



Working together, restoring the river

ASSEMBLY OF ROUGE COMMUNITIES

Meeting Summary

General Assembly Meeting

Thursday, March 18, 2004 at 9:30 a.m.

U of M Dearborn, Fairlane Center

Allen Park
 Auburn Hills
 Beverly Hills
 Bingham Farms
 Birmingham
 Bloomfield Hills
 Bloomfield Township
 Canton Township
 Commerce Township
 Dearborn
 Dearborn Heights
 Farmington
 Farmington Hills
 Franklin
 Garden City
 Inkster
 Lathrup Village
 Livonia
 Melvindale
 Northville
 Northville Township
 Novi
 Oakland County
 Plymouth
 Plymouth Township
 Pontiac
 Redford Township
 Rochester Hills
 Romulus
 Southfield
 Superior Township
 Troy
 Van Buren Township
 Walled Lake
 Washtenaw County
 Wayne
 Wayne County
 West Bloomfield Twp.
 Westland
 Wixom
 Ypsilanti Township

1. WELCOME

Mr. Tom Biasell of Farmington Hills, Assembly of Rouge Communities Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Dearborn for hosting the meeting. Tracy Slintak of Farmington Hills thanked University of Michigan – Dearborn and Ed Bagale for making the arrangements for the meeting. There was a bake sale for Howard Knorr’s children’s group at the meeting.

1A. Roll Call/Introduction and Status of Membership

Mr. Biasell took roll call at the meeting. He asked all attendees to identify themselves and the organization they represented.

The following communities were in attendance at the meeting:

Auburn Hills	Beverly Hills	Bingham Farms	Birmingham
Bloomfield Twp.	Canton Twp.	Commerce Twp.	Dearborn
Dearborn Heights	Farmington	Farmington Hills	Garden City
Inkster	Lathrup Village	Livonia	Melvindale
Northville Twp.	Novi	Oakland County	Plymouth
Plymouth Twp.	Pontiac	Redford Twp.	Rochester Hills
Romulus	Southfield	Superior Twp.	Troy
Van Buren Twp.	Walled Lake	Washtenaw County	Wayne
Wayne County	West Bloomfield Twp.	Westland	Wixom
Ypsilanti Twp.			

The following communities were absent from the meeting.

Allen Park	Bloomfield Hills	Franklin	Northville
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Only Lyon Township has not indicated whether or not they will participate in the Assembly of Rouge Communities.

1B. Review and Approval of December 10, 2003, Assembly Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the December 10, 2003 Assembly of Rouge Communities meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. There were no changes or corrections indicated for the minutes.

Mr. Jim Anulewicz, Plymouth Township, made a motion to approve the December 10 meeting minutes.

Mr. Mark Kibby, Melvindale, supported the motion.

The minutes were approved unanimously.

1C. Additions or Changes to Draft Meeting Agenda

Mr. Wayne Bonus of Southfield requested the Assembly of Rouge Communities discuss a proposed resolution of support for the installation of a pedestrian bridge at the M-10 bridge over the Rouge River. It was added to the agenda as item 5B.

Mr. Biasell indicated he would like to move item 3D to Item 4.5

Mr. Kurt Heise, Wayne County, made a motion to approve the agenda.

Mr. Ramzi El-Gharib, Wayne, supported the motion.

The motion to approve the amended agenda was unanimously approved.

1D. Chair Update of Assembly Activities

1D1. Response to Assembly Resolution to Governor Granholm re: State SSO Policy

Mr. Biasell reported that a letter was sent to State Representative William J. O’Neil from Director Chester, MDEQ in response to the SSO resolution that was mailed to Governor Granholm following the December 10 meeting. Mr. Biasell was copied on the letter.

Later in the meeting Mr. Larry Arreguin from Governor Granholm’s office provided a response letter to Mr. Biasell and the Rouge Assembly on behalf of the Governor.

1D2. SWPPI Deadline Modification and Coordinated Assembly Response

The Assembly of Rouge Communities worked with MDEQ to extend the due dates for SWPPI extensions from December 2003 to January 2004. MDEQ then extended the deadline to May 2, 2004. The Rouge Assembly negotiated with MDEQ that the Rouge Assembly could respond to MDEQ for communities who will not be changing their SWPPIs. Communities should indicate to their SWAG facilitator by April 19 if they will be modifying their SWPPIs. A letter will be sent to MDEQ on communities’ behalf and copies provided to the storm water manager. Any questions should be directed to the SWAG facilitators.

1D3. Other Information Items

A Change of Representative form is included in the meeting packet. Please use the form to change the representative or alternate for a community.

The Chair of the Assembly of Rouge Communities has been given a seat on the Water Quality Consortium. Mr. Biasell was unable to attend the most recent meeting so Chuck Hersey of SEMCOG gave a summary of the meeting. An interim report has been prepared by the rates team. A study of an Oakland County Drain Commissioner’s Report on charges and rates is also underway.

2. TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Gary Mekjian, Treasurer of the Rouge Assembly, reviewed 2003 income and expenses. 99.5% of community dues for 2003 have been paid to date. Only Ypsilanti Township, who recently joined the Assembly, has yet to pay. Mr. Mekjian reviewed the 2003 Assembly of Rouge Communities budget status. The summary is available in the meeting packet.

3. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

3A. Organization Committee

3A1. Draft Watershed Alliance Legislation

The Organization Committee is co-chaired by Kurt Heise, WCDOE, and Dave Payne, Bloomfield Township. Mr. Heise gave the Organization Committee report. The Organization Committee has met twice since December, in January and March. The Organization Committee has drafted the Watershed Alliance Act. The Act will enable the Assembly of Rouge Communities to accept grants and implement activities. It will apply to entities with a storm water permit. It allows for local control and it is not an authority. The Organization Committee indicated that there is a short time frame to get the act enacted because this is an election year. The Organization Committee requested the support of the Assembly of Rouge Communities.

Mr. Payne indicated the Act allows the Assembly to receive grants. The Act mirrors the basis of the original organization so it is not changing what communities have already agreed to.

Ms. Bononi of Washtenaw County indicated Washtenaw County supported the Act and protecting water quality in a business like manner. This Act will enable the Assembly of Rouge Communities to proceed.

Mr. Colaianne of Oakland County indicated Oakland County supports the concept of the Act. He indicated that insurance would be required for protection. Items disallowed in an audit would have to be made up. Indemnification is also an issue.

Ms. Hagaman of Bingham Farms indicated the Act was great in theory but had concerns about something getting tacked on during the legislative process and whether communities would be required to participate if it was substantially changed. Heise and Bails indicated they will be tracking the Act and that communities voting to support the legislation at this meeting are not binding themselves to the future.

Ms. Michelle Bononi, Washtenaw County, moved to support the Watershed Alliance Act.

Mr. Wayne Domine, Bloomfield Township, supported the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

3A2. New Committee Members

The Organization Committee has been trying to get additional members involved. According to the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement the Full Assembly must approve the

members of the Organization Committee. Mr. Michael Wicek of Garden City, Mr. Bob Beckley of Livonia, and Mr. Steve Mann of Plymouth Township have all agreed to serve on the Organization Committee. The members of the Assembly of Rouge Communities voted unanimously for these new members to join the Organization Committee.

3B. Technical Committee

The Vice Chair of the Technical Committee, Gary Zorza of Farmington Hills, gave the Technical Committee report.

3B1. Status of Round 6 Rouge Grants

The Technical Committee reviewed the Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project (Rouge Project) Round VI Notice of Grant Availability (NOG). The Technical Committee recommended some changes, which were incorporated. The NOG was approved by the Executive Committee and distributed by Wayne County. The NOG makes \$5.5 million available for CSO/SSO control projects at 40% Federal/60% local and \$2.0 million for storm water general permit activities at 50% Federal/50% local. Proposals are due by April 30 to Wayne County Watershed Management Division. There is no dollar cap on proposals. Rankings are due from the SWAGs by May 21. This will likely be the last round of grant funds. No extensions to the proposed end dates for projects will be permitted due to deadlines on the grants from U.S. EPA.

3B2. Other Information

Monitoring is scheduled for the Upper and Main 1-2 Subwatersheds in 2004. The Technical Committee Group will evaluate guidance from MDEQ on monitoring. The Technical Committee is reviewing the products of the monitoring program to make them more user friendly.

The next meeting of the Technical Committee is scheduled for March 29 at 9:30am in Livonia.

3C. Public Involvements and Education

The Chair of the Public Involvement and Education (PIE) Committee, Mr. James Anulewicz, gave the PIE Committee Report. The most recent PIE Committee meeting was March 16, 2004

3C1. Status of Proposed Survey

The PIE Committee recommends participation in SEMCOG's regional Public Survey. Participation in the regional survey will allow the survey to be completed in an economical fashion. The survey is listed in the SWPPIs for communities in five of the seven subwatersheds. A memorandum prepared by Jack Bails comparing the advantages and disadvantages of participating in the survey is included in the packet.

3C2. Press Package and New Logo

Draft press packets and the new logo for the Assembly of Rouge Communities were distributed to all members. Mr. Anulewicz commended Ms. Jill Pines of Farmington Hills

for her work on the press package. Any comments on the packets should be directed to Mr. Anulewicz or Ms. Zachare Ball.

3C3. Other Information Items and/or Budget Modifications

The budget modifications proposed by the PIE Committee include:

Item	Budget Modification (\$)
Press Package	+ 1,500
Newsletter	+ 5,000
Survey	- 10,000
Staff Support	+15,000
PIE Total	+11,000

Mr. Ed Bagale, Vice-Chancellor of University of Michigan - Dearborn, joined the meeting and welcomed the Assembly of Rouge Communities to their new facility. Mr. Biasell thanked Mr. Bagale on behalf of the Assembly of Rouge Communities for hosting the meeting.

3D. Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is chaired by Mr. Kurt Giberson of Dearborn. Mr. Giberson reported only one response was received to a letter sent pleading for assistance with the Membership Committee. This Committee is tasked with determining how to involve others in the Assembly of Rouge Communities, including schools and Detroit. Mr. Biasell requested communities get involved with the membership committee. Kelly Cave of Wayne County reported she had been contacted by the Wayne County Metro Airport Authority and they are interested in joining the Assembly of Rouge Communities.

4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Executive Committee report was given by Assembly Chair and Executive Committee Chair Mr. Tom Biasell of Farmington Hills.

4A. Special Assignments

Mr. Shawn Keenan of Auburn Hills has accepted the special assignments of coordinating Assembly of Rouge Communities involvement in a proposed elected/appointed official's seminar and/or a reception as part of the Watershed 2004 Conference.

The purpose of the Elected Officials Work Shop is to inform community leaders and planning commission members about innovative storm water designs. The goal is to have at least two participants from each community. A meal for the attendees would be included. The event will likely be scheduled for a Wednesday. The cost estimate for 160 people is approximately \$10,000.

Mr. Keenan reported Watershed 2004 is scheduled for July 11-14 in Dearborn at the Hyatt. A proposed reception to showcase the Rouge River restoration is being planned, for possibly Monday, the biggest day of the conference. Mr. Keenan has been in contact with sponsors of

the event, MWEA and WEF, and they are protective of their event. He has also already contacted the Hyatt and they indicated a separate event could not be scheduled that could possibly compete with the conference. The estimated cost for the event is \$5,000.

4B. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee report was given by Mr. Gary Mekjian, Assembly Treasurer and Committee Chair of West Bloomfield Township.

4B1. Status of Membership and 2003 Contributions by Members

The 2003 assessments have been paid by all communities, with the exception of Ypsilanti Township who only recently joined the Assembly of Rouge Communities. The status of Lyon Township is unknown and Salem Township has declined membership in the committee.

4B2. Status of 2004 Budget and Invoices

The amount of the 2004 invoices will be the same as the 2003 invoices. 2004 invoices will be due 60 days after a community's fiscal year begins or approval of their budget. No payments have been received to date for the 2004 assessments. The invoices will be mailed immediately. Timely payment of invoices is requested.

4B3. Other Information Items/Questions

Beverly Hills asked why the Counties are not assessed. Mr. Bails reported the Memorandum of Agreement specified the counties would not be assessed for the first 18 months of operation based on the value of their contributed services.

4C. Recommendations for Action by Executive Committee

4C1. New Members for Organization Committee

The new members of the Organization committee were approved unanimously earlier in the meeting. They include Mr. Michael Wicek of Garden City, Mr. Bob Beckley of Livonia, and Mr. Steve Mann of Plymouth Township.

4C2. Discussion of Draft Watershed Alliance Legislation

A motion of support for the Watershed Alliance Legislation was made earlier in the meeting.

4C3. Proposed 2004 Budget Changes

The proposed budget items were discussed. The budget items would be on a not-to-exceed basis.

New Committee	
1. Staff Support for Membership Committee	\$ 5,200
<i>New Committee Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 5,200</i>
Special Projects	
2. Watershed 2004 Reception	\$ 5,000
3. Seminar for Elected Officials	\$ 10,000

<i>Special Projects Subtotal</i>	\$ 15,000
Changes to Public Information/Education Committee Budget	
4. Press Information Packages Printing/Distribution	\$ 1,500
5. Assembly News Letters (2) Printing/Distribution	\$ 5,000
6. Rouge Survey (Cost Savings through SEMCOG)	\$ (10,000)
7. PIE Staff Support for new activities	\$ 15,000
<i>PIE Subtotal</i>	\$ 11,500
Total Proposed Changes in Contingency Budget	\$ 31,700
Previous 2004 Assembly Budget Contingency	\$ 166,276
Remaining 2004 Assembly Budget Contingency	\$ 134,576

Mr. Michael Howell, Wixom, made a motion to approve the items as a group
 Mr. Kevin Buford, Westland, supported the motion.
 The motion to approve the items as a group was unanimously approved.

The budget changes would allow the Assembly of Rouge Communities to maintain a reserve. The current agreement expires at the end of the year, so the reserve could be used for operations in the beginning of next year. The reserve could also be used for Wiley-Seelbach updates in 2005.

Mr. Wayne Domine, Bloomfield Township, made a motion to approve to budget modifications.
 Ms. Kathryn Hagaman, Bingham Farms, supported the motion.
 The motion passed unanimously.

5. OTHER ISSUES/ITEMS OF NEW BUSINESS FROM MEMBERS

5A. Using the Rouge Web Site for Assembly Information

Ms. Amy Ploof gave a brief demonstration of the Assembly of Rouge Communities web pages. The web pages are part of the Rouge Project website at www.rougeriver.com but contain distinct information. The pages contain the memorandum of agreement, meeting information, lists of representatives and alternates, and other information. The pages can be accessed at www.rougeriver.com/assembly.

5B. Southfield Resolution Request

Mr. Wayne Bonus of Southfield distributed a handout entitled "Resolution of Support for Installation of a Pedestrian Underpass at the M-10 Bridge over the Rouge River as a Critical Link in the Rouge Green Corridor". Southfield is requesting a resolution by the Assembly of Rouge Communities in support of incorporating a pedestrian bridge into the M-10/11 Mile Road Bridge Improvements project. This is the first request of this type to be presented to the Assembly of Rouge Communities. Several members raised concerns regarding the procedures for bringing resolutions to the Assembly for approval. The decision at the meeting was for the Southfield Resolution request to be referred to the Technical Committee

for review and discussion. The Technical Committee would make a recommendation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee would then recommend it for adoption at the next meeting of the Full Assembly. The Organization Committee will establish procedures for future requests for support from the Assembly of Rouge Communities.

6. OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

Bingham Farms indicated they have available the first program in a series of shows on the Rouge River completed that would support public education. The Public Involvement and Education Committee may want to review the program for distribution.

Wayne County distributed copies of the Rouge River Remedial Action Update on CD to all members.

Birmingham reported the EPA program “After the Storm” shown recently on the Weather Channel showed a limited amount of watershed awareness and focused more on water conservation.

Wixom reported that at a recent West Nile Virus workshop given in Oakland County the message was unclear regarding best management practices and not in line watershed protection efforts.

Cranbrook reported they have a new Rouge River Watershed display that was completed with support of a Rouge Project subgrant.

Greg Weeks suggested a sound system would be helpful for the next meeting.

Mr. Anulewicz requested communities submit lists of available public information materials to the PIE committee.

7. MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2004

7A. Full Rouge Assembly

The next meeting of the Full Assembly of Rouge Communities will follow the Executive Committee meeting and will likely be in July/August.

7B. Executive Committee

The next meeting of the Executive Committee will likely be sometime in June.