

**District of Columbia  
Water and Sewer Authority**

**Board of Directors**

**Environmental Quality and  
Sewerage Services Committee**

Thursday, October 21, 2010

9:30 a.m.

**MEETING MINUTES**



**Committee Members Present**

Robert Hoyt, Chairperson  
Joseph Cotruvo (via phone)  
David Lake  
Brenda Richardson  
Paivi Spoon  
Beverly Warfield

**DC Water Staff Present**

George Hawkins, General Manager  
Leonard Benson, Chief Engineer  
Meena Gowda, Acting General Counsel  
Linda Manley, Board Secretary

**Board Member**

David Bardin

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Robert Hoyt, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**II. AWTP STATUS UPDATES**

**1. BPAWTP Performance**

Mr. Aklile Tesfaye, Director of Wastewater Treatment, reported that the plant achieved full compliance with all permit parameters for September. Flow for the month averaged 280 MGD. Precipitation, measured at Reagan National, was 6.02 inches; higher than the historical average of 3.79 inches. Excess flow in the amount of 86 million gallons resulted from the higher rainfall. Biosolids production averaged 1094 wet tons per day. BNR performance was very good at a TN (total nitrogen) average of 4.29 mg/l with a 12-month discharge of 4.92 million pounds of nitrogen, well below the Chesapeake Bay Program goal of a nitrogen discharge of less than 8,467,200 pounds per year.

Questions were raised by the Committee on the costs related to chemically enhanced primary treatment, specifically the cost of modifications undertaken after the \$30M upgrade to primary treatment was completed. Mr. Tesfaye will provide that cost prior to the next meeting. A question was raised regarding the allocation of 4.5 MGD of Blue Plains reserve capacity to the District. It was noted that under IMA revisions being considered, this will not be an "asterisked" allocation, but will become part of the District's capacity.

A Committee member raised the issue of Maryland proposing an increased fee for biosolids land application. Mr. Tesfaye indicated the proposed increase in the biosolids disposal fee was still under consideration by MDE.

In response to a Committee member's question on when the Committee would receive a report on pretreatment activities, costs and fees, Mr. Tesfaye advised that it would be presented next month.

### **III. STATUS UPDATES**

#### **1. Trash TMDL/Water Quality Standards**

Mr. Leonard Benson, Chief Engineer, noted that comment periods have closed on both of these issues and they are final as far as regulators are concerned. Staff is evaluating whether to recommend that DC Water contest either of these through legal action. There is no specific time limit other than a standard of reasonableness, to doing so.

#### **2. Chesapeake Bay TMDL and DC WIP (Watershed Implementation Plan)**

Mr. Benson noted that these two rule makings are currently out for comment, which closes on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Staff will meet with the General Manager next week to discuss.

#### **3. LTCP Consent Decree Modification**

Mr. Benson stated that DC Water is still awaiting action from the Department of Justice. The Committee discussed a letter/petition from NRDC endorsing LID (Low Impact Development practices) and a recommending that LID be used to meet the CSO regulatory limits as an alternative to building the LTCP tunnels in the Potomac and Rock Creek basins. NRDC supports the tunnel approach for the Anacostia basin, however. During the discussion it was made clear that the LID approach has its limitations in significant storms. Mr. Hawkins noted that EPA promotes LID, but is happy with our LTCP due to its certainty and effectiveness. Further, analysis of the federal triangle flood of 2006 showed that in such an event (or similar large storm), LID, even if implemented throughout the drainage basin, would not have made a significant difference in flood levels or CSO discharges.

### **IV. STATUS UPDATES: POTOMAC INTERCEPTOR**

#### **1. Potomac Interceptor Sewer Odor Abatement Project**

Mr. David McLaughlin, Director of Engineering and Technical Services, reported that work continues on the D.C. site and two Maryland sites. DC Water hopes to

receive a Park Service permit for the third Maryland site shortly. The dispute over access for the Fairfax site continues. If it cannot be resolved soon DC Water will consider issuing the Loudoun County site as a separate contract to move forward with this site ahead of the Fairfax site.

## **2. Potomac Sewage Pumping Station-Consent Decree**

Mr. McLaughlin noted that efforts continue on the pump intake structures to improve performance. A design change from a rectangular to a round cross-section is underway. This could be implemented on one pump by the end of January after which performance will be evaluated to determine if the modification should be implemented on other pumps. Mr. McLaughlin is convinced that there is value in pursuing these improvements, as it is expected that pump performance will be improved, as was the case with the straightening vane installation. Modeling of the changes in the geometry of the pump intakes indicates that this should improve pump performance, and it is hoped that this improvement will be sufficient to meet the consent decree requirements.

Mr. McLaughlin also reported on an October 5, 2010 meeting with representatives of EPA, DOJ and EarthJustice to present DC Water's plans for achieving the firm pumping capacity at the Potomac Pump Station, as well as a number of alternatives that could provide equal or better environmental results. In response to a question whether contracted entities will be held accountable for the station capacity shortfall, it is DC Water's position that this is a force majeure event beyond the control of DC Water or its contractors.

## **V. PROCUREMENT: EXERCISING OPTIONS**

Mr. Benson provided general comments in response to Committee members' recurring questions that come up when staff recommends contract option years be exercised. He noted that staff is looking for guidance from the Committee and Board on how they would like staff to address these contract issues. Ms. Teresa Scott, Acting Director of Procurement, gave a presentation that outlined alternative procurement methods, history of the use of option years, methodologies that used to evaluate the benefits of exercising options years, and impacts of not exercising option years. Mr. Hoyt then opened up discussion from the Committee on thoughts and guidance.

It was suggested by a Committee member that the EQ&SS Committee conduct an annual review of the contracting processes and practices that are approved by the Board, so that the Committee can review and evaluate the procedures annually. It was pointed out that re-procuring options is something that should not be taken lightly as there are additional staffing, time restraints, and cost impacts if that course is pursued, and there are also impacts on the contracting community. Committee members expressed a desire to know that a quantitative

evaluation of option years was done, and that they do not want to be seen as a “rubber stamp” on procurements. Some were also not comfortable with a generic statement about satisfactory contractor performance. The Committee also desired a better understanding of option year costs compared with base year costs. The consensus was to recommend an annual review of the contracting procedures, and to include additional narrative information on the option year fact sheets.

## **VI. ASSESSMENT OF A ‘NEW’ DENITRIFICATION PROCESS-DEMON (DEAMMONIIFICATION)**

Sudhir Murthy, PhD, Director of Research and Laboratory, gave a presentation on a promising technology development for wastewater denitrification that could provide savings in energy (power), carbon (methanol) and capital costs over the processes currently being utilized or proposed. The process is currently in use at several plants in Europe on process sidestreams. Dr. Murthy is excited about its potential and envisions it being used in the US and evolving to main stream treatment in the future. Use at Blue Plains for treatment of biosolids centrate will be contingent on evaluation of operation and maintenance requirements and feasibility of scale-up. It was reported that Dr. Murthy had worked with the City of Alexandria to pilot test this process on digester Centrate at Alexandria’s WWTP and results were encouraging.

## **VII. ACTION ITEMS – JOINT USE**

Mr. Benson presented the following action items for Committee review. After some discussion it was determined that since #435, #436 and #437 would very likely involve some joint use facilities in the long term, as well as water system upgrades, they should be treated as joint use, and reviewed also by the Water Quality and Water Services Committee. A note will added to the fact sheets consistent with the Committee’s recommendation.

Joint Use:

1. Contract No. 100080; Alberici Constructors, Inc.
2. Contract No. DCFA #400; URS Corporation
3. Contract No. DCFA #434; CH2M Hill
4. Contract No. DCFA #435; RK&K
5. Contract No. DCFA #436; Brown and Caldwell
6. Contract No. DCFA #437; Hazen & Sawyer

After discussion, Mr. Hoyt verified that all Committee members agreed with the categorization of three action items as joint use; that they should be sent to the other Committee for consideration, but this Committee agrees without objection that all six action items should be sent to the full Board for action.

### **VIII. EMERGING ISSUES/OTHER BUSINESS**

Due to time constraints, no presentation or discussion took place on the following agenda items.

1. **Update: Fresh Creek End of Pipe Trash Capture System**
2. **Overview of Uncertainty and Risk Evaluation at Blue Plains**

### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Hoyt adjourned the Committee at 11:48 a.m.