

Memo

To: Improving Austin Streams participants
From: Suzanne Schwartz, facilitator
Re: Meeting/Operating Guidelines for the IAS Update process for August 17, 2021 discussion
Date: August 5, 2021

During development of the Improving Austin Streams Implementation Plan, the stakeholder group adopted meeting guidelines to govern how it operated. A copy is attached as Appendix A. A copy of meeting guidelines adopted for the Gilleland Creek I-Plan group is provided at Appendix B for comparison. This memo will present various topics and possible options for you to consider in adopting meeting guidelines for the update process. Meeting guidelines will be discussed at the August 17, 2021 meeting.

Goal: Do you want to continue to use the goal adopted for the original I-Plan development:
“To develop and implement strategies to reduce fecal contamination such that the affected watersheds fully meet contact recreation water quality standards.”

Composition of the Stakeholder Group/ Decision making group: The following illustrate two possible options for organizing the IAS Update participation process. Other options are, of course, possible.

- The IAS organized around a Coordination Committee, composed of 13 individuals representing 11 interests (City of Austin had two members, as did the community/neighborhood interest). This group of 13 people made all final decisions for the IAS process. Each of the 13 individuals could appoint an alternate, who could participate fully in the process in lieu of the primary member. While this Coordination Committee made all final decisions, other people participated in the process through work groups or by providing information to the Coordination Committee.
- The Gilleland Creek effort created a stakeholder group composed of (1) individuals or representatives or organizations who are (a) in the watershed, or (b) who may be affected or may affect water quality in the watershed, or (c) who can help develop or implement actions to reduce water quality problems in the watershed. All persons meeting such criteria were invited to participate. However, decisions were made by a Decision-making Group composed of individuals and representatives of all entities who would be responsible for implementing management measures and control actions. The Decision-making Group could be revised as entities or individuals agreed to join in the implementation process.

Quorums: Will the presence of a simple majority of the full Coordination Committee membership (or full general membership if no Coordination Committee is formed) be sufficient to constitute a quorum for conducting business?

Reaching Decisions: You may choose any method to make decisions. Both the IAS and Gilleland Group agreed to attempt to make decisions by consensus (and generally succeeded). The attached documents describe the consensus process. If consensus was not deemed possible, both groups allowed suspension of the consensus process by a vote of 75 percent of the full decision-making group. Once consensus was suspended, a vote of 75 percent of the members present at the meeting could approve an action.

Conducting the meetings: The following are some elements you may wish to consider in your meeting guidelines.

- Public attendance at and notice of meetings.

- Meetings of the general stakeholder group (i.e. coordination committee/stakeholder group/decision-making group) should be open to the public to conform with TCEQ guidelines.
 - The Coordination Committee and any work groups, if formed, may choose to keep their meetings closed, or may open them to the public, as decided by the general stakeholder group. A caveat: if one of the work groups has closed meetings, then all the work groups should do the same; however, the Coordination Committee may choose to meet publicly or privately, even if work group meetings are closed to the public.
 - TCEQ posts notices of public meetings (only) on the IAS webpage at least 10 days prior to the meeting if possible. Do you want any additional notices? How will groups whose meetings will be closed receive/share meeting notices?
- It is assumed the group will set its own meeting schedule.
 - Recording of meetings: Will electronic recording be allowed?
 - Notes of meetings: The facilitator generally will prepare meeting summaries reflecting decisions and key points of discussion. Does the group want to review and approve these summaries before they are posted on the IAS webpage? Does the group want to post meeting summaries only for those meetings they decide will be public, or do they also want to post summaries for meetings of closed committees and/or work groups, if formed?
 - Discussion guidelines: Do you want to adopt discussion guidelines? Examples are provided in the appendices.
 - The role of the facilitator is described within the example guidelines in the two appendices if you wish to include that in your guidelines.

Appendix A: Improving Austin Streams Meeting Guidelines

Appendix B: Gilleland Creek Meeting Guidelines

MEETING GUIDELINES
Coordination Committee
Improving Austin Streams
Adopted Feb. 11, 2013

I. Goal

The goal of the Coordination Committee is to develop and implement strategies to reduce fecal contamination such that the affected watersheds fully meet contact recreation water quality standards. (Agreed by consensus; Coordination Committee, July 22, 2013)

II. Composition of Coordination Committee

The Coordination Committee is initially composed of the persons listed in Appendix 1, and serve as representatives of interests identified at two public meetings in November 2012 and January 2013. The Coordination Committee may change the composition of its membership by adding additional people or by agreeing to eliminate people or interests on the Committee.

Each Coordination Committee member may designate an alternate, who may participate fully in the meeting, including counting toward a quorum and making decisions, if the member cannot attend. The names of alternates shall be submitted to the Coordination Committee. The Coordination Committee member shall be responsible for keeping his or her alternate informed of relevant issues. Members should attempt to name an alternate who can serve for the duration of the implementation plan development.

Individual participants acknowledge that they have been named to participate as the representative of all others in their stakeholder class, and not just themselves. To this end, the participants pledge to communicate with other members of their stakeholder group to ensure that the deliberations reflect the viewpoints of the stakeholder class as a whole.

III. Quorum

A simple majority of the full membership of the Coordination Committee shall be a quorum to conduct business and make decisions. If a quorum is not in attendance, the Coordination Committee members may decide to proceed with items on the agenda as informational briefings, but no decisions can be made.

IV. Reaching Decisions

A. Use of Consensus.

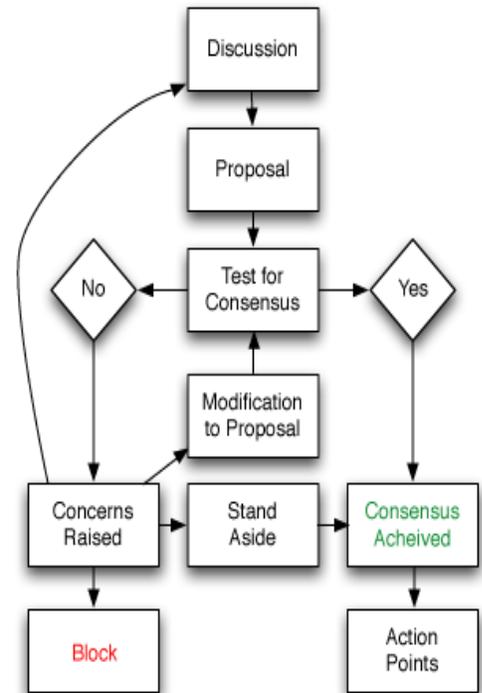
The Coordination Committee shall attempt to make decisions based on consensus.

1. Consensus is a decision built by identifying and exploring all members' interests and by assembling a package of agreements which satisfies those interests to the greatest extent possible. A consensus is reached when all members participating in a meeting at which there is a quorum agree that their major interest have been taken into consideration and addressed in a satisfactory manner so they can live with and support the decision of the group.

2. Consensus is a process that involves developing alternatives and assessing the impacts of those alternatives, with full opportunity for each member to voice his or her perspective. The process of achieving consensus is called consensus decision-making and has the components shown:

- discussion of an item,
- formation of a proposal,
- call for consensus,
- identification and addressing of concerns, and
- modification of the proposal.

This process allows participants to discover unmet needs that have produced an objection to a proposed agreement and to find a way to meet that need in a revised agreement, rather than to suppress the objection.



3. Achieving consensus does not mean unanimity on all issues. Some members may strongly endorse a particular solution or decisions while others may accept it as a workable agreement. A member can participate in the consensus without embracing each element of the agreement, or necessarily having his/her interests satisfied to the fullest extent. Members recognize that, given the combination of gains and trade-offs in the decision package and given the current circumstances and alternative options, the resulting agreement is the best the voting members can make at this time.
4. The following principles will be used to foster consensus:
 - Everyone actively participates;
 - Members have a common base of information;
 - Members create an atmosphere where everyone can share views;
 - Members respect disagreement as illuminating problems, improving decisions;
 - Disagreement is used to discover unmet needs, and to find a way to meet them;
 - Members are specific about a concern and why it matters, and are open to options to address it.

Decisions in the Absence of Consensus If it appears that consensus cannot be reached, the Coordination Committee may suspend the attempt to reach consensus on the proposal under consideration, by a vote of 75% of the full membership of the Coordination Committee. If the vote to end the consensus process is approved, a member of the Coordination Committee may propose a vote of the Committee on a particular matter, and parliamentary procedure will be used to make decisions. For a motion to be approved, it must receive an affirmative vote of 75% of the full Coordination Committee membership present. A proposal supported by at least 75% of the full Committee present, but not achieving consensus, will be considered a recommendation of the Coordination Committee, but will be clearly noted as being non-consensus and will reflect the vote totals. Dissenting members will be offered the option of submitting a minority report to be included with the recommendations.

V. Conducting the Meetings

A. Participation in Meetings

1. Meetings will be open to the public. Notice of the meetings and agendas will be posted on the Committee's webpage.
2. Those in attendance who are not Coordination Committee members or alternates substituting for Coordination Committee members will be allowed to speak during a time devoted to public comment, with a limit of three minutes per speaker, or as otherwise invited to speak by the Coordination Committee.
3. Absent participants are responsible for updating themselves about the proceedings of missed meetings. The Coordination Committee is not obligated to backtrack to accommodate absent participants.

B. Meeting Schedule. The Coordination Committee will set its own meeting schedule.

C. Record of Proceedings. The Coordination Committee meetings will not be electronically recorded unless the group agrees to do so. The facilitator will prepare draft summaries of the meetings for the convenience of the Coordination Committee members, who may make suggested changes. The meeting notes will be posted on the website of the project to provide information to the public.

D. Discussion Guidelines

1. Listen to understand
2. Work on the problem, not the person
3. Stay on topic
4. Share relevant information
5. Test assumptions

E. Facilitator

1. The facilitator will prepare a proposed agenda and process to move through the meeting, with input from the Coordination Committee. The Coordination Committee will agree to the agenda at the start of each meeting.
2. The facilitator will help the group move through the meeting agenda, keep the meeting on track, seek to move participants past deadlock or impasse, and generally provide process support for the meeting.

VI. Amendment of Meeting Protocols

These protocols may be amended by consensus at a Coordination Committee meeting.

**IMPROVING AUSTIN STREAMS
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE
Updated 7/22/2013**

#	Interest	Representatives	Organization
1	Parks	Monnie Anderson	Shoal Creek Conservancy & Pease Park Conservancy:
1	Environmental	Lauren Ross	Austin Sierra Club
2	Community & neighborhood	Susana Almanza	PODER
		Joyce Basciano	Austin Neighborhood Council
2	City of Austin	Chris Herrington	Watershed Protection
		Dana White	Water Utilities
1	Austin citizen board	Mary Ann Neely	Austin Environmental Board
1	Travis County	Tom Weber	Transportation & Natural Resources
1	Off-leash group	Bill Fraser	Off-leash Advocate
1	State	Jim Crisp	Texas Department of Transportation
1	University	Chip Rogers	University of Texas at Austin
1	Developers	Rick Coneway	Home Builders Association & Real Estate Council
1	Business	Mark Ramseur	Austin Chamber of Commerce

APPROVED May 15, 2017
MEETING GUIDELINES
Gilleland Creek Implementation Plan Revision
Stakeholder Group

I. Goal

The goal of the Gilleland Creek Implementation Plan Stakeholder Group is *to* assure the I-Plan:

- Allows Gilleland Creek to meet contact recreation standards; and
- Manages the entire Gilleland Creek watershed through cooperation among jurisdictions and citizens, and by tailoring solutions to each entity's unique needs.

II. Composition of Stakeholder Group

The Stakeholder Group is composed of the individuals or representatives of organizations who are (1) in the Gilleland Creek watershed (watershed), (2) who may be affected by or may affect water quality in the watershed, or (3) who can help develop or implement actions to reduce water quality problems in the watershed. All interested persons who meet these criteria are invited to participate in the Stakeholder Group. The Stakeholder Group seeks to include a variety of stakeholders to reflect the diversity of interests within the Gilleland Creek watershed and also to incorporate the viewpoints of those who may be affected by Gilleland Creek water quality.

III. Reaching Decisions

A. *Decision-making Group.* Decisions will be made by those individuals and representatives of entities who will be responsible for implementing management measures and control actions (Decision-making Group). A list of these entities is included as Appendix A, and may be revised as entities or individuals agree to join in the implementation process for management measures and control actions.

B. *Quorum.* A majority of the Decision-making Group must be present at the meeting to constitute a quorum. While discussions and informal decisions of the Stakeholder Group may be made in the absence of a quorum, decisions may be formally made only when a quorum of the Decision-making Group is present. In the case of an entity, one person will formally represent the entity for the purposes of determining a quorum and for making a decision. The Decision-making Group may make decisions by participating in a virtual meeting, or by email agreement or vote in the event it is impractical to gather the group together to make a time-sensitive decision or to make minor changes in previously made decisions.

C. *Decisions by consensus.* This group will attempt to make decisions based on consensus.

3. Consensus is a decision built by identifying and exploring all members' interests and by assembling a package of agreements that satisfies those interests to the greatest extent possible. A consensus is reached when all members participating in a meeting at which there is a quorum agree that their major interests have been taken into consideration and

addressed in a satisfactory manner so they can live with and support the decision of the group.

2. Achieving consensus does not mean unanimity on all issues. Some members may strongly endorse a particular solution or decisions while others may accept it as a workable agreement. A member can participate in the consensus without embracing each element of the agreement, or necessarily having his/her interests satisfied to the fullest extent. Members recognize that, given the combination of gains and trade-offs in the decision package and given the current circumstances and alternative options, the resulting agreement is the best the voting members can make at this time.
3. The following principles will be used to foster consensus:
 - Everyone actively participates;
 - Members have a common base of information;
 - Members create an atmosphere where everyone can share views;
 - Members respect disagreement as illuminating problems and improving decisions;
 - Members use disagreements to discover unmet needs, and to find a way to meet them;
 - Members are specific about a concern and why it matters, and are open to options to address it.

D. *Decisions in the Absence of Consensus.* If it appears that consensus cannot be reached, the Decision-making Group may suspend the attempt to reach consensus on the proposal under consideration, by a vote of 75% of its full membership. If the vote to end the consensus process is approved, a member of the Decision-making Group may propose a vote on a particular matter. For a motion to be approved, it must receive an affirmative vote of 75% of the Decision-making Group present. Dissenting members will be offered the option of submitting a minority report to be included with the recommendations. Any decision involving a management measure or control action must include the concurrence of any entity involved in its implementation.

IV. Conducting the Meetings

- F. Meetings will be open to the public. Notice of the meetings and agendas will be posted on the TCEQ website of the Stakeholder Group.
- G. The Stakeholder Group will set its own meeting schedule.
- H. *Recording of meetings.* The Stakeholder Group meetings will not be electronically recorded unless the group agrees to do so. The facilitator will prepare draft summaries of the meetings reflecting decisions and key points of discussion to assist the group in moving forward. The meeting notes will be posted on the TCEQ website of the Stakeholder Group to provide information to the public.
- I. *Discussion Guidelines*
 6. Listen to understand

7. Work on the problem, not the person
8. Stay on topic
9. Share relevant information
10. Test assumptions

E. Facilitator

1. The facilitator will prepare a proposed agenda and process to move through the meeting, with input from a planning team designated by the Stakeholder Group. The Stakeholder Group will agree to the agenda at the start of each meeting.
2. The facilitator will help the group move through the meeting agenda, keep the meeting on track, seek to move participants past deadlock or impasse, and generally provide process support for the meeting.

V. Amendment of Meeting Protocols

These meeting guidelines may be amended by the Decision-making Group at a meeting.

APPENDIX A: Decision-making entities/individuals:

- City of Austin
- City of Manor
- City of Pflugerville
- City of Round Rock
- Lower Colorado River Authority
- Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Travis County
- Windermere Utility Company