

**MWRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
JUNE 21, 2001  
BRADLEY ESTATE  
ROUTE 138, CANTON, MA**

**MINUTES APPROVED AT THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2001 MEETING**

Forty members were present: Philip Farrington, ARLINGTON; Edward A. Maguire, ASHLAND; Guy Carbone, BELMONT; John Sullivan, BOSTON; Darren McAuliffe, BRAINTREE; Charles Barry, BROOKLINE; Pete Peters, BURLINGTON; Ed Sullivan, CANTON; Andrew DeSantis, CHELSEA; Glen Garbati, EVERETT; Robert Angelo, FRAMINGHAM; J. R. Greene and Barbara Wyatt, GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTEES; Ralph Pecora, LEXINGTON; Bruce Kenerson, LYNNFIELD; Joseph Peluso, Jr., MALDEN; Edward Bates, MAPC; Dana Snow, MARBLEHEAD; Doran Crouse, MARLBOROUGH; Gabriel Federico, MEDFORD; Peter Hersey, MELROSE; Katherine Haynes Dunphy, MILTON; Stanley Stanzin, NEEDHAM; Jay Fink, NEWTON; Bernie Cooper, NORWOOD; Peter Smyrnios, PEABODY; Paul Connors, RANDOLPH; Ted McIntire, READING; Rod Granese, REVERE; Joseph Attubato, SAUGUS; Joseph Foti, SOMERVILLE; Jeffrey Oxman, STONEHAM; Jeanne M. Fleming, STOUGHTON; Tom Hayes, WAKEFIELD; David Savoy, WALTHAM; Walter Woods, WELLESLEY; Bradley Hayes, WEYMOUTH; Michael Woods, WILMINGTON; Ed Grant, WINCHESTER; Brett Gonsalves, WOBURN.

Also present: John Carroll and Andrew Pappastergion, MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS; Avril Elkort and James Moran, CANTON; Russell Dean and Peter Tassi, READING; Donald A. McCabe, Jr., WALTHAM; Rob Antico, WILMINGTON; John Gall and Ginger Hartman, CDM; Fred Laskey and Ria Convery, MWRA STAFF; Joe Favalaro, Cornelia Potter, Ryan Ferrara and Mary Ann McClellan, MWRA ADVISORY BOARD STAFF.

**AGENDA**

**A. WELCOME**

Chairman Joe Foti called the meeting to order at 11:55 a.m. Avril Elkort, Chair of the Board of Selectmen, welcomed everyone to Canton.

**B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM MAY 17, 2001**

A Motion was made **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 17, 2001 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**. It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

**C. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Joe Favalaro, Executive Director of the MWRA Advisory Board, noted that the Advisory Board's Annual Field Trip is scheduled for August 16<sup>th</sup> beginning at the brand new state-of-

the-art maintenance facility in Chelsea and continuing on to CSO facilities in the Boston and Cambridge areas and the Cambridge Water Treatment Plant.

Over the summer, staff will put together a report on system expansion to review the past five years for the reconvening of the System Expansion Committee in September. In addition, the Water and Sewer Retail Rate Survey will be sent to communities for input in the 2001 Report.

Some serious concerns on the state of the Authority's metering system on the wastewater side were brought to staff's attention at the Operations Committee meeting. Members of the Board of Directors have been informed of these concerns, which will be addressed during the fall schedule.

**D. PRESENTATION: CHALLENGES FACING THE MWRA – Fred Laskey, MWRA Executive Director**

Fred Laskey, MWRA Executive Director, thanked the Advisory Board representatives who serve on the Board of Directors for their support of his candidacy for the Executive Director position.

Mr. Laskey served as the Commissioner for several years at the Department of Revenue (DOR), where he had worked since 1994. During the early 1990's, Mr. Laskey was indirectly involved with the MWRA over several months when Governor Weld's office asked him to analyze and make a recommendation on whether the Weld Administration should embrace a policy for rate relief that the Legislature included in its Operating Budget. The result was the Rate Relief Strategy that has developed over the last number of years.

Mr. Laskey stated that he received a lot of feedback from people regarding the MWRA's 3.5% rate increase, which serves to remind him that the Authority must always be vigilant in providing service, make important infrastructure improvements at the least cost, and always be aware that there is someone at the other end that has to pay the bill.

Additionally, Mr. Laskey stated that he recognizes the need to maintain the confidence of legislative leaders for the state contribution for rate stabilization. The restoration of the funds both in the House and Senate budgets is a step toward that. Mr. Laskey stated that he is confident that the Governor will support the funding, adding that it is his goal to work cooperatively as a team and try to maintain support on Beacon Hill.

Jay Fink stated that member communities have come to rely on the community assistance that the MWRA has provided in the past. With warmer weather, occasionally communities experience water quality problems and the MWRA has staffed laboratory facilities that help to identify the problem. In times of heavy storms and emergencies, some communities don't have the capacity or equipment needed and need help to be a phone call away. On the sewer side, staff has been more than cooperative. Mr. Fink stated that he would like to see that level of community assistance, especially in times of emergencies, continue.

Mr. Laskey stated that the MWRA's cooperative working relationship would continue and offered his assistance via a phone call if there are issues or roadblocks.

**E. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee** - Joe Foti

❖ **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Favaloro stated that the Senate budget provided just under \$63.5 million in debt service assistance. Either the House or Senate number will provide the funds necessary for full debt service assistance for the MWRA and the other communities.

The Senate took action against the MDC as well. In the past there have been concerns about accountability at the MDC. The Senate separated the MDC into seven or eight line items, with the watershed piece a certain percentage of each of those line items. Staff expressed concern that it would make it even harder to make the Watershed Division accountable than with one line item. Staff asked the Senate to include language that prefaced the Watershed Management Act to try to get some level of accountability in ensuring that only funds that are used for watershed purposes are charged to ratepayers.

The Senate Post Audit and Oversight Bureau has submitted an information request to the MDC Watershed Division. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the MDC Watershed Division, the MWRA, the Advisory Board and EOEA, which still has not produced a level of accountability. The Advisory Board has tried many avenues to ensure accountability and will continue to do so.

❖ **ACTION ITEM: NOMINATION AND ELECTION TO THE MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Ed Sullivan, Secretary of the Advisory Board, reiterated that Norman Jacques decided not to seek reelection to the MWRA Board of Directors. The Advisory Board posted an official notice that applications would be accepted for a new member to the Board. One application was received from Mr. Foti. Mr. Sullivan asked if there were any nominations from the floor and hearing none, declared the nominations closed.

Mr. Fink offered a Motion **TO NOMINATE JOSEPH C. FOTI TO SERVE A THREE-YEAR TERM ON THE MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPRESENTING THE ADVISORY BOARD.** It was seconded.

Mr. Foti noted that in 1990 when he joined the City of Somerville there was a list of organizations he had to participate in as part of his job requirement, including the Advisory Board. He stated that the more he was involved with the Advisory Board, the more he realized what a worthwhile organization it was, stating that he was fortunate four years ago to be elected as Chairman. During that time, much has been accomplished by staff and the Advisory Board together, such as the ozonation issue, debt service assistance and a spending cap for the MWRA. Mr. Foti stated that it would be an honor and a privilege to serve on the Board of Directors if the membership sees fit.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the Executive Committee, acting as the Nominating Committee, interviewed Mr. Foti at its regularly scheduled meeting. The Secretary stated for the record that a quorum is present, and read into the record the words of the Nominating Committee: **TO NOMINATE JOSEPH C. FOTI TO THE FULL ADVISORY BOARD TO SERVE AS AN ADVISORY BOARD REPRESENTATIVE ON THE MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS FROM JULY 1, 2001 TO JUNE 30, 2004.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Foti expressed his thanks.

Mr. Favaloro stated that a notice would be sent out in August for anyone interested in joining the Executive Committee.

**Operations Committee** - Andy DeSantis

❖ **PRESENTATION: TOWN OF READING – PENDING APPLICATION FOR ENTRANCE TO MWRA WATER SYSTEM, Edward D. McIntire, Director of Public Works**

Ted McIntire, Public Works Director in Reading, thanked the Advisory Board for allowing a presentation on why Reading is pursuing an entrance into the MWRA water system and introduced Russell Dean, Assistant Town Manager; Peter Tassi, Water Treatment Plant Supervisor; and Camp Dresser & McKee consultants, John Gall and Ginger Hartman.

Mr. Dean stated that the Reading Board of Selectmen in 1999 presented an annual goal statement that included a review of the water supply issue and long-term options for the future of the water supply in the community.

An 11-member ad hoc committee comprised of representatives from the Finance Committee, Planning Commission, the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee and members of the Board of Selectmen formed to discuss potential contamination issues and vulnerability to Reading's water supply. North Reading has several contaminated sites that the town has factored into this process. Jonathan Yeo from MWRA informed the Committee on what it would take to join the MWRA in terms of money, supply, etc. The Ipswich River Watershed Association, where all of Reading's wells are located, also made a presentation, where it was noted that the Ipswich River is known as one of the most endangered rivers in the country.

After reviewing the criteria and different options, and offering the public a chance to comment through a series of public meetings, the ad hoc committee published a report which recommended that the town seek an additional source of supply through the MWRA as a supplement to the primary source. The Town of Reading is seeking to supplement existing local sources with an additional 600,000 gallons per day of water through the MWRA.

Mr. Gall noted that Reading has a registered withdrawal amount of 2.5 mgd and currently uses about 2 mgd and has been stable at that level since about 1970. The Ipswich River is oversubscribed with respect to water, particularly in the upper part of the basin. If the town takes its 2.5 mgd, and others in the system take their water, the river has been known to dry up and even run backwards.

Of the 2 mgd, 70% of that demand is from the domestic sector. Reading's domestic consumption is around 58 gallons per capita per day, which is relatively low, in part because of the high cost of water.

Reading plans to renovate its existing treatment plant. There is some need for reinvestment to treat for disinfection and disinfection byproducts and modernize the system with respect to SCADA. All of the alternatives evaluated included utilization of an aggressive conservation program, such as monetary rebates for low flow toilets and high efficiency washing machines. Eight years ago the town allowed people to install second meters on their property to measure water use for irrigation; two years ago the town charged for irrigation water as if it were going to the sewer system, purely as a statement of the affects on the Ipswich tributary. It is in Reading's economic interest to use as little of MWRA's water as possible and would be

mainly used during the May through October timeframe amounting to an estimated need for 219 million gallons per year.

In 1999, Reading began leak detection and repair and has a \$1 million capital planning process, which designates \$250,000 per year for each of the next four years. Reading has begun the mandatory MEPA EIR process.

**Finance Committee** - Phil Farrington/Katherine Dunphy

❖ **UPDATE: CIP/CEB**

Cornelia Potter stated that early next week the Authority will be presenting to the Board of Directors a final Current Expense Budget (CEB) with a required rate revenue of \$389.5 million, an increase of 3.5% over FY01. Ms. Potter noted that the rate revenue increase will be \$9.1 million less than the Authority's Proposed CEB budget in February; and \$28.5 million less than assumed two years ago.

The Authority has made considerable progress in containing direct expenses for FY02. Direct expenses are lower than actual spending in FY00 and barely \$600,000 greater than projected for FY01. The Authority has managed to achieve this through a number of means, including the renegotiated pellet plant operation contract, reduced labor costs and reduced purchased energy and chemical use, as well as reduced expense for sodium hypochlorite at Deer Island.

The driving force of the rate increase is capital finance and has been for the last several years. Even as the Authority transitions to an operations agency, it still plans to spend \$1 billion in the next three years on capital projects and \$2 billion over the next ten years. Debt service is contributing to rate increases for this year and projections for future years.

The Authority's Board of Directors has approved the final FY02-04 CIP, with a three-year budget of \$1,128.8 million and a ten-year budget of \$1,977.4 million. Spending caps have been set at \$457 million for FY02, \$329 million for FY03 and \$347 million for FY04. The ten-year cap was approved at \$2.09 billion.

The five largest projects are: Walnut Hill Water Treatment Plant, MetroWest Tunnel, Braintree-Weymouth Relief Facilities, CSO Control Program and Norumbega Covered Storage. Together these projects will account for two-thirds of capital spending.

**F. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 1:02 P.M.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Sullivan, Secretary