

MINUTES: Healthy Carolinians of Macon County – Environmental Quality Task Force

DATE: December 9, 2010

PLACE: Community Facilities Building

TIME: 9:00 – 10:30 AM

ATTENDEES: Rhonda Blanton, Mike Grubermann, Matt Mason, Kathy McGaha, Teresa Murray, Barry Patterson, Derek Roland, Jenny Sanders, Kathy Tinsley and Charles Womack

GUESTS: Mike Breedlove, Doug Johnson and Michelle Price

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
Welcome and Approval of Minutes	Barry Patterson welcomed everyone to today's meeting of the Environmental Quality Task Force. Mr. Patterson asked the task force members to review the minutes of the last meeting. Teresa Murray motioned for the approval of the minutes. Charles Womack 2 nd the motion, with a unanimous vote for approval.		
Introductions	Barry Patterson welcomed our guest speakers to today's meeting and asked them to introduce themselves. <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Mike Breedlove – Macon Soil and Water Conservation❖ Doug Johnson – Macon Soil and Water Conservation❖ Michelle Wilson Price – The Jackson-Macon Conservation Alliance❖ Jenny Sanders – Little Tennessee Watershed Association❖ (Barry Patterson and Rhonda Blanton will present information from the Jackson County Water Study Task Force) Mr. Patterson asked the task force members to introduce themselves and tell what organization they represent.		
Brief Recap of Survey and Discussion from last meeting	Barry Patterson presented a brief recap for the guest speakers of our recent survey and the discussion from the last meeting; covering information and topics discussed. Mr. Patterson said the results from the recent survey, showed water issues as the main topic that this task force will next work on. Surface water and ground water issues received the most votes.		

MINUTES: Environmental Quality Task Force

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
	<p>Mr. Patterson also talked about our recent trip to Coweeta Lab and the wealth of information that was gathered from that trip.</p>		
<p>Guest Speakers</p>	<p>Barry Patterson next asked the guest speakers to give a brief recap of their organization and list items their organizations have worked on or will be working on.</p> <p><u>Jenny Sanders – Little Tennessee Association</u> Ms. Sanders is the Executive Director for the Little Tennessee Association. Ms. Sanders said the main mission of the association is to protect and restore the health of the Little Tennessee River and its tributaries through monitoring, education, habitat restoration and citizen action.</p> <p>Ms. Sanders said the Stream Biomonitoring Program has been conducted for over 20 years. The program is headed by Dr. Bill McLarney, who has won several awards for this program.</p> <p>Ms. Sanders talked about some of the publications that the LTWA offer from their number of years of collected information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Cartoogechaye Creek Municipal Watershed Assessment</i> ➤ <i>Sediment in our Watershed</i> ➤ <i>The State of the Streams in the Upper Little Tennessee Watershed</i> <p>Ms. Sanders said the State of the Streams report was last done in 2003 and this report needs to be updated</p> <p>Ms. Sanders stated the current concern is on the upcoming DOT Hearing for the Needmore Road project. Ms. Sanders said this is a top priority for the LTWA. Ms. Sanders said another public meeting will be held</p>		

MINUTES: Environmental Quality Task Force

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
	<p>soon and asked everyone present today to go to their website and review the material available on this project.</p> <p><u>Mike Breedlove and Doug Johnson – Macon County Soil & Water Conservation District</u></p> <p>Mike Breedlove explained that the mission of the Macon Soil and Water is to assist in the development and implementation of conservation programs that promote and encourage the wise management and use of soil and water resources for the lands of Macon County.</p> <p>Mr. Breedlove stated that he was pleased that water quality is important to this task force, since it is very important for Soil & Water. Mr. Breedlove said one area they work on is fencing waterways to keep livestock from entering. Mr. Breedlove stated they also assist with getting wells for farm and livestock irrigation.</p> <p>Mr. Johnson, who is a Streambank Technician, said he has worked on stream restoration and cleaning up the waters in our county. Mr. Johnson explained that sometimes he is limited on what can be done, because sometimes they only have clearance for one side of the stream.</p> <p>Mr. Breedlove and Mr. Johnson explained that their job duties include overseeing conservation programs, providing technical assistance, educational programs and conservation literature.</p> <p><u>Michelle Wilson Price – The Jackson-Macon Conservation Alliance</u></p> <p>Michelle Wilson Price is the Executive Director for The Jackson-Macon Conservation Alliance (J-MCA). Ms. Price said that J-MCA was formed in 2000, to serve as an alliance of organizations dedicated to protecting and</p>		

MINUTES: Environmental Quality Task Force

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
	<p>preserving the natural environment and cultural character of the headwater regions of western North Carolina.</p> <p>Ms. Price explained that she has only been in her role for two months. Ms. Price stated that she grew up in the Glenville area and went onto UNC-Chapel Hill to earn her bachelor’s degree in public health. Ms. Price is a water quality specialist and has worked at the state, regional and local levels for more than 18 years in the environmental field.</p> <p>Ms. Price thanked Ms. Blanton for inviting her to today’s meeting and stated that if she could be of any help to this task force in the future, just contact her.</p> <p><u>Jackson County Water Study Task Force – Barry Patterson and Rhonda Blanton</u></p> <p>Rhonda Blanton said that Tom Massie with the Clean Water Management Trust Fund had hoped to attend today’s meeting, but was called to a meeting in Raleigh. He offered to attend one of our future meeting’s.</p> <p>Ms. Blanton passed out copies of the Jackson County Water Study to the task force members. Ms. Blanton explained that Jackson County had created a Water Study Task Force to study and discuss water shortage issues and address them. This task force held several meetings and invited local experts to cover a variety of topics. After listening to the local experts, a list of recommendations was created.</p> <p>Mr. Patterson stated that hopefully our task force could do something similar to this process, since our current topic is water. Mr. Patterson stated that having Coweeta Lab with all their collected data gives us a bonus that very few other counties would have.</p>		

MINUTES: Environmental Quality Task Force

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
	<p>Mr. Patterson also discussed two additional articles that he had recently read. These articles covered water studies and the information that had been gathered. Mr. Patterson explained that once water is taken out of the ground, it is not coming back tomorrow just from a recent rain storm or snow event.</p> <p>Mr. Patterson stressed that the general public does need to be further educated on water issues and receive this type of information. The task force members ask that Mr. Patterson forward the articles onto them.</p>	<p>Barry Patterson will email the articles he discussed onto the task force members.</p>	
<p>Other Items for Discussion</p>	<p>Other Items for Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highlands Biological Station – Rhonda Blanton stated that she had contacted Highlands Biological Station (HBS) and discussed the possibility of this task force touring their facility next year. Ms. Blanton will call back and talk further with the Executive Director about our visit. ○ Environmental Health Updates – Barry Patterson covered a few Environmental Health updates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rabies Clinics – Mr. Patterson said 1900 animals were vaccinated at the two recent rabies clinics days. Mr. Patterson is very pleased with the numbers, and warned that several surrounding counties have had rabies cases confirmed in their counties. ▪ Radio Talk Show – Mr. Patterson said he had recently done a 30-minute talk show on the local radio station. ▪ Newspaper Articles – Mr. Patterson said he is still pursuing the idea of having a section in the local newspaper covering health department news. Mr. Patterson said he is working on a section that would appear quarterly in the newspaper. 		<p>Rhonda Blanton contacted the Executive Director of HBS – Dr. James Costa. Dr. Costa was very excited about our visit and offered to conduct our tour. The trip is tentatively planned for April 2011.</p>

MINUTES: Environmental Quality Task Force

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
Next Meeting Date	The next meeting of the Environmental Quality Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday, February 9 th , from 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM in Meeting Rooms A/B at the Health and Human Services Building.		