



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Customer and Community Services  
Committee Meeting  
Thursday, October 14, 2004  
10:00 a.m.**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Committee Members in Attendance**

**Alexander McPhail  
David J. Bardin  
Stephanie Nash**

**WASA Staff in Attendance**

**Jerry Johnson, General Manager  
Paul Bender, Chief Financial Officer  
Avis Marie Russell, General Counsel  
Charles Kiely, Customer Service  
Director**

Committee Chairman Alexander McPhail called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

**Covington & Burling Recommendations**

Mr. Johnson discussed WASA's responses to the Covington and Burling recommendations. The General Manager referenced that several recommendations from Covington and Burling were already implemented in advance of their report. Mr. Bardin had several concerns relating to confidentiality and the distribution of certain information that was personal in nature being requested from time-to-time by council members and other key stakeholders. Mr. Bardin stressed the importance of the Board issuing a policy directive relative to the distribution of public information to relieve the General Manager and staff of the burden of saying no.

Mr. Bardin also requested a listing of all publications distributed. He further believes that the Board of Directors should review all publications prior to distribution. Mr. Johnson recommended that the Board, especially this Committee, provide general guidelines on the publication's contents instead. Mr. Johnson mentioned that the operational environment is not consistent with routine opportunities for thorough Board review of publications and other documents used to communicate with the public. He added that timeframes are generally short and occasionally publications involve multiple agencies, which require different approval processes before release.

## **Committee Work Plan**

The annual report was not available.

Government Relations Plan - The Committee wants to review and comment on the plan and request that the Office of the Secretary transmit the draft plan to the full Board for comment. The Committee will endorse the plan at its November meeting.

## **Lead Service Line Replacement Program**

Mr. Johnson presented the draft communication for lead line replacement. Customers will receive a folder along with printed material describing the program, financial assistance available through DHCD and Wachovia, cost estimates for the private replacement of the lead service line and an agreement authorizing the work on private property. Tenants will receive a similar package excluding the references to construction and estimates.

There was discussion on whether estimates for private line replacements would be available. Mr. Kiely clarified that most packages sent to the owners would contain cost estimates. He added that estimates might not be available for some of the priority replacements; however, it was too early in the process to ascertain how many customers would not receive estimates. Mr. Bardin expressed concerns regarding WASA's ability to identify the customer's property line.

Ms. Russell commented that customer services, engineering, legal, public affairs and finance were meeting regularly to coordinate the lead replacement project. The consensus of the group was that these meetings should continue on a regular basis to ensure that everyone stayed informed.

Mr. Johnson reported the Inspector General's office is drafting a review of the lead issue; however, we do not have an advance copy of the draft.

## **S.P.L.A.S.H. Program**

Mr. Kiely discussed WASA's outreach plans to encourage people to donate to S.P.L.A.S.H. He presented a draft of November's "Whats on Tap" that focused on the "S.P.L.A.S.H. program. Mr. Kiely reported that the new bill allows for multiple messages enabling us to keep S.P.L.A.S.H. on everyone's mind without sacrificing other important messages. In addition, the new bill has a round up feature that allows customers to make monthly S.P.L.A.S.H. contributions. Grace Beaman reported that nine (9) customers signed-up for bill roundup in the first few weeks of implementation. Mr. Kiely informed the Board that we are about to implement a web application that will allow anyone visiting the site to make a S.P.L.A.S.H. contribution. Mr. Kiely also reported that we are working

closely with Public Affairs to explore print media, radio and television as a means to promote S.P.L.A.S.H.

Mr. Bardin asked if it was possible for the same customers to receive S.P.L.A.S.H. donations each year. Mr. Bender advised that the Salvation Army administers the program and the recipients of contributions are determined based upon pre-established guidelines. These guidelines do not preclude customers from receiving more than one grant provided they demonstrate some financial need.

The issue of whether a S.P.L.A.S.H. contribution is tax deductible was discussed in length. It was felt that the donation is probably deductible; however, WASA cannot attest to this statement and that the individual contributor would have to check with their respective tax preparer. Questions were raised on possible ways to ensure this donation was tax deductible such as making the check out directly to the Salvation Army. However, it was agreed that more research was needed.

Mr. Kiely informed the committee that Joint Utility Discount Day (JUDD) was being held on October 21, 2004 at new Convention Center. He welcomed volunteers to help during the course of the day at JUDD.

### **Other Business**

The next committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 10, 2004 because of the November 11<sup>th</sup> holiday.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:05 p.m.