

To: Stakeholder Committee
From: Shawn Grindstaff, Facilitator
Date: May 14, 2012
Re: Establishing the best process we can for the group

Since our first meeting, I have received some stakeholder communications and requests regarding the format and content that the group could have as it moves ahead. I'm thrilled at the interest in making the most of our time together as a committee. These are always great times to take stock of where the group can go as we build a productive collaboration. As I often say, watching many groups succeed or not over the years has motivated me to offer up some observations for the whole stakeholder committee to consider.

- 1) Most groups find that the CAM type processes quickly become very technical in nature, pushing the group (as it develops context for its function) to the brink of "information overload" if not handled in a measured manner. In other words, we have a better chance of success if we focus in on the Hinkson data/materials in a measured way as we ramp up for the discussions and actions ahead. Too much material too fast has created challenges for many groups in the past.
- 2) In terms of format and content for a group engaged in CAM, we will have substantial limitations on the facilitative nature of the meetings themselves. The CAM process will yield the substance that forms the basis for each meeting, and the appreciative style of facilitation will help "unlock" the potential of the group to truly collaborate and take action on the watershed. Other groups often find that diversifying the meetings (expansion of agenda) too much can make less productive meetings and force options such as increased meeting frequency, longer meetings, and other similar effects.
- 3) Some groups want the option to contact the facilitator on an "as-needed" basis between meetings. This has pros and cons. Some groups want that handled in front of the whole group (in person or by e-mail). Some don't care. For those who do talk to the facilitator separately, most successful groups I have encountered hold such communications to the mechanical or mundane, while addressing substantive items in the group setting. This allows the facilitator to focus on the facilitative role while he/she steers the group through the process (in this case, CAM).

These procedural "growing pains" happen at the outset of every group and are completely normal as we "grow" into an efficient, action-oriented collaborative body. If we get our process house in order, it makes the group stronger, the cumulative dialogue stronger, and the CAM process stronger as we enter the substance of our mission as a group.

I'd like to briefly raise these observations for the next meeting on June 11th and hope to reach a consensus on these matters as we start to pick up speed on CAM. We could add in this understanding as an additional group ground rule if you desire. Thanks again.