

Precautionary Principle Meeting
March 31, 2008
Public Health Conference Room #2

Present: John Morley, Paul Cayler, Linda Helland, Phyllis Webb, Britt Bailey, Alice Ring Diefenbach, Stacey Cryer, Carmel Angelo, Theresa McNerlin, Sara O'Donnell, Jacque Williams

Introductions were made

Background on Precautionary Principle (PP)

- Britt Bailey described how she started the non-profit, Mendocino Partnership for the Precautionary Principle, and how it has been transformed over the past 4 years into the County-lead program via the adopting of the PP in June 2006. The non-profit still exists and has a few hundred on-line supporters from all walks of county life as well as a website that Britt maintains with information about the PP in general and updates on the county's progress and meetings. Britt would like to see the County take on the implementation aspects of the Precautionary Principle though is willing to continue to be the public liaison for continued information.
- Currently the 2 pilots are in Environmental Health and the Water Agency. EH has almost completed its pilot but the Water Agency has been unable to get to theirs. Linda Helland suggested that we ask General Services if they would be willing to be the 2nd department with a pilot.

Discussion with Carmel Angelo, HHS Director

- Original vision was based on SF County ordinance, which was passed and placed into the Environmental Code and based in Department of the Environment. They developed a procedure and piloted it as the county way of doing business thus creating a culture shift.
- Sara O'Donnell (SO) brought it through MCPHAB to the county. Debbie Rafael came up from SF DOE and presented it to the BOS and the working committee of the BOS.
- Other counties and departments around the country have adopted the PP re: toxic reduction in government practices.
- Carmel Angelo (CA) is interested in where we go from here? To move forward we need other departments to participate and community partners. There is also a concern about workload on county staff.
- Paul Cayler (PC) mentioned that we already do all this in C EQA. Here we have a new set of forms, which would be required of all managers. Is this just another system of forms?
- John Morley (JM) reported the EH was about 80% complete with the pilot – it definitely changed what EH normally did around mosquito abatement.
- CA wanted to know what was the outcome of this pilot? Can we compare what we would have normally done with what we did with the PP pilot? Was there a positive change?
- JM will have those questions answered and the pilot complete by the end of April.
- CA wanted to know if the Water Agency pilot would continue?
- PC did not think this would be possible until after September due to workload issues.
- Linda Helland (LH) had an alternative suggestion of asking Kristen McMenemy of General Services to be the 2nd pilot. CA agreed to this.

- SO mentioned that SF started in Purchasing and would work with Mendocino to start “green” purchasing. This would be a very tangible aspect of using the PP.
- CA wants to keep workload low and not increase county cost. There will be a 5% reduction this year in the budget. John should include labor in his assessment of the EH pilot to get a look at workload.
- Jacque Williams, who recently worked for Hewlett Packard, is familiar with pilots and mentioned that they should be considered a “learning as we go” and that projections of time should be cut in half. Also need to look at the value of educational part of a pilot.
- PC felt it was important to approach Kristen but ultimately it’s Tom Mitchell’s choice.
- CA wanted to see this institutionalized into county functions but that the decision cannot be made today. We need to assess the pilots 1st.
- PC interested in sustainability primarily and hoped that PP would eventually lead to this. Many agreed with him.
- SO mentioned that it was important in the 1st pilot to get input from others about mosquito abatement and what other alternatives might there be out there and he found a few suggestions. In this way the PP sets an example of county government believing in public participation. The 1st pilot met this need. It takes time to get to sustainability.
- CA – Do we need to do this?
- Britt reminded folks that 110 individuals and businesses (names on web site) have endorsed the PP and await the county decision.

NEXT MEETING – Monday May 5, 2008 from 11-12 pm in Conference Room 355.