



**District of Columbia
Water and Sewer Authority**

Board of Directors

**Water Quality and Water Services
Committee**

Thursday, July 21, 2011

11:30 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Dr. Joseph Cotruvo, Vice Chair
Howard Gibbs
Alexis Roberson
Brenda Richardson

DC WATER Staff Participating

Leonard Benson, Chief Engineer/Acting
General Manager
Charles Sweeney, Director of Utility Services
Randy Hayman, General Counsel
Linda R. Manley, Board Secretary

Board Members Present

David J. Bardin
Alan Roth (by phone)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Dr. Joseph Cotruvo called the meeting to order at 11:50 a.m.

II. WATER QUALITY MONITORING

1. Total Coliform Testing

Ms. Maureen Schmelling of the Water Quality Office reported that there had been two positive coliform samples taken in June, and one positive sample taken so far in July.

2. Lead and Copper Rule Monitoring

Ms. Schmelling reported that the first semester LCR compliance sampling had been completed for the period of January through June. The 90th percentile value for the first draw samples was 5 ppb, compared to the regulatory Action Level of 15 ppb. She also noted that the 90th percentile value for second draw samples was 7 ppb. (The second draw samples are not a regulatory requirement.) Dr. Cotruvo noted that the EPA is considering revising the compliance sampling protocols under its current LCR review, and encouraged staff to submit to this EPA review process comments on DC Water's experience including in using the second draw sample as a routine monitoring protocol.

III. FIRE HYDRANT PROGRAM

Mr. David Wall of the Department of Water Services gave the monthly update on hydrant

status, including statistical fact sheet and map of out-of-service (OOS) hydrants. Mr. Wall reported that as of July 1 there were 56 OOS hydrants that were mechanically defective (i.e. not including those designated as OOS because of access issues). This amounts to 0.61% of total hydrants, compared with the target of 1%.

There was an extended discussion on the problem of unauthorized hydrant openings, particularly during the summer, which was reported by several Committee members to be a serious problem. Mr. Sweeney noted that it is no longer the policy of DC Water and of the Fire Department to open hydrants with sprinklers as informal cooling stations, although DC Water does provide some “misting tents” for cooling. Dr. Cotruvo commented that it sounded to him that there was a significant issue with the current situation in which there are extensive uncontrolled openings, and he and Ms Richardson suggested that DC Water should explore options with the City for re-establishing some program to hydrant cooling on a controlled basis so that there would be less water loss. Committee person Roberson noted from her prior experience as Head of the Department of Recreation that there had been significant problems with the previous hydrant cooling program that had been operated jointly by the Recreation Dept. and Fire Dept. Committee members also commented that under the current situation the Fire Dept should have principal responsibility for responding to reports of unauthorized flowing hydrants, although it was acceptable for DC Water to respond to Fire Dept requests for assistance.

IV. PRIVATE HYDRANT LEGISLATION UPDATE

Mr. Wall responded to a prior meeting request on the Private Hydrant legislation. The legislation had passed the City Council last January. It had been reviewed by Congress and been enacted into law effective March 31, 2011.

“To prohibit the Mayor and other District officials from approving permits and plans which include private fire hydrants unless information is provided stating who is responsible for the repair, maintenance and replacement of the hydrants and the information is recorded with the Recorder of Deeds; requires owners of private hydrants to effect repairs within 180 days; allows WASA to repair private hydrants and charge up to twice the cost of repair and to place a lien on any property of the owner within the District; and allows the owner of a private hydrant to cede the hydrant to the District if the hydrant can be accessed by a public road.”)

The remaining question is what is the status of implementation?

V. WATER DISTRIBUTION CONTAMINATION ASSESSMENT

Ms. Schmelling gave a briefing on the Office of Water Quality’s capabilities for water contamination event monitoring with the use of a handout presentation. The briefing covered daily field sample collection, fixed location on-line monitoring stations, and emergency response equipment. The on-line monitors consist of three systems:

- Five basic chemical monitors placed throughout the system at water pumping stations and at Blue Plains WWTP,
- Two more advanced chemical monitoring stations, and
- One biological fish monitor.

Dr. Cotruvo expressed satisfaction with the briefing, and commented that as designed the monitoring is primarily useful for providing basic operating information on residual disinfectants, conductivity, turbidity etc. for distribution system management, but not as a real time detector for contamination events. Although the number of real time sites could be increased, it is probably not feasible to develop a system for actual toxicant identification. He requested followup discussion at a future meeting on related subjects which could be done in closed session if appropriate:

- Further discussion regarding on-line monitors, including the practical feasibility of their being used for detection of intentional contamination for protection of the customers.
- A review of the Vulnerability Assessment and Emergency Response Planning that was done in 2002/2003, and the status of DCWater's corrective action responses.

VI. REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLANNING

Mr. Thomas Jacobus, the General Manager of the Washington Aqueduct, presented a very informative introductory briefing in response to the Committee's interest in understanding the relationships between water availability and management of unaccounted for water losses during distribution. His presentation reviewed the planning and coordination relationships among the three principal water suppliers in the region (the Washington Aqueduct, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and Fairfax Water). He discussed the CoOp collaboration arrangements that are staff supported by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB), including drought and emergency incident coordination, and the several sources of water availability future projections from the Corps, COG and ICPRB. He indicated that current supply planning indicates that water supplies should be adequate through 2040, and he discussed other regional options that have been and are being considered (e.g., utility interconnections, off-line quarry reservoirs, and estuary treatment options). One estimate of the unreimbursed cost to DC Water of unaccounted for water is in the 7 to 8 million dollar annual range, apart from costs due to emergency repairs of breaks from decaying infrastructure. The Committee will continue follow-up on the water availability and loss issues, and means to make more efficient use of available water by reducing losses.

VII. ACTION ITEMS – NON-JOINT USE

1. The Committee recommended for full Board approval the funding of the fourth option year of a contract with Rodgers Brothers Custodial Services for sand, gravel, stone, topsoil and concrete.

VIII. EMERGING ISSUES / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Several topics were identified for future meetings including:

- A briefing on the issues of water loss (leakage) and unaccounted for and unmetered water (requested by Mr. Bardin.)
- Permit operations and system as-built records (requested by Mr. Gibbs).
- Vulnerability Assessment / Emergency Response Plan (developed pursuant to the 2002 Bioterrorism Act) and current status (requested by Dr. Cotruvo).

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm.