield