



News & Notes

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4.2% Rate Increase Finalized for FY06

At its June 29th meeting, the MWRA Board of Directors gave final approval to a 4.2% rate increase for Fiscal Year 2006. The increase is based on a Debt Service Assistance (DSA) appropriation of \$12.5 million, of which the MWRA expects to receive approximately \$10 million. Without a DSA appropriation, ratepayers were facing combined water and sewer rates in FY06 approaching 6.5%. Thanks in large part to the efforts of the MWRA Legislative Caucus and the Ways & Means Committees, rates will be kept more manageable at 4.2%. Additionally, Governor Romney, who has consistently opposed the Debt Service Assistance Program in his last two budgets, spared the program this year from his list of vetoes thereby securing the \$12.5 million in the final FY06 budget. Final FY06 rate assessments by community can be accessed at the Advisory Board's website.

MWRA Gets High Marks from State Auditor

State Auditor Joe DeNucci released a report in June reviewing the MWRA's Security Management Program. The review makes specific mention of several security enhancements implemented since June 1, 2002 and notes, "the MWRA has made great security improvements to date...".

Waiver Language Still On the Table

Advisory Board Chairman Katherine Haynes Dunphy sent correspondence this month to Governor Romney requesting that he waive the indirect rate currently assessed to the Water Supply Protection Trust. Similar requests have been made by the Trustees of the Trust and the MWRA Board of Directors. The Governor is empowered to waive the fee, which totals approximately \$1.4 million in FY05 and approaches \$2 million in FY06. Additionally, the MWRA Board of Directors voted last month to abstain from any watershed land purchases until the waiver is secured. Although unsuccessful in securing waiver language in the FY06 budget, the Advisory Board remains hopeful similar language will find its way into another legislative vehicle in the coming months.

MWRA Board of Directors' Chairman Steps Down

Governor Romney's top environmental officer, Ellen Roy Herzfelder, has announced her resignation, effective this month, as Secretary of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, thereby vacating her position as Chair of the MWRA Board of Directors. Romney has appointed Stephen R. Pritchard as the new Secretary. Mr. Pritchard is the former acting Commissioner of the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

John Carroll Receives Top Honors from MWRA Board of Directors

At its June 29th meeting, the MWRA Board of Directors voted to name the new MWRA Water Treatment Plant at Walnut Hill the "John J. Carroll Water Treatment Plant", in recognition of Board Member John Carroll's 20 years of service to the MWRA. Mr. Carroll is the only remaining original member of the MWRA Board of Directors, first elected by the Advisory Board in 1985. During his twenty years of service, Mr. Carroll has represented the interests of the 60 communities serviced by the MWRA, ensuring public accountability and promoting cost-effective programs and policies. The John J. Carroll Water Treatment Plant is now in the final testing stages, with official startup expected later this month. The Plant will be officially dedicated on August 18th, as part of the Advisory Board's Field Trip. Please contact the Advisory Board for additional information.

Advisory Board Meets with EPA Chief to Discuss CSO Controls

Members of the Advisory Board met with Robert Varney, Regional Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), last month to discuss the status of MWRA combined sewer overflows (CSO) control efforts. The MWRA is under a court mandate to perform CSO control efforts in 4 separate receiving waters. Reiterating the need to reach agreement on all 4 areas (the so-called "holistic discussion"), the Advisory Board placed emphasis on a minimum 15-year variance for the Charles River from further CSO control efforts. Following the meeting, MWRA staff made significant strides in reaching agreement with the regulators, although the length of the variance has yet to be finalized.

Reading Water Transfer Request Approved

The Town of Reading moved a step closer to becoming a partial MWRA water community this month, receiving approval from the Water Resources Commission (WRC). WRC approval means Reading can now request legislation for an interbasin transfer permit, which Governor Romney filed last week and is required before the town can purchase water from the MWRA. In addition to receiving legislative approval, Reading must also secure support from the MWRA Advisory Board and the MWRA Board of Directors.

Upcoming Meetings/Events

- August 18- Advisory Board Field Trip**
John J. Carroll Water Treatment Plant, Marlborough
(please contact the Advisory Board office for information)
- August 18- MWRA Board of Directors' meeting**
John J. Carroll Water Treatment Plant (prior to Plant tour)

note: the MWRA Board of Directors meeting on July 20th has been cancelled

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

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