

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 9, 1998  
MINUTES APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER 13, 1998 MEETING

Present: Guy Carbone, BELMONT; John Sullivan, BOSTON; Mike Nicoloro, CAMBRIDGE; Ed Sullivan, CANTON; Andrew DeSantis, CHELSEA; Bill Hadley, LEXINGTON; Peter Hersey, MELROSE; Katherine Haynes Dunphy, MILTON; Bernie Cooper, NORWOOD; Joe Foti, SOMERVILLE; Walter Woods, WELLESLEY; Bob Simonds, WOBURN.

Also in attendance: Andrew Pappastergion, John Carroll and Norman Jacques, MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS; Douglas MacDonald, Tom Powers, Barbara Gottschalk and Miriam Maxian, MWRA; Catherine Frazer and Lowell Richards, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE; Joseph Favaloro, Ryan Ferrara, Cornelia Potter, Ann Chamberlin LaBelle and Mary Ann McClellan, MWRA ADVISORY BOARD.

**I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The meeting, held at the Advisory Board office, was called to order by Chairman Joe Foti at 8:30 a.m. **A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 1998 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

**II. PREVIEW WATER TREATMENT DECISION  
LOCAL WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Doug MacDonald stated that the MWRA's recommendation to the Board of Directors on the water treatment decision is the mid-priced "ozonation" option. He noted that the main problems in the system are yellow or red water and customers who are impacted by dealing with unlined cast iron pipes. Communities have found themselves in different positions with regard to availability of resources to tackle this large and expensive problem. Because the cast iron pipes are responsible for so much of the chlorine demand, as long as the Authority has to run the residual chlorine, MWRA will always be over chlorinating the water to the communities that have repaired their pipes.

A & F has offered to make a state contribution of \$800,000 for the first year, which grows to \$4.5 million annually for a total of \$75 million, in conjunction with three MWRA contributions of \$20 million to begin a pipeline rehabilitation program. The fund will provide zero interest loans to MWRA communities and will be constantly replenished by the repayment of the loans. Every improvement improves the ability of the entire system to run the residual disinfection with minimum chemicals.

Catherine Frazer, Director of Debt Policy for the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, speaking on behalf of the Cellucci Administration, stated that the Administration does

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not

support

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filtration. The State Revolving Fund (SRF) will provide contract assistance, based on the Board of Directors selecting the ozonation option. If the filtration option were selected by the Board, the offer would be removed. The numbers indicate \$550 million would be made available over the next 20 years, with the Authority contributing \$60 million of its own funds.

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Lowell Richards, the Assistant Secretary of Capital Resources, stated from A & F's perspective, that a program addressed at the distribution system to resolve a problem that is clear and present and will have a long-term benefit to the whole system, as well as maintaining the initiative on watersheds, would be the most appropriate way to go within the resources that are available. The longer some pipes in some communities need repair, the longer it effects all the communities.

Guy Carbone asked "How do you decide which communities get the money first?" Mr. Richards said that a collaborative process between the Authority staff, Public Works and Boards of Health at a local level will decide what the definition of the greatest need will be and will have the greatest benefit for the whole. Mr. MacDonald stated the Department of Environmental Protection will establish a points criteria, like they do with the sewer money in the state revolving wastewater fund.

Walter Woods asked "Who will control this fund?" Lowell Richards said there is more flexibility on that. As far as allocation between who's going to get the money, this problem was not encountered before because every town was allocated a certain percentage depending on what they pay. Every year's appropriation of state debt service for the MWRA is going to MWRA communities. Legislation will be filed saying that this money is going to new debt service fund activities to support the MWRA initiative program. Some entity, MWRA or DEP, will decide on a formula (ability to pay, public health, rate capacity).

Communities, either out of water rates or tax rates, will pay back the loan over ten years at zero interest. The only subsidy coming from other communities is the portion of the MWRA overall rates attributable to the three \$20 million contributions.

In response to a question from a member of the Executive Committee, Mr. MacDonald said that if this Administration is not in office in January, this proposal will go to the public with a strong case that MWRA has a program that makes sense to fix water quality. Mr. MacDonald believes that this program could be sold to the Governor.

John Sullivan made the point that Boston will be putting up \$24 million on the MWRA side, and contributes to the state coffers, and would want to get as much zero interest loans as possible. Because Boston has taken care of their worst pipes, Mr. Sullivan expressed concern that Boston would not be able to qualify for the zero interest loans for many years, because other communities who have not repaired their pipes would be allowed to receive loans first. He would like to know the criteria ahead of time before Boston votes either as an Advisory Board member or as a member of the Board of Directors. Mr. MacDonald stated that he felt that the Advisory Board could design the formula to ensure that all communities are treated fairly.

Andrew De Santis asked what would happen to the pipeline rehabilitation program if EPA should win in court and require a filtration plant to be built. Mr. Richards responded by asking if the Authority could find \$60 million on top of \$400 million for filtration? He also stated that he believes with this program it is A & F's obligation to reserve the right to make allocations because the argument for

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greater contract assistance is driven by the debt service. A & F would only be willing to proceed if the Board supported ozonation. Catherine Frazer stated that when A & F looked at this proposal it was based on a decision to build a \$450 million treatment plant or a \$200 million alternative solution that contributes high health benefits according to health experts. She also stated "If the Authority decides they are going to budget for a \$400 million treatment plant, then in my view I don't believe that we can afford to do an additional \$60 million during that time in your capital budget. If you do a \$200 million program, then maybe you can afford to layer an additional \$60 million on top of that. This is the finance perspective."

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John Carroll stated that Andrew Pappastergion, Norman Jacques and he would prefer the filtration alternative and expressed his concern about a long, drawn-out battle with EPA. He also stated that he planned to propose a compromise, if a motion in favor of filtration failed, that the Board vote for the ozonation/chloramination alternative and commit to a Task 8 like study on the need for filtration.

The water treatment decision vote, as drafted, will include the pipeline rehabilitation program as proposed by A & F to indicate to EPA and the public that the Board is making one decision to improve water. Andy Pappastergion stated that there is no question that the rehabilitation program is a terrific program and should have been developed before. He stated that it bothered him that if he votes on October 21st for filtration, he will be voting against the rehabilitation program.

Joe Favalaro asked if the Grant/Loan Program will continue? It will be reconsidered at the appropriate time with this program providing context.

### **III. DISCUSSION: SYSTEM EXPANSION REQUESTS Cambridge School in Weston and 450 N. Main Street, Sharon.**

The Cambridge School in Weston has had a sewer connection with Waltham for 35 years with no known paperwork and is now trying to legitimize this connection for an expansion of a Performing Arts Center. No new flows will be added, just relocated.

A professional building located at 450 N. Main Street in Sharon has requested a system expansion for flows less than a single family house for a dental office. The Operations Committee will consider these requests.

### **IV. OTHER DISCUSSION**

Mr. MacDonald informed the Executive Committee about an incident at the Cosgrove Intake the previous day. The MWRA lost chlorine feed at the Cosgrove Intake in Clinton for four hours on October 8, 1998 between approximately 1:14 a.m. and 5:10 a.m. allowing water to move through the system without primary disinfection. Communities were notified to change their residual chlorination levels. Residual disinfection usually done at Norumbega was increased to become primary disinfection. John Sullivan asked why it took four hours to realize there was a problem. Interviews and investigation found that a hose was blocked, chlorine backed up and back pressure shut the pump down. The alarm did sound, but was not appropriately responded to.

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The Authority treated this incident as a test on community notifications. Communities were notified by fax by 7:15 a.m. with updates throughout the day. The MWRA Headquarters in Charlestown opened as an emergency operating center at 6:15 a.m. John Sullivan asked how you would manage to communicate with communities if this had happened on a weekend. The need to identify one key person in each community with home phone numbers was acknowledged.

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### **V. OTHER ITEMS**

Mr. MacDonald discussed aspects of the Braintree/Weymouth Relief Facilities Project. DEP and EPA are expected to attach upon the NPDES permit conditions that would set wet weather flow limits on all wastewater communities. Doug MacDonald drafted a letter to send to EPA and DEP, and asked Representative Mariano to be involved. There was discussion regarding communities voicing their concerns and the best way for them to do that.

### **VI. APPROVAL OF THE ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 15, 1998**

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 15, 1998.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 11:00 A.M.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Sullivan, Secretary