



# News & Notes

A publication of the **MWRA Advisory Board**  
January 2006

## **The Case for Debt Service Assistance**

Forty-seven MWRA communities, representing 97.5% of the service area have endorsed a Resolution requesting that the Commonwealth provide a minimum of \$25 million in Debt Service Assistance (DSA) for FY07. A complete list of the communities supporting the Resolution, as well as a presentation on the need for Debt Service Assistance, can be viewed on the Advisory Board's website at [www.mwraadvisoryboard.com](http://www.mwraadvisoryboard.com).

The MWRA Legislative Caucus led a successful effort in FY06 to restore DSA, securing \$12.5 million for the Program.

In addition to the community Resolutions, Advisory Board staff will be circulating a Legislators' Resolution requesting that DSA be doubled to at least \$25 million for FY07.

## **Appropriation Discontinued**

Governor Mitt Romney's recently filed fourth State Budget has the same amount allocated for Debt Service Assistance Funding as his last three budgets: zero.

## **Budget Review Underway**

Advisory Board staff have begun to review the FY06 Current Expense Budget Amendment proposed by the MWRA. The budget amendment primarily addresses increases in energy costs. Comments and Recommendations will be discussed at the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Advisory Board.

The MWRA Enabling Act empowers the Advisory Board to review and comment on the Authority's Proposed FY07 Capital Improvement Program. Staff will provide draft Comments and Recommendations at the Advisory Board's March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting in Canton.

Advisory Board staff will outline its recommendations for the Authority's Proposed FY07 Current Expense Budget at the May 18<sup>th</sup> Advisory Board meeting in Boston.

## **MWRA Advisory Board 2005 Legislator of the Year Award**

Speaker of the House Salvatore F. DiMasi and Senator Robert A. Havern were presented with the MWRA Advisory Board 2005 Legislator of the Year Award on January 19, 2006 at the State House. MWRA Chair Katherine Haynes Dunphy noted the efforts made by both on behalf of ratepayers.

## **DEP Issues Revised Water Management Act Permitting Policy (One Size Fits All)**

The Department of Environmental Protection's revised Water Management Act Permitting Policy ignored the concerns raised by water supply communities, the MWRA and the Advisory Board at the Advisory Board's October 2005 meeting.

The Advisory Board will continue to work closely with the Massachusetts Water Works Association to change the policy.

## **Water System Expansion**

In a presentation to the MWRA Board of Directors, MWRA staff identified a minimum of 36 million gallons per day available for sale. Staff identified 25 communities who may require MWRA water in the future.

The MWRA Board of Directors intends to provide staff with parameters for water system expansion at its March 2006 meeting.

## **EPA Chief Sees \$500 Billion Water and Wastewater Infrastructure as Top Priority**

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen Johnson, at a panel discussion marking the agency's 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, stated the agency's top priority is finding innovative ways to pay for costly upgrades to the nation's aging wastewater and drinking water infrastructure. Mr. Johnson estimated the cost of these upgrades to be \$500 billion. However, federal funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund has been declining; funding in FY06 fell below the \$1 billion mark to \$900 million. Further reductions are under consideration for the next budget.

### **Upcoming Meetings/Events**

- February 2 - System Expansion Committee** - 10 am – Adv Brd office
- February 8 - MWRA Board of Directors Meeting** - 10 am - Charlestown
- February 17 - Advisory Board Executive Committee Meeting**  
8:30 am at Advisory Board office
- February 23 - MWRA Advisory Board Meeting**  
11:30 am at the Wellesley Free Library

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

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