

ITRC March 18, 2021 Board Call

11:30am-1:00pm

Attendance: Naji Akladiss, David Asiello, **Douglas Bacon**, **Randy Chapman**, Nathan Barlet, Michelle Brown, **Rebecca Higgins**, Thomas Holdsworth, **Keisha Long**, Richard Mach, Lisa Matthews, **Melinda McClanahan**, Deborah Morefield, Jeremy Musson, **Sara Pearson**, Robert Pope, Hugh Rieck, **Richard Spiese**, David Tsao

ITRC Staff: Evan Madden, Patricia Reyes, Carolyn Sistare

1. Approval of February Minutes

Richard Spiese ran through corrections to the February minutes, noting that corrections have been employed to distinguish between Richard Spiese and Richard Mach's names in the notes. **Doug** asked for clarification on the discussion on the environmental justice project and asked if there was a document ready for circulation that he should send to the POCs; Patty responded that at this point there is no external draft ready for review.

Doug motioned, **Keisha** seconded, and the board voted to approve the February minutes.

2. Updates to Team Products & External Review Enhancements

Randy provided an update on team products, noting that there is currently an issue with ITRC documents that concern emerging issues and unsettled science.

Randy went on to note that there are existing concerns regarding the 1,4-Dioxane document – specifically within *Section 5* and *Appendix C*; within these sections, there are concerns over potential bias and large industry input. Randy and Patty reached out to the state of California for additional input, and issues were brought up which involved a potentially conflicting EPA document, which was published at around the same time as ITRC's 1,4-Dioxane document. Upon recognizing that Appendix C of the 1,4-Dioxane document was problematic, the page was removed from the website to undergo further revision. A call is scheduled for Friday, March 19th with team trainers, to ensure that there are no further concerns with the course's companion presentation moving forward.

Moving forward, further concerns have been voiced over the use of external draft documents included in ITRC guidance materials, as well as the balance of state input and industry input in development and review of future guidance materials. Randy suggested that a solution for this issue moving forward could be for ITRC to develop an additional outside review team to provide further revision in the guidance development process. Naji mentioned what he did on a prior team by asking experts that were not team members to review outlines and sections early to ensure they were going in the right direction. Most teams are moving forward as planned, with Pump & Treat Optimization and QUEST being mapped out to begin in the summer. QUEST Team Leader interviews are currently in progress, and we are in the process of searching for Pump and Treat team leads.

Richard Spiese commented that if it was only a reference to a draft document that was the problem with 1,4-D, that would be one thing, but if there are further issues at hand with the published guidance, further revision would certainly be needed moving forward. He stressed that moving ahead, ITRC should review the most substantial comments relating to a given document and remove corresponding sections of the document.

Patty noted that three big issues have risen out of the 1,4-Dioxane report and training that need to be addressed:

1. Need for a sufficient amount of external review comments in the guidance development process;
2. How and when does ITRC make updates to guidance materials, and what is the process for employing updates to existing ITRC guidance documents that have just been released; and,
3. How to best address industry input vs. state input in guidance material development.

Patty also brought up the need for a discussion about employing further edits to a peer review process as well as the other big issues at the April meeting.

Rebecca added that because 1,4-D is an emerging issue, there will likely be further revisions and comments that are brought up which need to be addressed, as more and more gets discovered about these specific issues. Furthermore, ITRC needs to stress the importance of state members' roles in guidance development and review.

Naji mentioned that back when DNAPL was new, only a few people knew about it as an emerging contaminant, but when the document was written, he invited experts from federal agencies for input on the document and had members of the team present it to them. He suggested inviting relevant field experts to review future documents presented by current and future ITRC teams, and asked if the board would entertain the idea of bringing in a group of outside experts for such a review. Patty responded that this sounded like a good idea to employ and noted that the Board should discuss this moving ahead; Sara Pearson also agreed.

Richard Spiese asked for federal input in the conversation. **Deb Morefield** responded that a lot of the ideas brought up seemed good, but noted that the federal government is limited in terms of expert personnel able to review these documents. It would be good to look into timeframes of materials slated to be finished, and whether these documents are overlapping in their production schedules. **Nate Barlet** agreed, saying that having multiple documents getting to the same point of review at the same time can be burdensome to limited personnel.

Doug mentioned that in coordinating with Team Leaders, the SEP urges state team members to explicitly reach out to state employees for additional engagement throughout the document review process. Patty suggested that moving ahead in upcoming board meetings ITRC could include updates on which documents are coming up that need reviews. **Randy** remarked that if ITRC is going to seek additional involvement from subject matter experts relevant to upcoming guidance materials, it needs to make stronger efforts at reaching out to state parties for additional participation and review. Doug agreed, remarking that it is difficult to reach out for review.

David Tsao commented that ITRC should utilize academia in a more prominent role within the review process, and they should be the impartial 3rd party ITRC turns to - not another

state or industry party - in particularly to adjudicate differences of opinion of those two groups. **Doug** said that there may be an opportunity to come up with a topic specific call with the SEP to determine how state and industry members can better function together. **Patty** remarked that this may be a good thing for team leaders to take on moving forward, forging cooperation within respective teams.

3. FY2021 Proposed Budget Discussion

Patty provided an update on ITRC's budget, and the transition to reflect a federal fiscal year (FY). The proposed FY2021 budget splits the revenue and expenses for the calendar year (CY) and reflects a minor reduction in Sponsorship, Registration, and Other Revenue but there are no changes to the expenses. The FY budget, which includes actual revenue and expenses from October to December 2020, is \$2,210,442 in revenue and \$1,907,839 in expenses. As ITRC is proposing a Fall Meeting in-person in October, which is in Fiscal Year 2022, so some sponsorship and registration funds are not indicated in this budget. **Battelle** has been cancelled, and those funds have been returned, causing a reduction in Other Revenue; and those expenses have been shifted from 2021 to FY 2022. **Keisha** asked if the budget needs to be approved again by ERIS, and **Patty** said that it will be presented to ERIS at the end of the month but does not know if it needs to be approved again. **David Tsao** asked about whether the IAP dues need to change as well, and **Patty** responded that they do not. **David** asked if he should seek input from the IAP in regard to potentially shifting its dues to function on a Fiscal Year basis. **Patty** said that it would be a good concern to be brought up during the spring meeting.

Richard Spiese asked for a motion to approve the budget change, with a switch to FY '21. **Keisha** motioned, **Naji** seconded, and the board voted to approve the budget shift.

4. EJ Update

Patty asked for clarifications on two points:

1. Does ITRC *need* an EJ document; and
2. What is the intent of the paper?

Keisha responded that she believes that ITRC should keep the document, noting that this document draft is ahead of where a lot of organizations are today. **Naji** commented that he believes EJ is a political issue and should be handled by government agencies, and ITRC is a technical organization. **Keisha** noted that other policies exist elsewhere, and **Patty** further affirmed that the intent of the document is only to serve as a *reference* document and not policy.

Rebecca asked about the possibility of having an facilitator or EJ expert involved in April's discussion about the white paper to best facilitate a move forward. **Deb** asked for **Patty** to send out the intent of the document for agreement of the board, and pending consensus, the paper can then be moved forward. **Patty** agreed to send out a survey to obtain Board input on the matter.

5. Spring Meeting

Patty asked for additional feedback on any items not discussed today that should be discussed at the upcoming spring meeting. She also brought up the prospect of an in-person Summer Board Meeting for Discussion; should the meeting be virtual or in-person, and, if in-person, should the meeting be in Rhode Island, or Richmond, VA? **Doug** asked whether there would be an option for a hybrid meeting as well – Patty confirmed that there will be that option. **Richard** asked for a vote by Survey Monkey to get input on the summer meeting and EJ.

6. Richard Spiese's Closing Remarks

Richard Spiese remarked that it has been a pleasure to work with ITRC. There have been challenges, but he believes that everyone has risen to the occasion of moving things forward. He remarked that as things go forward, taking slower steps will ensure that ITRC will function more efficiently. He urged members on the call to think about how the Board can slow things down a bit. He thanked the Board and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Rebecca motioned, **Doug** seconded, and the Board voted to Adjourn.