

Steering Committee Meeting

January 22, 2008

Victorville Water District

Present: Jeanette Hayhurst, Matt Puffer, Mike Stevens, Joe Mathein, Mike Hernandez, Mike Stevens, Joe Guzzetta, Larry Attebery, Terri Blomker

Guests: Linda Ellsworth representing Desert Communities Water Awareness Expo

Ken Alstott, CEO San Bernardino County Fair Ground

Education Committee (Mike Hernandez)-Wants to participate in a Maverick Stadium Fireworks night. Cost would be about \$3350. For that cost we would receive a fireworks show, they (Mav's) would announce water conservation messages, the score board would flash conservation messages and we would be allowed to put up displays or booth. Education has also been looking at stadium cushions for giveaways during the event. Terri brought two samples. The cushion would display the AWAC logo along with a conservation message on one side and the other would have logos from the participating agencies. Mike H. stated that there would be Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) Facilitators training session on Wednesday, Feb. 13 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will be held at the Victorville Water District. It is free training and lunch will be provided. Jeannette asked if Mike could put together a complete breakdown of the financial request for Maverick's night and bring it back to the next Steering Committee meeting. Mike Stevens had some concern as to the cost of the one night event. It breaks down to about \$1 an impression-Jeannette raised the question if that was a good way to spend our money. Mike H. said that he would speak with the Education Committee on the 23rd (next meeting) to see if they could layout the total cost of the one night event.

Finance Committee (Joe Mathein)-The committee met with Kathy Cortner, CFO, from MWA and went over some of the paper work from the previous CFO of MWA. Joe stated that they explained to Kathy that (AWAC) wanted some type of billing ledger, income-something that was clear and understandable. He stated that Kathy also suggested one step further and to have everything broke down by committee. Other discussions with Kathy were if we should become a corporation, how the financing should be done, and who should hold the account. Joe and Linda look forward to working with Kathy.

Morongo Basin (Joe Guzzetta)-The committee is working on the Bureau of Reclamation Grant and they will be getting the proposal from the firm who will be drawing up the landscape design templates. This is the same firm that the State Conservation Council

in Sacramento is using, so we (AWAC/Morongo Basin) are integrating the project that they are working on which is similar to our grant to develop landscape templates.

Landscape (Joe Mathein/Larry Attebery)-Count on the calendars was 80 boxes left (8800) as of Wednesday, January 16. At the meeting they discussed whether the plant stands were a viable resource for AWAC and came up with the idea that they are-in certain applications-like where they are indoors and protected and where it may generate one of the community to go and buy one of the plants. The group also talked about adding leaflets to the bottom of the display, so that people go out and pick up the plants. It was also suggested that there be brochures or note cards on the stands that have information about the plant, to make selection easier for customers. Since the large plant stand is not applicable to each location, the group is also looking to put the plant list into three ring binders for desk or counter use, in addition to use at events-since the plant stands are bulky. The group is also looking at the development of CD's which are put out by GardenSoft. Software cost is \$7000 for 1,666 CD's. It would be our landscape designs, our plants, made for our area. Kathy Cochran and Linda Ellsworth are working on new brochures-something that customers can "grab and go".

Joe reported that EXPO (Desert Communities Water Awareness EXPO) has decided to not hold a Landscape Contest this year due to lack of participation from high desert residents. So Larry Attebery thought each agency would go out and start taking photos of home landscapes. The photos would then be brought back to the group to vote on, get a signed release from the customer and then use this photo (without the customer's address showing) in our brochures, calendars and any other promotional material we may have. At the end of the year-funds permitting-the group would give a prize to the best landscape.

A recommendation from the landscape committee was brought to the table to have Larry Attebery replace Joe Mathein as Landscape Chair. Joe has taken over as Finance Committee chair. Motion was made by Matt Puffer and seconded by Joe Guzzetta.

Public Relations (Mike Stevens)-Since the committee is pretty much Mike, he would like to speak with some of the cities who don't physically participate in AWAC to see if their Public Relations staff would step up and help.

The AWAC website is done. Terri has been working with Martin Rauch and his web designers on the site. Software for the maintenance for the site has been purchased and installed on Terri's computer. The designers are tweaking parts of the site which were not performing correctly and they have posted the January Plant of the Month flyer. Terri has begun to place events on the calendar.

Research (Matt Puffer)-Finally got the last of the responses for the baseline water survey (Golden State and Apple Valley Ranchos). Comments and responses were fairly minor. Kirby Brill (MWA) gave the go ahead to finalize the form and with AWAC going the next step and producing the letter and send out the forms with a "Kirby letter" to all the agencies to fill out. The committee needs to determine what the deadline for returning the letters-since most of the agencies are on a traditional fiscal year. Matt is hoping to have the draft letter available within the next couple of weeks. The baseline water survey goes back to 2000. Jeannette would like to see a deadline of April for agencies to return the letters so that by the next AWAC quarterly, the group as a whole could be notified and then go back to their individual agencies to remind the person responsible for preparing the survey to get it returned. This is a critical component of the Regional IRP- in order to track conservation. Survey's will be returned to Terri and forwarded to Matt.

Matt reported that Kirby decided that the new website for the Water Conservation Incentive Program will be linked within the new AWAC website as well as look like the AWAC website. It will have its own domain name.

Interim Executive Director (Terri Blomker)-Letters were sent December 10, 2007, to those AWAC members who have not been active for at least a year or more. It was felt that if they did not wish to participate in AWAC, that we would take their names off all correspondence and not promote them as member agencies. Seven letters were sent out, only two agencies did not respond. Apple Valley Ranchos Water District will have a new conservation person coming to AWAC, releasing Jill Seney from the committees; Mariana Rancho's County Water District will be sending Connie Borden; Shirley Barra will be representing Apple Valley Heights County Water District; and Cindi Ribera from Golden State Water Company in Morongo Basin.

Some water agencies are asking that the In-Kind reports be started up again, as this is a good way for them to track their employee hours that are donated to AWAC. Finance committee will be looking at this.

The Home and Garden show that was held the weekend of Jan. 18-20 at the San Bernardino County Fairgrounds gave out 9 boxes of AWAC calendars. The remainder was given to Garrison's Foothill Nursery from Upland, who is supporting AWAC and supplying customers from the high desert with low water use plants. The AWAC Plant of the Month article came out in the Daily Press on the 18 featuring Coyote Bush. John Garrison stated about 30 people came up to him and asked if he had the plant there. If AWAC is interested in having a booth at this show, the Home Show Consultants have booths for \$975.

The Project Matrix was brought to the table to see if it needed to be re-instated or left alone. Since the AWAC group is networking well, it was decided to continue to keep it on the back burner.

Also needing to be looked at again is the AWAC membership recruitment. There are several groups (like San Diego) that are similar to AWAC that have members other than water agencies and cities. Landscapers, plumbers and contractors are included in those groups. Joe stated that this is one thing that the Finance Committee will be looking into and how to generate revenue.

Also mentioned was the Landscaper's Certification Program.

Linda Ellsworth-EXPO-The Desert Communities Water Awareness Expo is looking to come under the umbrella of AWAC as one of the standing committees. EXPO has been around for about 17 years. The program began with exhibits at the Victor Valley Mall, and then moved to the fairgrounds as part of the Home & Garden Show, in April.

One concern of EXPO becoming a committee under AWAC is that those who currently serve on the EXPO committee will no longer be able to be a part since there are others from their agencies already serving within AWAC.

EXPO has maintained its own checking account throughout the years (they are not a 501c3). No taxes have ever been paid and donations have been solicited every year. The way EXPO has financed itself-it's annual budget is \$10-12,000), members have been billed about \$1500. Since there needs to be some tax responsibility, EXPO feels that they cannot afford to take on further costs related to taxes and therefore the best solution to the problem would be to join AWAC. It is understood that by them joining AWAC, the past tax situation would not go away, but it would allow EXPO to continue without incurring any more taxes. EXPO had voted to become an AWAC committee on July 1, 2008.

Linda also explained that the Home & Garden Show feels that the Water EXPO is such a large draw, that they would like EXPO to be a part of the fall show as well as the spring show. The EXPO committee liked the idea of being a part of both shows, but as they currently stand, it would be a strain on both finances and people if they were to put on a large exhibition both times. One thought is that they would continue with the water conservation exhibit in the spring and then have a smaller-possibly a booth-with educational workshops for the fall.

Jeanette asked that we put on the next steering committee meeting agenda to except EXPO as a standing committee of AWAC.

Ken Alstott-Chief Executive Officer (28th District Agricultural Association) San Bernardino County Fair Grounds. Typically fairs have gotten away from supporting agriculture, and since coming on board they (fair board) has been working with the San Bernardino County Farm Bureau, they are active in the legislation and the type of things that take place both for farmers and dairy men. The main thing that they are looking for right now is curriculum that they could take into the schools. They are looking to place low water use landscaping with proper signage in the paint ball area and in front of the livestock area that would be left in place. He is asking for support from AWAC to provide curriculum and expertise to the 4H, FFA and Grange kids. There is hope that at the new facility there will be a horticulture building. The invitation to participate in the fair either by having a booth, providing landscape brochures, giving workshops was given to AWAC.

Matt and Mike will be giving an update to the MWA board about the WCIP program.

Quarterly meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of April, July, and October. April will be held at Mariana Rancho's County Water District, July at Victor Valley College and October at Joshua Basin Water. January 2009 will be held at Helendale CSD. Times to be determined.

The next quarterly meeting will be held at the MWA board meeting, Feb. 6, 2008. It will be a lunch meeting, after the TAC.

The next steering committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 26 at 10 a.m. at Victorville Water District.