

askHRgreen.org | Water Awareness Committee Meeting Summary Thursday, April 22, 2021

To protect the public health and safety of the Committee members and staff, the askHRgreen.org Water Awareness Committee meeting was held electronically via WebEx. A recording of the meeting is available upon request.

Attendees:

Laura Tworek, VB
Cyndi Masterstaff, NN
Tamara Clore, SU
Rachael Gaul, NO

Erin Trimyer, CH
Katie Cullipher, HRPDC
Rebekah Eastep, HRPDC

1. Meeting Summary

The March meeting summary was accepted without changes.

Action: Summary approved.

2. askHRgreen.org Event Schedule

The current listing of outreach events is as follows:

5/15	Fix-it Fair	Chesapeake
6/16	HRSD Woodstock Park Project	Virginia Beach
9/16-19	Isle of Wight County Fair	Windsor
10/7-10	Peanut Festival	Suffolk

Earth Day Market on April 18th at Pembroke Mall was well attended.

HRPDC staff will coordinate with Newport News Waterworks on restocking the askHRgreen.org trailer. Newport News also needs additional landscape guides, rack cards, and brochures for local outreach.

Cigarette litter prevention project launching next week. Program includes large scale cigarette butt models and a cigarette receptacle grant program for businesses to add ash receptacles to their establishments. 100 receptacles are available for the program.

Action: Committee members should reserve the trailer for any upcoming events.

3. Media Campaigns & Promotions

The following media and promotional campaigns are planned for this fiscal year:

- Imagine a Day Without Water paid media campaign (October) – existing + new creative - COMPLETED
- Fixing Leaks paid media campaign (March) – existing creative - COMPLETED
 - The Committee reviewed the campaign summary report. Campaign

included participation in Arlo's Shed promotion by donating a rain barrel and gift bag to the prize package.

- April Showers Rain Barrel promotion - HRPDC staff have been promoting the rain barrel giveaway on social media during the month of April. The promotion has had over 300 signups for the enewsletter through the promotion. The City of Newport News sharing the promotion on social media provided a big increase in entries. To date, two rain barrels have been given away. Two more winners will be selected by the end of April.
- Value of Water paid media campaign (May 3-9)
 - The Committee discussed the new creative which was provided for review via email. The collage format was selected over the slideshow format.
 - Discussed Drinking Water Week promotion
 - askHRgreen could do a stainless steel straw giveaway on Facebook since the straw is easy to mail to winners
 - Virginia Beach is doing a grab and go lunch for staff
 - Other ideas discussed included: poster templates from fall campaign are available to use in recognizing staff, employee recognition raffle, social media recognition of staff or projects
- Virginia Drinking Water & Wastewater Professionals Day (June 30)
 - The Committee can promote the new creative used during Drinking Water Week.
 - Opportunity to develop an op-ed recognizing the region's water workers.
 - May incorporate "Work for Water" recruitment messaging
- Work for Water campaign - HRPDC staff have discussed project with RCS and shared script from Newport News Waterworks recruitment video. Committee members should help identify different job categories and priorities for highlighting difficult to recruit/retain positions.
- askHRgreen social media branding campaign – ongoing
 - Infrastructure Week (May 10-14) can be supported through use of video assets in social media branding campaign

Action: Committee members should help identify different job categories and priorities for Work for Water campaign.

4. Printing & Promotional Items

The following items are available for pickup: water bottle stickers, seed bookmarks, and skoy cloths. Inventory for stainless steel straws is low. There is about \$13,000 available in the promotional item budget to support any outreach events or special promotions the Committee would like to pursue.

The Committee requested quotes for stainless steel straws with a carrying pouch and bamboo toothbrushes.

Action: HRPDC staff will get quotes for stainless steel straws and bamboo toothbrushes.

5. Roundtable

- Norfolk - This will be Rachael Gaul's last meeting with the Committee as she has accepted a new position, Norfolk Public Utilities is currently advertising her position.
- Virginia Beach - staff is back in the office full-time in new office space
- Newport News - staff is still working remotely, ordering decals for AMI water meters (must withstand the sun and being submerged in water), AMI meter installations underway in the Oyster Point/Christopher Newport area, Smart Energy Water (SEW) portal upgrade, maps projects for planned/unplanned outages and AMI replacement schedule
- Updates to COVID Utility Relief program - HRSD is not promoting the availability of funds but others are still accepting applications. Committee members should update program details as needed.

Action: None.

6. Staff Reports

Budget

- The FY21 budget was provided for review.
- The FY22 draft budget was provided for review and approved by the Committee.

Digital Marketing Report - HRPDC staff reviewed the March Digital Marketing report.

Help 2 Others - HRPDC staff will be meeting with the Directors of Utilities to discuss next steps from the H2O All Hands meeting. Opportunities to be addressed include increasing the program cap of \$250 to \$400-\$500 (working with HRSD on reviewing average balances to determine reasonable amount), new donation process for mail in donations (possibly discontinuing envelopes and replacing with plain insert due to cost - approximately \$11,000 to provide each round of envelope inserts), and increasing frequency of allocations from quarterly to every other month to help assist localities that exhaust their funds quickly.

Action: HRPDC staff will discuss Help 2 Others changes with Directors of Utilities.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 27, 2021.