

*Handout*

*Agenda Item* 3A.1

*Date* October 13, 2016

**NBWA Communication Planning Committee  
October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Meeting Summary**

By Phone: Brad Sherwood, Judy Kelly, Megan Clark, Pam Miegs, Madolyn Agrimonte, Robert Wilson, Sophie Hallam-Eames

Brad started the meeting off with an overview of what he envisions a Communication Plan for NBWA will look like. -- by setting goals for NBWA communication outcomes, determining strategies on how to attain those goals, and setting actions with budget and staffing to complete those actions.

Pam asked if NBWA have a strategic plan, and noted her organization was just going through that very helpful process. Judy and Brad responded that there is not currently an NBWA strategic plan but the Communication Plan, when finished, could serve as a foundational piece for strategic planning and will accomplish some of that work.

Brad suggested the first step is to define our goals [based on NBWA mission] and our target audiences. For example, if our priority is to communicate with just with our members, we would not prioritize a media plan, we would just work on internal communications.

Madolyn asked what task had been assigned by the NBWA Board. Brad responded that the board had hoped to identify communication goals, tools, and target audiences. Madolyn added that a fundamental goal of NBWA is to *share and communicate environmental strategies*.

As a little background – we began rethinking the website update several months back and it became clear that we lacked a basic idea about how we could best direct our overall communication activities. After some discussion about the possible need to start with communication policies first. Madolyn, suggested, and others concurred, we should move ahead with a basic communication plan and see if down the road policy development is needed.

All agreed that among the goals of the NBWA should be to highlight member work; tout the work of and outcomes of project grants we give out; and have a strong focus on community and youth outreach. Megan thinks there is a general lack of awareness about NBWA and suggested gathering kids through blogs and facebook. Might be worth the effort. The group noted that NBWA is already involved with STRAW but we could serve broader groups. Brad suggested that a plan goal for that could be to “Support education outreach related to NBWA’s mission and goals.”

Brad suggested that after a small set of goals are lined up, we define the tools we have, or need to develop, to achieve the goals. Example: to better communicate

with members and the interested community should we consider an e-newsletter that could expand and polish up the current Director's Report Judy does for each meeting? What aspects of social media should we pursue, acknowledging that younger people rely very heavily on that format? Should we be doing more workshops, and public programming? Tours of facilities and projects? How can we best position the NBWA biennial conference to help us achieve our Communication Plan goals? Should we be pursuing more earned media through press releases? If so, that is a big effort and who would actually do the work?

Brad reminded the group that the plan would set out the goals, and match those up with the best tools and define a budget. He stated he would like to see the NBWA develop an annual Communication Plan and present to Board each year to approve and fund. Pam asked how much money we will need and Brad responded that at this time the expectation is that much of the implementation of a Communication Plan would be done primarily by NBWA staff and through support from outreach specialists at the member agencies. The real costs would be if the Association wants to build new tools, like an e-newsletter or hard copy version. That would be \$5-10K annually.

Brad stated that we should be looking to start small, maybe we do an online newsletter as a new endeavor and that we are not talking about hiring consultants at this point. He encouraged the group to be visionary but noted we will only implement what we have the budget for.

Action Items:

- 1) Brad will take a stab at developing a Draft Communication Plan with 4-5 goals, associated strategies, and actions, with the intent of having a final proposal to the Board in Nov.
- 2) Goals for the Draft plan will be based on Brad experience and NBWA mission and the comments made on today's call regarding NBWA priorities. NOTE: Brad distributed the plan on 10/6, and asks for comments regarding the goals and actions outlined by no later than **Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>**.
- 3) Brad will talk to Russian River WS Assoc. folks and find out what their budget is youth outreach as members agreed that kids are the main legacy.

Brad's outline for the Plan:

## **North Bay Watershed Association Communications Plan**

### **Goal 1: Adopt formal communications strategies to support NBWA mission and goals**

#### **Strategy:**

- 1) Develop and implement a communications plan

#### **Actions/schedule:**

- 1) Develop a communications committee per Board direction
  - a. Hold first meeting in October
  - b. Hold a total of four meetings a year
- 2) Draft a communications plan for Board approval
  - a. Draft a plan with committee in October in 2016
  - b. Present plan for approval by Board in November 2016
- 3) Develop a budget to support the plan
  - a. Present budget for Board approval in 2017
- 4) Develop staffing, responsibilities to implement the plan
  - a. Develop responsibilities in November 2016
- 5) Review and update the plan once a year
  - a. Committee to review plan and update in November of each year

### **Goal 2: Increase outreach and communications to youth**

#### **Strategies:**

- 1) Develop a school education program
- 2) Provide tours of NBWA member systems and facilities
- 3) Provide in-school or external educational workshops or curriculum

#### **Actions/schedule:**

- 1) Develop a list of public schools within the NBWA boundary
  - a. Finalize list by January 2017
- 2) Create a contest/scholarship annual program (Video contest, poster contest)
  - a. Roll out program in July 2017
- 3) Develop a tour itinerary schedule/ feasibility map
  - a. Create tour plan by July 2017
- 4) Investigate funding needed for busing costs for schools to attend NBWA tours, events
  - a. Itemize busing costs per tour plan by July 2017
- 5) Investigate grant funding opportunities to support in-school or external workshops
  - a. Ongoing, concurrent with NBWA budget/grant process

**Goal 3: Increase awareness about NBWA to its members and water industry**

Strategies:

- 1) Update and maintain a robust website
- 2) Develop a quarterly electronic newsletter
- 3) Support bi-annual conference

Actions/schedule:

- 1) Host, maintain and update website
  - a. Update website in October 2016
  - b. Review content quarterly with committee
- 2) Create a mail chimp or constant contact account
  - a. Secure account in December 2016
  - b. Develop design template in December 2016
  - c. Develop content, featured stories quarterly
- 3) Identify recipients
  - a. Secure email database of recipients by January 2017
- 4) Distribute first electronic newsletter
  - a. January 2017
- 5) Develop communications plan for bi-annual conference
  - a. Work with conference committee schedule to ensure proper communications strategies are implemented

**Goal 4: Develop positive earned media opportunities for NBWA projects and its members**

Strategies:

- 1) Build strong relationships with North Bay journalists covering water resources, government

Actions/schedule:

- 1) Build a North Bay media list
  - a. November 2016
- 2) Develop a media page on website
  - a. November 2016
- 3) Issue press releases on grant announcements, projects
  - a. Ongoing as announcements are made