

## **Public Engagement Subgroup**

**June 30, 2020**

**8:00-9:30 a.m.**

**Zoom Meeting**

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Members: Missy Nergard, Mike Rupiper, Tricia Gorby, Kyle Minks, Mark Riedel, Martye Griffin, Brenda Gonzalez, James Tye, Carolyn Clow, and Renee Lauber

Lead or Spokesperson: Carolyn Clow

Recorder: Sarah Dance

Charge: Formulate a recommended implementation strategy for how the Yahara CLEAN Compact will communicate with, engage, and empower diverse watershed communities to support our decision-making and plan development.

Objectives:

- 1) Recommend content and outreach-coordination strategies related to Compact messaging and information sharing.
  - 2) Recommend what specific questions should be asked of the public to inform plan development.
  - 3) Recommend desired outcomes, methods, level of intensity, and timing for soliciting public feedback, particularly from specific communities or demographics.
  - 4) Recommend how and by whom this work gets completed.
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Attendance:

Paul Dearlove (acting chair in Carolyn Clow's absence), James Tye, Alison Lebwohl, Mark Riedel, Tricia Gorby, Renee Lauber, Missy Nergard, Kyle Minks, Sharon Lezberg (guest), Mike Rupiper, Sarah Dance

Subgroup Resources/Models

A shared Google Drive folder for the subgroup was created to serve as a repository for resources. The folder will be updated with documents shared and discussed as part of this meeting. Those resources include the results from a 2018 Madison Areas Municipal Stormwater Partnership (MAMSWaP) survey, and the public-engagement frameworks created as part of Capital Area Regional Planning Commission's work on A Greater Madison Vision and its Regional Development Plan. For the latter, CARPC staff completed the work with support from the International Association of Public Participation. This effort recognized that different groups need different kinds of engagement, as well as the importance of focused messaging coming from a trusted source.

## Responses to the “What” and the “Why” Homework

### *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion*

- Lt. Governor Barnes, in remarks made to the Water@UW-Madison Symposium, provides a good response to the “why” when he expressed the importance of involving marginalized communities in decision-making around the protection of natural resources (<https://youtu.be/V-0XeHpCvzE?t=824>). Note: This sentiment is also captured in the Compact’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion statement.
- We need to be racially and culturally sensitive in designing any outreach tools, and recognize that everyone’s relationship with the lakes is different. There are successful models out there that we can use to guide our work.
- How we give voice to the historically voiceless is a stated priority. Who speaks for renters? Who makes sure all kids can access the beach and safely swim in the water? There should be organizations representing historically under-represented communities that we can partner with to help us answer such questions.
- 48% of the shoreline on the Yahara lakes is in public trust. However, not everyone has the same ability to access and enjoy the lakes. We need to better understand these barriers.

### *Education*

- Our public engagement should work at leveling people’s knowledge and awareness of the issues. We need to let the community have a voice in the planning process, but there are challenges in doing that in an effective and meaningful way. The longer-term goal of engaging with the public is to affect a cultural shift in how we interact with the lakes.
- From a big picture perspective, we want everyone to know what is needed for cleaner lakes.
- Shared messaging on the goals and progress of the Compact should be one component of any outreach plan. We need to have a common elevator pitch, and a coordinated way to communicate to the public.
- A public-participation plan can be drafted covering two distinct objectives: 1) plan development, and 2) longer-term education and public engagement.

### *Outreach Targeting*

- Need to make sure all potential lake users feel heard, and that includes renters.
- We should plan to isolate and uniquely interact with different communities and demographics to better understand their specific needs and perspectives.
- Recommend we intentionally reach out to specific stakeholders rather than conduct random surveys. We will want to build on recent, successful efforts and not reinvent the wheel to rediscover things we already know.
- Recommend we work at identifying specific groups to engage, and find ways to effectively connect with those groups. This will be important to getting buy-in down the road.
- Realistic expectations need to be established on who we can strategically engage and to what level within our limited project timeline.

### *Purpose for Soliciting Public Input*

- Question for the subgroup to answer: What is the purpose of the outreach and public feedback we are seeking? Is it to have people react to an emerging plan and proposed solutions, is it to shape goals or priorities, or is it something different?
- As far as getting feedback, there are existing resources from which we can glean information, like the MAMSWaP and CARPC surveys. We should not need to gather all the information ourselves. Getting public feedback on our draft recommendations will be a critical piece.
- We have good science on the importance of reducing phosphorus loads and lake water quality, so public engagement for CLEAN 3.0 should focus on water quality from the lake user perspective (i.e., Is the beach open? Do I have access to a beach? Can I eat the fish?).
- We need to first be clear about purpose. Are we informing? Getting feedback on something being proposed? Learning about individual attitudes and behaviors? Once that's decided, it may be best to strategize around each objective separately.
- A public engagement purpose statement could be helpful. Our Compact's approved logic model states that the purpose is to get public feedback on the action plan. Expanding beyond this purpose, such as asking the public to help shape goals and priorities, takes us in a different direction. (Post-meeting debriefing note from Alison Lebwohl: Compact members have already decided on goals and our priority areas of focus.)
- Should public input be sought before or after a draft plan is created? The answer may be somewhere in the middle. Asking the public to react to draft recommendations allows us to still be open and responsive to changes. In the interim, Compact members can serve as spokespeople for different constituencies, or take the lead in reaching out to those constituencies. The question then becomes how we connect with groups not represented on the Steering Team.
- The Compact's focus is on improving water quality. To the public, what is good water quality? What impedes access and use of the water? Knowing how the public understands and views water quality could prove useful.

### Proposals

No specific recommendations or proposals were produced for the July 10<sup>th</sup> Compact meetings.

### Ideas for Next Steps

- The subgroup's responsibility is to advise on what we need when it comes to public engagement and for what specific purpose. (This in contrast to the actual development and administration of surveys, public meetings, etc. which is intended to be completed through contract assistance.) A good next step is to establish criteria that define our public-engagement goals and expectations.
- Recommend coming up with our common elevator pitch on what we are doing and why. Also should start identifying the specific communities or stakeholders we want to target, the specific type of input we're looking to obtain for those groups, and how that might best be accomplished.

- Let's decide on what public-engagement objective to focus on first. Then, identify specific strategies relevant to that objective. We need to pick a lane among all the ideas and needs that were proposed today.
- Recommend drafting a focused purpose statement that addresses why we are engaging with specific communities. Then, outline a basic plan and define what is realistic for our timeline.

#### Action items

- Dance and Dearlove will finalize and send out the meeting summary notes.
- Dearlove will connect with Carolyn Clow to bring her up to speed on the discussion and offer assistance in getting an agenda planned for the next meeting. A scheduling poll will likely be used to set a date sometime after next Friday's Steering Team meeting.

#### Supplementary Notes or Attachments

New Public Engagement Subfolder:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/10\\_5QJc1mYK\\_2omP0ymon3\\_XS2dUuu4Fy](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/10_5QJc1mYK_2omP0ymon3_XS2dUuu4Fy)