



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
D.C. Water and Sewer Authority
Board of Directors
Customer and Community Services Committee**

**Tuesday, May 19, 2009
11:00 a.m.**

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present

Alan J. Roth
Brenda Richardson
Howard Gibbs
Joseph Cotruvo

Other Board Members

David J. Bardin

Staff Present

Jerry N. Johnson, General Manager
Johnnie Hemphill, Chief of Staff
Avis M. Russell, General Counsel
Charles Kiely, Ass't Gen Mgr, Customer Service
Jay McCoskey, Customer Service Director
Mujib Lodhi, Information Technology Director
Michele Quander-Collins, Public Affairs Director
Linda R. Manley, Board Secretary

Call to Order

Mr. Roth called the meeting to order at approximately 11:10 a.m.

SPLASH - Update

The Committee was provided with a list of outreach activities undertaken by the Urban League from December 2008 to May 2009. Mr. Hemphill reported that it appears that the Urban League has shown continuing improvement with the administration of the program. However, the Urban League has not been consistent with some of the terms of the contract. Specifically they have failed to consistently submit their reports by the 10th of each month, and they have occasionally granted funds to customers who have not met the minimum threshold requirement. Urban League staff met with the Customer Service Director and the Chief of Staff, and they have made a clear commitment to address these two issues going forward.

Mr. Hemphill reminded the Committee that sometime ago the Authority requested assistance from the Committee on Public Works and Transportation in passing legislation that would allow WASA to solicit and receive funds from private sources for the purpose of assisting low-income customers. That effort has not progressed to date. WASA has recently contacted the Mayor's Office of Partnership and Grants Services (OPGS), which administers the Mayor's authority to solicit and receive private contributions from various sources. OPGS has been supportive and has pledged to do whatever it can to expedite consideration. Although OPGS has agreed to work with WASA, they admit that WASA's request is unique and that their process is cumbersome. Ultimately WASA would like the opportunity to significantly

expand its solicitation authority through the requested legislation. Mr. Roth pointed out that in the meantime, the two tracks are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

With regards to the Urban League's performance, Mr. Hemphill noted that the agreement between WASA and the Urban League is incentive-based and thus intended to encourage the Urban League to recruit new contributors as well as to distribute funds to additional recipients. He also pointed out that the level of contributions has dropped off largely due to the economy and that the Urban League suggests that WASA exercise caution in how it solicits new recipients in an effort to avoid having more recipients than contributions.

The Committee had several questions related to a comparison chart that itemized the contributions and disbursements for both the Salvation Army and the Urban League. It appeared that the disbursements under the Urban League's administration were greater than the contributions received, prompting several committee members to express concern that this trend is not sustainable over the long term. Staff agreed to go back and reconcile the chart to include carry-over funds prior to May 2007. The Committee asked staff to provide the new data prior to the Board meeting if possible.

DCWASA Board Meeting Webcasting - Demonstration

Ms. Quander-Collins informed the Committee that staff is in the final stretch of this project and that all the equipment and wiring will be complete by the end of this week. Staff is planning to do a live-to-tape video production at the June Board meeting which will allow everyone to see how the equipment is working and how the operators are producing. During the week of May 25th staff will be in training for operation of the equipment and posting the agendas and schedules on the website.

Following the update, Daniel Stillwaggon gave the Committee a brief demonstration and illustrated how a viewer would navigate through the video pages. In response to questions regarding maximizing the view of the video Mr. Stillwaggon informed the Committee that he will be working with the webhost to work out the technical details and would be better equipped to address technical details at a later date. It was agreed that this is the first take and that there will be an opportunity for reactions and improvements.

The Committee agreed that Board members have to be cognizant that they are on camera and exhibit proper etiquette at all times, and that it would be beneficial to having some training on being presented on camera.

DCWASA Construction Permit Process - Update

Mr. Roth introduced the next item on the agenda by referring to an e-mail from Ms. McGowan at DDOE seeking assistance from the Department of Parks and Recreation on two specific permits that had been delayed in processing. While the permits were quickly issued once the problem was brought to the General Manager's attention, Mr. Roth thought it would be timely to receive an update on WASA's progress in implementing its new permit tracking system, since the Committee had not been briefed on the issue in more than a year. Mr. Hemphill

acknowledged that the DPR permit issues stemmed from human error in the intake process that have since been addressed with corrective actions, but that in general significant progress had been made in both transparency and accountability in the permitting process. He gave the Committee a brief overview of the inconsistencies and problems in past permitting processes and described the improvements that have been implemented to address those issues.

Mr. Kevin Butturff went into further detail on the new process improvements implemented since the time the Committee was last updated, as well as on a new online system to track permit applications. He also observed that while WASA is involved in many work process streams initiated by DCRA, DDOT and the Surveyor's Office, WASA itself issues relatively few permits.

In response to the issues WASA experienced with the old permitting process, staff reengineered and streamlined the business processes and deployed the improvement processes in conjunction with the new electronic tracking system using the asset management system Maximo. Streamlining the process has resulted in standardization of processes, reduced processing time, and reduced duplication of effort, which has led to a higher degree of consistency, increased work and efficiency, and reduced application processing time. He also noted that delays caused by interoffice mail have been reduced by electronic routing of assignments. The Committee requested that a hard copy of the presentation be provided to the Committee.

Mr. Butturff then gave the Committee a live demonstration using the Maximo asset management system and WASA's website.

Customer Service Update

Mr. McCoskey presented the Committee with samples of the new CAP brochure containing information on the recently implemented sewer credit. The brochure has been translated into six languages. He also noted that the first bills with the IAC were mailed out on May 8th. In anticipation of a high volume of calls due to the implementation of the IAC, the option for information on IAC was placed upfront on the AVR system. During the first full week after the bills were mailed, Customer Service received 3,000 calls from customers who selected the option for information on IAC. Upon talking to these callers, it was discovered that only 12% actually had questions regarding IAC. It is believed that the remaining callers evaded the system to get to a live person. The customer representative had to then manually code the correct call type based on the actual inquiry. As a result, staff is looking at realigning the IAC option.

Public Affairs Update

Ms. Quander-Collins presented the monthly report by exception. She noted that Public Affairs has been conducting a fair amount of research in preparation for developing a campaign to raise consumer confidence in the quality of drinking water as well as the organization, including the use of focus groups and surveys. She also noted that Public

Affairs has been involved in a great deal of outreach activities and welcomed the Committee members to upcoming events.

Mr. Roth asked Ms. Quander-Collins to share with the Committee the results and analyses of the focus groups and surveys. The General Manager suggested that the Committee await the presentation of a fuller action plan based on those results and analyses. Mr. Roth indicated that the two suggestions were not inconsistent but that the Committee would benefit from seeing what the focus groups and surveys produced.

Other Business

Hearing no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.