



NEWS & NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD
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WATER, SEWER AND THE STIMULUS PACKAGE; INVESTING IN THE FORGOTTEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Federal government and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts must address critical water resources infrastructure issues and the stimulus package is the place to start. In an Op-Ed piece submitted to *The Boston Globe*, MWRA Advisory Board Chairwoman Katherine Dunphy argues the lack of adequate infrastructure puts communities at risk of losing businesses and jobs because they cannot provide the cost-effective services expected and necessary to promote economic development by attracting and keeping businesses. This is true not only for roadways and bridges, but also for drinking water and wastewater systems. A reliable water and sewer infrastructure is the backbone for successful economic development. The water and sewer infrastructure requirements of the Commonwealth outpace the availability of dollars. In addition, the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act mandate costly investments to the region's water and sewer systems to ensure compliance; these investments come with an expensive price tag

The MWRA Advisory Board urges the Massachusetts Delegation, Governor Patrick and other state elected officials to ensure that adequate funding for water resources infrastructure is included in the federal economic stimulus package and that the Commonwealth dedicates sufficient funds to these critical sectors. While the funding included in the stimulus package will begin to address the need for improvements to drinking and wastewater systems, the reality is staggering. The MWRA submitted 27 water and wastewater projects, totaling \$318 million, for consideration for funding through the economic stimulus package. In addition, the MWRA submitted 11 energy projects totaling \$31 million.

We must act now to support water and sewer infrastructure projects to protect public health and the environment and to restore the economy. Massachusetts has the opportunity to use federal stimulus funds to make a long-term investment in the forgotten infrastructure.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MARCH 11: MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS / 10 AM – CHARLESTOWN

MARCH 12: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / 8:30 AM – BOSTON

MARCH 19: MWRA ADVISORY BOARD / 11:30AM – WELLESLEY*

* CEB HEARING HELD PRIOR TO ADVISORY BOARD MEETING



MWRA Advisory Board Chairwoman Katherine Dunphy and Representative Paul Donato at the February Advisory Board meeting

AB NAMES LEGISLATORS OF THE YEAR

The Advisory Board presented its Legislator of the Year Award for 2008 to four Legislators: Representative Paul J. Donato (D-Medford), Representative Katherine Clark (D-Melrose), Senator Marian Walsh (D-Boston), and Senator Michael Morrissey (D-Quincy). These Legislators have played a key role in the caucus through their leadership in advocating for Debt Service Assistance in last year's budget and their advocacy in promoting pro-ratepayer legislation. The Advisory Board sincerely thanks each award recipient for their strong advocacy for ratepayer relief. In other legislative news, MWRA Caucus Chairman Ronald Mariano was promoted to Assistant Majority Leader in Speaker Robert DeLeo's new leadership team. Mariano pledged to continue serving as MWRA Caucus Chair.

CEB TRANSMITTED TO ADVISORY BOARD

In mid-February, the Authority approved the transmittal of the proposed Current Expense Budget (CEB) for FY 2010 to the Advisory Board for its review and comment. Total expenses come to \$610.5 million, of which \$354.4 million is for capital financing costs (before offsets), fully 58% of the budget. Direct expenses total \$214.5 million and indirect expenses come to \$41.6 million. Non-rate revenue is \$43.7 million. Nearly 93% of all revenue is from water and sewer rates, projected to be \$566.8 million, a 4.8% increase over FY09's rates. The Advisory Board will vote on its *Comments and Recommendations* in May; the Authority's Board of Directors is scheduled to vote on the final budget in June. The Advisory Board hearing on the MWRA's Proposed FY10 CEB will be held prior to the Advisory Board meeting next month.

If you have any questions regarding topics raised in this newsletter or any other MWRA issue, please contact:
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