



**District of Columbia
Water and Sewer Authority**

Board of Directors

**Water Quality and Water Services
Committee**

Thursday, June 17, 2010

11:00 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Neil Albert, Chair
Joseph Cotruvo
Howard Gibbs
Alexis Roberson
Alan Roth

WASA Staff Participating

Avis Russell, General Counsel
Charles Kiely, Assistant General Manager
Debra Mathis, Executive Assistant to the Board
Secretary

Board Members Present

David J. Bardin (by phone)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Neil Albert called the meeting to order at 11:55 a.m. He noted that he may have to leave early because the meeting started late and that Dr. Cotruvo would assume the Chair for the balance of the meeting.

II. WATER QUALITY MONITORING

1. Coliform testing:

Mr. Kiely reported that there were no positive coliform samples in May or so far in June.

2. Lead and Copper Rule compliance testing:

Mr. Kiely reported that the first semester monitoring was completed and three samples exceeded the Action Level. The 90th percentile for the monitoring period was 7 ppb, continuing the downward trend in lead levels. He said no change in the sample results was observed after the change in secondary disinfection on May 17, when the use of free chlorine was discontinued and the use of chloramines resumed.

Mr. Kiely noted that one sample exceeded the Action Level in the current round of sampling. This sample also had high iron levels, and it is likely that the high lead level was caused by galvanized plumbing. Staff will perform a follow-up inspection of the residence to confirm. In response to a question from a Board member, he noted that 72% of the LCR compliance sampling locations are at residences where there is a full lead service line,

while the remaining 28% of sampling locations are residences with partial lead service lines.

III. FIRE HYDRANT PROGRAM

Mr. Kiely reported that the first round of inspections has been completed by the Fire Department and that 118 public fire hydrants are defective. This number is slightly higher than the 1% goal. A map showing general locations of the out-of-service hydrants and a statistical fact sheet were also distributed.

It was reported 246 of 1,395 privately owned hydrants were reported to be out of service. It was also noted that there is pending legislation before the City Council to address the issue of responsibility of privately owned hydrants. Staff will provide an update to the Committee on the status of the pending legislation.

IV. WASHINGTON AQUEDUCT PROTOCOLS

The Washington Aqueduct General Manager, Mr. Tom Jacobus, made a presentation on the working relationship between the Aqueduct and its wholesale customers (DC Water, Arlington County, and the City of Falls Church). The presentation focused on arrangements for decision-making and communication. He noted that the Wholesale Customer Board operates at two levels: Board Principals meeting annually (which includes the DC Water General Manager) and the Technical Committee meeting quarterly (which consists of senior managers dealing with operations, financial and budgetary issues.)

Actions requiring Wholesale Customer Board approval included annual budgets, multi-year capital improvement plans, changes in rate allocation formulas, and agreements with regulatory agencies pursuant to permit or enforcement actions. In these deliberations each wholesale customer has one vote, but invariably decisions have been arrived at by consensus, with the customers seeking to arrive at a "common good." Mr. Jacobus referenced a recent cost allocation study. The study determined that DC Water's cost should go down while Arlington and the City of Falls Church should increase. A vote was taken by the three principals and the allocation formula was changed to reflect savings to DC Water.

Mr. Jacobus noted that it has been the Aqueduct's objective to be timely and responsive in communication with its customers. The Aqueduct strives to provide customers with information in advance of any developments that might affect or concern them. Mr. Kiely asserted that water operations staff is in constant communication with the Aqueduct. If a communication issue surfaces between the entities it is addressed immediately and he cited specific examples, including the recent elevated chlorine incident at Fort Reno.

Board Members discussed both the distribution of votes among members of the Wholesale Customer Board and the relationship between DC Water and the Washington Aqueduct. Ms. Russell advised the Committee that the General Manager is reviewing the relationship with the Aqueduct in consultation with the Governance Committee with respect to whether there might be a rationale for consolidation of the two organizations.

Dr. Cotruvo agreed that the overall joint function of WAD and WASA had been successful, but that there was need for seamless interaction. He reminded Mr Jacobus that the Water Quality committee had initiated the exploration of the interactive relationship between WAD and DCWASA several months ago due to some communication and operational problems that had surfaced, and due to the substance of the operating contract that is heavily weighted in the favor of WAD. He mentioned examples such as the results of water quality studies conducted by USGS several years ago that were not reported to the BOD, and also the need for a proactive and rapid response at WAD to deal with periodic serious taste problems resulting from algal blooms. The committee's intent is to have both WASA and WAD identify issues that had led to any problems and to recommend corrective measures. Dr. Cotruvo requested a joint briefing to be presented at the September Committee meeting, on issues and initiatives to improve the communication and operating protocols between DC Water and the Washington Aqueduct.

Mr Jacobus was also asked to provide information on the unit cost of water that is provided to WASA, including the sales and costs of capital improvements that are funded by WASA.

VII. CONTRACT ACTION ITEMS

The Board members were briefed on the following two Non-Joint Use contracts, which were recommended for full Board approval:

Contract No. WAS-10-038-AA-CE - Wachs Valve and Hydrant Services, LLC
Contract No. WAS-10-028-AA-GA, Ideal Electric Supply Corp.

The committee members were also briefed on the following Joint Use contract that contained a single non-joint use facility location. This joint use contract had been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Environmental Quality and Sewerage Services Committee.

Contract No. DCFA# 431-WSA, Samaha Associates, P.C.

Management presented this fact sheet to the Water Quality and Water Services Committee for informational purposes to ensure full transparency. One of the four tasks in this contract is 100% District funded and several members of this committee do not sit on the Environmental Quality and Sewerage Services Committee.

V. CUSTOMER SERVICE UPDATE

Ms. Lauren Preston, Director of Customer Services, provided an update on SPLASH, the financial assistance program established to help households of limited means pay water bills. She reported that it is expected that fundraising will exceed the FY 2010 goal of \$80,000. Through April 30, 160 households received \$57,657 in assistance, averaging \$360 each. As of the end of May, \$63,475 in contributions had been received. She also noted that staff raised \$2,500 at the recent DC Water yard sale; the proceeds benefitted the SPLASH program.

Ms. Preston noted that SPLASH is administered by the Urban League on behalf of DC

Water. DC Water staff is not involved in the assignment of funding to individual households; however, staff does review business practices applied to the SPLASH funding program. Ms. Preston also noted that DC Water is currently reviewing the administrator's performance in managing this program and is considering whether to establish a relationship with the Salvation Army. Dr. Cotruvo reminded Ms Preston that the Salvation Army had been the former administrator and that the program had been shifted to the Urban League about 2 years ago. The Committee recommended that Ms. Preston encourage competition from multiple non-profit agencies to optimize the program in the event that the Plan administrator is to be changed.

VI. PUBLIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

The Public Affairs Director, Alan Heymann, provided the committee with a handout reviewing the public affairs and government relations activities of the previous month. He gave a synopsis of the activities associated with the recent rebranding effort, particularly the official unveiling that took place on June 15, with the participation of Mayor Fenty and DC Water Board Chair Walker. Mr. Heymann presented the YouTube video *DC WASA is now DC Water*. He was congratulated for the success of the rebranding program. He was also encouraged to seek consumer outlets beyond Channel 16, such as commercial TV stations to directly reach a larger audience for public service announcements about DC Water and when WASA information is being released, including viewing the *DC Water is now DC Water*.

V. EMERGING ISSUES / OTHER BUSINESS

Board Members engaged in discussion on the role of this committee on TMDL and MS4 permit storm water and ground water issues. The current Board Bylaws assign oversight of storm water issues to the Water Quality and Water Services Committee. After some discussion the Committee felt that the Governance Committee should address this assignment and that it might be more appropriate if those issues were handled by the Environmental Quality and Sewerage Services Committee. The chairs of the EQSS and WQWS committees will discuss the matter and make a recommendation.

An update on the agreement between DC Water and the District concerning soliciting donations for the SPLASH program was requested for the next meeting..

A mail out was provided on the Saint Elizabeth Water Tower historic review process. This status report is provided each month at the Committee's request.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm.