



**District of Columbia  
Water and Sewer Authority**

**Board of Directors**

**Retail Services Committee**

**Tuesday, March 24, 2009**

**11:00 a.m.**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Committee Members Present**

Joseph Cotruvo, Chairman  
Howard Gibbs  
David J. Bardin

**WASA Staff Present**

Jerry Johnson, General Manager  
Leonard Benson, Acting Chief Engineer  
Gregory Hope, Staff Counsel  
Linda Manley, Board Secretary

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Cotruvo called the Retail Services Committee Meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

**II. WATER QUALITY MONITORING**

**1. Coliform Testing:**

Richard Giani, Water Quality Manager, reported that zero (0) sites had tested positive for coliform in March, as of March 24<sup>th</sup>.

**2. LCR Compliance:**

Mr. Giani reported that for the most recent reporting period, 29 samples have been analyzed to this point, as reported at the last meeting; 36 samples are at the laboratory awaiting analysis. One (1) sample exceeded the EPA Action Level of 15 ppb with a 1<sup>st</sup> draw result of 24 ppb. Follow-up found galvanized internal plumbing at this address.

A discussion was held on the issue of pre-stagnation flushing. Mr. Johnson confirmed that WASA is following the most recent guidance from EPA. The Committee requested a report at the next meeting that compares sample results collected preferably at the same locations, as part of the LCR Monitoring under the prior 10-minute pre-stagnation flushing guidance vs. the current pre-stagnation flushing guidance recommended by EPA in September of 2008 that did not include the 10 minute pre-stagnation flushing.

The Committee then discussed public health issues and the means by which national agencies (e.g., EPA, CDC) can be of assistance to WASA. DCWASA could place hot links on the DCWASA web site for health-related information published by USEPA and CDC. The Committee also suggested that DCWASA advise DDOE and DDOH that they too could do this for the benefit of the citizenry. Also, the Committee discussed possible merits of WASA having highly qualified in-house scientific and public health expertise. Several members felt that in house expertise and advice would benefit the General Manager in anticipating and responding to health and science-related issues. This would not replace outside expert advice that could be accessed. The Committee requested a briefing at the next meeting on the scope and management of the contract with George Washington University related to public health information support.

### **III. FIRE HYDRANT STATUS**

Lou Jarvis, Director of Water Services, reported that the current “out-of-service” list for fire hydrants stands at 113. A Committee member pointed out that this is approximately (only) 1.2% of the total number of hydrants in the District, but that it appeared that since all of the hydrants had been inspected at least once, WASA had now reached a baseline attrition range level of out-of-service hydrants. Last month the number was 70.

Mr. Jarvis showed the Committee the new hydrant rings that will be used by WASA to identify hydrants that require repair or replacement that would make it easier for the fire department to quickly recognize the status of hydrants. A green-colored ring indicates the hydrant requires maintenance, but is still in service. A red-colored ring indicates that the hydrant is out of service and cannot be utilized for fire fighting. Those hydrants that are found to be in good working order during the survey/inspection will not have a ring installed.

The Committee requested information on the number of hydrants that have been repaired or replaced over the past month. The Committee also expressed an interest in being briefed at a future meeting on the GIS system, particularly with respect to fire hydrant location and service status.

### **IV. WATER ACCOUNTING - UPDATE**

Olu Adebo, Chief Financial Officer, gave a presentation to the Committee on WASA’s water balance project. Mr. Adebo stated that WASA is currently using the American Water Works Association (AWWA) 2003 Water Loss Model to account for all of the water purchased from the Washington Aqueduct (WAD).

Mr. Adebo reported that the water purchased from WAD can be broken down into two main categories: a.) revenue water and, b.) non-revenue water. He also provided additional details with respect to non-revenue water; and thoroughly discussed one performance indicator that is used in the model, the Infrastructure Leakage Index (ILI). Comparisons between WASA’s 2007 and 2008 ILI indicate a reduction in avoidable water losses, although additional data is needed to refine the estimates used in the analysis.

Mr. Adebo briefed the Committee on the water balance audit and report for 2008. He summarized: how the audit was conducted; what measurements and estimated values were utilized; and the results that were obtained. Of interest, was that over half of the “authorized, unbilled consumption” component of the water balance model (713.6 MG) was a direct result of protecting public property (i.e., firefighting and fire training). There are several estimated values that provide some uncertainty to final figures. The Committee asked whether the cost of providing the water used for fire fighting and training was included in the cost of service study. Staff will verify and report back to the Committee.

Mr. Adebo provided future recommendations to improve WASA’s system performance and outlining WASA’s next steps to achieve its interim and long-term goals.

Dr. Cotruvo requested that the General Manager provide a brief version of the water balance presentation to the full Board, focusing on the methodology and terminology used in the study, and including additional cities for comparison.

## **V. WASHINGTON AQUEDUCT RELATIONSHIP**

The Committee continued its discussion with Tom Jacobus, General Manager of WAD, joined at this meeting by Carl Lorenz, Assistant General Counsel with the Baltimore District of the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Mr. Jacobus confirmed that water from both water treatment plants (Dalecarlia and McMillan) is frequently checked for taste and odor, and stated that the Aqueduct makes rapid decisions on the need to introduce corrective actions (e.g., powdered activated carbon) without necessarily notifying WASA. Dr. Cotruvo noted that there have been situations where seasonal taste and odor had persisted for several days, and he wondered whether that was due to inadequate treatment adjustments.

A discussion followed on the legal and contractual relationship between WASA and WAD. In particular, the Committee was interested, as a hypothetical, in responsibility for harm claimed by a WASA customer with respect to a water quality issue. Mr. Lorenz confirmed that WAD would be responsible for penalties for violations assessed under the Safe Drinking Water Act, and that those costs could not be passed on to WAD’s customers. Under the water sales agreement between WAD and WASA, WAD has no liability for claims resulting from water quality issues. The distinction between tort liability and contractual liability was discussed. In particular, Mr. Lorenz confirmed that while the Federal Government has broad sovereign immunity from tort claims, the U.S. Congress had made specific exemptions, including exemptions for claims made under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The Committee requested that WAD provide a one page summary of WAD’s legal liabilities with respect to claims.

Dr. Cotruvo concluded the discussion by asking that both WASA and WAD management review the existing Sales Agreement to see if there are changes they would propose. He also recommended that WAD review the energy management presentation provided to the Environmental Quality and Operations Committee prior to this meeting, for possible application to WAD’s treatment facilities. Mr. Jacobus confirmed he would do so.

## **VI. LEAD PROGRAM UPDATE**

David McLaughlin reported that the one-page summary for the mitigation plan following a partial lead service replacement (LSR) had been distributed to the Committee, and that the information contained in the summary was consistent with earlier presentations to the Committee. Dr. Cotruvo advised that the Committee would forward any questions on the summary to staff for response, after the Committee has reviewed the document in detail.

Mr. McLaughlin also reported on a possible alternative approach for determining the service material type without test-pitting. Dr. Cotruvo had put WASA in contact with Echologics Engineering in Canada, who developed a procedure utilizing acoustic wave technology to check for leaks in water lines. The company believes this procedure can be adapted to identify the type of pipe material present *in situ*, although at this point the use of the technology for this purpose has not been demonstrated. No field tests have been performed to this point, and WASA will continue to obtain additional information and test data from Echologics Engineering as it becomes available. EPA has expressed an interest in participating in a demonstration if this appears to be a promising technique.

## **VII. WATER QUALITY STUDY - STATUS**

Ms. Maureen McGowan of DDOE briefed the Committee on the status of the Water Quality Study. DDOE is working with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) to finalize the MOU for the preparation of the study request for proposals. DDOE anticipates that COG will provide the contractual mechanism for the study. Ms. McGowan reported that there is no target date for release of the RFP; however, a main objective for the study is to collect samples during the summer season in 2009. It was discussed that the study should include three (3) seasons of data, if possible; however, it was most important to include the warmest months. Dr. Cotruvo repeated his concerns that DDOE should utilize a rigorous systematic approach for identifying the issues to be addressed in the RFP and provide clear direction to the contractor selected so that the basic questions posed by Councilmember Graham and others can be prioritized and addressed.

Mr. Bardin noted that the District Government should decide quickly which agency is responsible for providing health guidance with respect to lead in drinking water, so that WASA can provide this information to customers. He recommended that DDOE work with the Department of Health and WASA to clarify. Ms. McGowan noted that she would consult with DDOE and report back to the Committee. Dr. Cotruvo noted that CDC places personnel in states as liaisons to assist in responding to health issues. Ms. McGowan was asked to determine whether CDC has technical personnel presence in DC.

## **VIII. LOW LEAD RESOLUTION**

The Committee discussed a draft resolution for the WASA Board to recommend to the District Council and Mayor's office adoption of legislation requiring low-lead content in new plumbing and water system fixtures similar to legislation that has been passed in California

and Vermont. The proposed legislation would restrict lead content of wetted components of fixtures to 0.25% by weight, compared to existing limit of 8% (established by federal regulation), and also limit solders and flux to 0.2 % lead. The Committee agreed to move forward with the resolution and adopted several minor textual changes to the draft copy.

#### **IX. COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

Dr. Cotruvo announced that the Committee would be developing a Work Plan for the next year (i.e., providing more details on existing tasks/issues, adding new agendas if appropriate, etc.). He requested that the committee and WASA provide recommendations for subject areas that the committee should address.

#### **X. ACTION ITEMS – NON-JOINT USE**

##### **1. Contract No. WAS-06-014-AA-VW, Wachs Utilities**

The Committee agreed to recommend approval.

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

None.

#### **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 p.m.