

SWMD Structure Sub-Committee Summary

January 17, 2013 | 10:00am – 11:30am | WebEx/Conference Call

This document is provided as a summary of the committee's proceedings and it not intended to serve as official minutes or statements from any participant. This document serves to capture the highlights of the meeting and provide a level of understanding and consistency throughout the sub-committee process. Any questions may be directed to Christopher Germain at Ohio EPA.

This summary was approved by committee members at the January 24th meeting.

In Attendance: Christopher Germain (Ohio EPA), Andrew Booker (Ohio EPA), Larry Long (CCAO), Brad Cole (CCAO), Jack Betscher (Putnam), Paul Braasch (OSWDO), Dan Graeter (Montgomery), Dana Storts (Greene), George Brake (Van Wert), Rob Reiter (SEO).

Andrew Booker began the meeting with a brief overview of the committee process over the next six weeks. The committee's purpose is to influence the development of a proposal from Ohio EPA regarding consolidation and shared services. One of the key tasks for members is to serve as liaisons between the group and other SWMDs to ensure we are hearing everyone's opinion.

Andrew Booker also provided a quick review of the January 10th meeting.

Committee members requested a list of issues that may be covered over the next list six weeks as we consider consolidation. After some discussion, the committee came up with the following list: funding, governance, local community reaction/interest (possible 'political jealousy'), involvement & leadership of Commissioners, transition of assets (real property, tangible personal property, disposition of current funds), legacy costs, and due diligence. Committee members are encouraged to think of others over the coming days.

Next, the conversation turned to Ohio EPA facilitated consolidation – an idea raised during the January 10th meeting. Several key points were raised:

1. **Any system that is developed should allow for a window where identified Districts can engage in their own consolidation efforts;**
 - a. A key reason for this is the need to develop relationships with neighbors;
 - b. General agreement that approximately one year is sufficient;
 - i. About 9 months was allowed for initial formation in 1988-89 (with a possible 6-month extension – ORC 3734.52(B) and (D));
 - ii. Concerns were raised that one year isn't necessarily enough to develop the relationships necessary for a smooth, successful and voluntary consolidation effort;
 - c. There must be a deadline or trigger that allows for forced action if none is taken;
2. **There should be some sort of basic standard to identify which Districts will be targeted. It is believed this will make the efforts more credible to the legislature;**
 - a. Ohio EPA is unsure how comfortable we are with creating a quantifiable standard (which potentially impacts credibility), but there is agreement that things such as a population threshold could serve as initial filters;

- b. Any list of identified Districts would have to be based partially on professional opinion due to the complex and varying nature of the program;
3. **We should consider reforming the waiver process to recognize the situations where a standard criteria (if developed) doesn't make sense;**
 - a. General agreement on the concept, but work remains to be done as to what it would look like. Ohio EPA feels not enough is being done in some Districts to move forward – simply meeting the goals isn't enough anymore (some suggested it was unfair to require more than the goals – we should raise the goals in that case);
 - i. Some considerations *may* include stable funding sources, demonstration of future movement/improvement, history of past success beyond goals, etc...
4. **The process could be tiered in such a way that would require certain milestones to be reached for identified Districts on the path to consolidation (certain number of meetings? Study? Etc...). Missing a tier could result in forced consolidation?**
 - a. Several agreed the idea has merit and should be explored further.

The group also engaged in a brief discussion of the regional planning concept raised during the January 10th meeting:

1. This approach can achieve a greater level of shared services;
2. We should consider including a regional ADR and perhaps shift the focus of goals to a regional level;
3. We should explore ways to incentivize/reward regional cooperation.

Finally, the conversation turned to shared purchasing. Ohio EPA is willing to look at establishing State Contracts for common materials, but help is needed to identify what items or services would be best. It's important to remember that this would simply establish contracts that any District could use – having all 52 on board isn't required. CCAO discussed their current initiatives with joint purchasing – they are still in the initial stages, but could provide a similar service in the future. It is also a general belief that Districts may now be able to receive GSA pricing for certain products (this needs to be confirmed).

Based on the conversations, there are four items that need to be achieved by the next meeting on January 24th at 10:00am:

1. Paul Braasch (OSWDO) will lead the charge to compile a list of existing cooperative initiatives currently underway among SWMDs as well as any barriers (not just legal, but others as well) to future efforts;
2. Committee members (no specific lead assigned from the call) will work to compile a list of items or services that may benefit from State purchasing power (this could also apply to CCAO cooperative purchasing initiatives we discussed at the end of the call);
3. Ohio EPA will work to provide a list of inefficiencies or other issues that have led to a desire for consolidation;

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4. Ohio EPA will draft a series of initial proposals for reaction and discussion.

Next meeting is at 10:00 on January 24, 2013 at the CCAO Offices (209 E State St, Columbus, OH 43212).