



**District of Columbia
Water and Sewer Authority**

Board of Directors

**Retail Services Committee
Friday, June 26, 2009**

9:00 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Joseph Cotruvo, Chairman
Howard Gibbs
David J. Bardin
Brenda Richardson

WASA Staff Present

Jerry Johnson, General Manager
Leonard Benson, Acting Chief Engineer
Avis Russell, General Counsel

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Cotruvo called the Retail Services Committee Meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

II. WATER QUALITY MONITORING

1. Coliform Testing:

Maureen Schmelling, Water Quality Supervisor, reported that one (out of a total of 215 sites/samples analyzed) tested positive for coliform as of June 26th. Follow up testing was negative, and investigation indicated no likely cause for the positive result.

2. LCR Compliance Testing:

Ms. Schmelling provided an update on the status of the Lead and Copper Rule compliance testing activities. She reported that 102 samples have been analyzed to this point (June 26, 2009). Three (3) samples have exceeded the EPA Action Level of 15 ppb. The 1st draw results for these samples were 85 ppb, 24 ppb, and 22 ppb. Ms. Schmelling indicated that when a result exceeds EPA's Action Level a follow-up investigation is performed to attempt to determine the source of the high lead results. She noted that two (2) of the three (3) high lead samples also exhibited high iron concentration, which appears to be related to the age and type of domestic plumbing.

III. FIRE HYDRANT PROGRAM

1. Service Status:

Lou Jarvis, Director of Water Services, reported that the Fire Department is nearing the end of their first round of surveys for this year, and the current “out-of-service” list for fire hydrants stands at 136. Of these, 25 are considered “blocked access”, i.e., functional, but inaccessible to the Fire Department. Mr. Jarvis indicated that the number of “out-of-service” hydrants is updated on an hourly basis in WASA’s asset management system. Mr. Jarvis also informed the Committee that every hydrant in the city has been evaluated (two (2) full years of inspections or four (4) rounds of inspections total); and that the program is now in “maintenance mode”.

Mr. Jarvis was asked to always state the numerical counts in 2 distinct groups: 1) out of service, 2) blocked access or other status. The Committee discussed the frequency of hydrant inspections – currently twice per year per the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WASA and Fire and Emergency Management Services (FEMS). Mr. Len Benson, Acting Chief Engineer, indicated that the frequency of inspections may impact insurance ratings for the District. WASA staff will request from the District information concerning its rating system with respect to the frequency of fire hydrant inspections. Dr. Cotruvo requested that an assessment (what should change and what should stay the same) of the fire inspection program be placed on the agenda for future consideration, because of the current costs and the fact that the system has been modernized since the MOU. Mr. Jerry Johnson, General Manager, agreed that it would be appropriate to evaluate the current program inspection frequency.

IV. SUMMARY OF ISSUES FOR FUTURE WAD/WASA INTERACTION

Mr. Tom Jacobus, General Manager of the Washington Aqueduct Division (WAD), reported that during WAD’s most recent Wholesale Customer Board Meeting in June, the topic of the current Wholesale Customer Water Sales Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WAD and each jurisdiction was made an agenda item for evaluation and re-examination. Mr. Jacobus indicated that a follow-up meeting is scheduled for August 5, 2009; and after that meeting, WAD will be able to evaluate and assemble the comments/considerations raised by the jurisdictions (customers) to present to WASA’s Retail Services Committee.

Mr. Jacobus reconfirmed to the Committee that WAD will keep the Committee informed of any water quality research or studies in which WAD participates so that WASA can evaluate the data and be able to respond to any potential issues. Mr. Jacobus also provided other examples of the on-going, daily working relationship between WAD and WASA, including the recent incident when an automobile entered McMillan Reservoir, the work on the cross-town main and city tunnel, etc. Mr. Benson stated that WASA has a great deal of confidence in WAD and the relationship between the two organizations works very well.

Dr. Cotruvo agreed that there is a good working relationship between the entities, but there had been some breakdowns in recent times. The Committee's main concern is with the contractual relationship between the organizations which limits the responsibilities for WAD and includes little recourse for WASA. The situation today is far different from when the contract was written. In addition there are perhaps some process interactions and information flows that should be articulated in writing to assure that no glitches occur.

Mr. Bardin requested that the rate comparison information provided to the Committee be updated to include rates charged to customers in Arlington County and the city of Falls Church. Mr. Bardin again pointed out that WASA's Annual Report was misleading in that it stated that the District's water supply was drawn from the Potomac River and included a photograph of the river in the vicinity of Key Bridge, while in fact the drinking water source is further upstream at Great Falls. This creates public misunderstanding with respect to the locations of drinking water intakes and treated waste discharges, which, in fact, are totally distinct in Washington. The drinking water supply cannot be impacted by the Blue Plains waste discharges.

V. ST. ELIZABETH'S WATER TOWER – STATUS UPDATE

Mr. Roger Gans, DETS Planning and Design Manager, provided the Committee with a report concerning the St. Elizabeth Water Tower. Mr. Gans summarized the need for a new water tower, the current status of the project, and the historic impact review related to the project. The project is needed because there is currently less than optimal water pressure for some residents east of the Anacostia River, south of W Street. The project will raise the pressure in this area by approximately 22.5 psi. The St. Elizabeth campus was chosen because it has optimal elevation and lesser impact on residential development, and on cost considerations. Mr. Gans described the Federal 106 – Historic Review Process and stated that WASA is currently about to begin this process for the project. After being asked whether the lowered pressure during fire fighting events might cause backflows, he said he did not believe that was a problem.

The Committee requested that the Ward 8 Historic Heritage Council be added to the stakeholder list for the project. WASA staff will check if they are already on the stakeholder list. If they are not, a letter will be sent to them to determine if they would like to participate. A Committee Member also requested that a monthly progress sheet be provided to the Committee concerning the status of the project.

VI. WATER FACILITIES PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Dave McLaughlin, DETS Acting Director, provided the Committee with a status update for WASA's Water Facilities Plan. The presentation noted that the Facilities Plan extends over a 20 year period (through 2030) and focused on: water demand, water quality, and service reliability. Mr. McLaughlin reported that in terms of water demand, WASA is in good shape – the system can meet current and future demands. There is, however, a major issue that impacts water quality – tuberculation (i.e., the process of the build-up of

deposits inside a pipe). Tuberculation reduces the hydraulic efficiency of the pipe; contributes to taste, odor, and color issues with the water; and can lead to the accumulation of biofilms. Tuberculation typically occurs in unlined cast iron pipe. WASA currently has approximately 740 miles of this pipe in the distribution system. In terms of service reliability, WASA has recently completed upgrades to major pumping stations necessary to ensure reliable water distribution to the District's residents, and the major remaining challenge is presented by the condition of the water main system.

Mr. McLaughlin reported that nearly 200 miles of small-diameter water pipe in the system are more than 100 years old. Currently, WASA is replacing small-diameter pipe at a rate of 0.35% per year. The Facilities Plan recommends increasing the replacement rate to a minimum of 1% per year. The Facilities Plan has also identified specific projects that need to be completed to maintain water quality and service reliability; and has recommended a program to renew assets on an on-going basis in order to prevent more expensive issues from arising in the future (i.e., address system condition and renew before failure).

Dr. Cotruvo requested that WASA provide the Committee with the annual costs for replacing/repairing water pipe leaks and breaks to indicate the amount of cost offset that might occur from prioritized preventive replacement of the most vulnerable segments.

Mr. Benson reported to the Committee that WASA will be providing the Board Committees with the recommended CIP projects in the fall. WASA will continue to look at risk as the major factor in determining which projects should be included in the CIP. Projects that address potential health and environmental impacts will continue to receive priority.

Mr. Bardin suggested that the topic discussed in the most recent executive session of the Environmental Quality and Operations Committee be presented to the full Board in executive session. Mr. Bardin also recommended that the impact to retail rate payers for those projects that are not yet in WASA's budget be addressed during the next Retail Rates Committee Meeting in July.

VII. SEWER SYSTEM FACILITIES PLAN UPDATE

Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to defer this agenda item to the next meeting.

A Committee Member requested that at the next meeting, two items be addressed when presenting the Sewer System Facilities Plan Update: 1) Slide 8, which appears to show combined sewers flowing into sanitary sewers, and 2) the Executive Summary Section reference to an "agreement" for WASA to maintain the storm sewer system.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS – NON-JOINT USE

1. Contract No. 060040 – Fort Myer Construction

The Committee agreed to recommend approval.

2. Contract No. 080110 – Video Pipe Services, Inc.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval.

3. Contract No. 090110 – Anchor Construction Corporation

The Committee agreed to recommend approval.

4. Contract No. DCFA #371-WSA – Hatch Mott MacDonald I & E, LLC

The Committee agreed to recommend approval.

5. Contract No. WAS-09-026-AA-SM – Flippo Construction Company, Inc.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval. A Board Member requested that an additional line or two be added to the Fact Sheet for this Contract to help further explain the contract action and remove the ambiguity that currently exists in the language.

IX. EMERGING ISSUES / OTHER BUSINESS

1. Rate Comparison Discussion

Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to defer this agenda item to a future meeting.

2. Water Quality Study

Mr. Len Benson reported on the current status of the Water Quality Study as DDOE was unable to attend. Mr. Benson reported that on June 10, 2009 a Request for Qualifications/Quotations (RFQ) was issued by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments to prepare a scope of services for the study. According to the COG RFQ this stage of the study would be focused exclusively on lead in water, and would include sampling water from residences occupied by individuals with elevated blood lead levels, and from residences with prior water sample lead results that exceeded EPA's action level (15 ppb.). Some skepticism on the scope was voiced by the committee and disappointment that the project was running late. A broader assessment of water quality issues is expected in phase 2.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 a.m.

Follow Up Items

1. Prepare an assessment of the fire hydrant inspection program, and update the Committee on recommendations at a future meeting.
2. Request from the District information concerning its insurance rating system with respect to the frequency of fire hydrant inspections.
3. Update the rate comparison information to include rates charged to customers in Arlington County and the City of Falls Church.
4. Ensure that the Ward 8 Historic Heritage Council is included in the list of consulting parties for the St. Elizabeth's Water Tower Project.
5. Provide a monthly progress sheet to the Committee concerning the status of the St. Elizabeth's Water Tower Project.
6. Provide the Committee with the annual costs for replacing/repairing water pipe leaks and breaks.
7. Present the report on the Sewer System Facilities Plan at the next Committee meeting.
8. Add additional explanation to the Fact Sheet for Contract No. WAS-09-026-AA-SM – Flippo Construction Company, Inc. **(Completed)**