



NEWS & NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD
SEPTEMBER 2008

ADVISORY BOARD TESTIFIES AT BUDGET HEARINGS

Staff from the Advisory Board testified at two budget hearings this month hosted by state agencies in an effort to put water and sewer infrastructure on the radar of state budget writers for the upcoming budget season. The Advisory Board testified before the Executive Office for Administration and Finance and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to communicate the importance of investing in infrastructure, which provides the basis for economic development in the Commonwealth. During testimony, MWRA Advisory Board Executive Director Joe Favaloro showed photographs of a construction site in Boston that mapped out water, sewer, gas and electricity lines on the surface; he used the illustration to show that hidden infrastructure is present although often unseen beneath city streets, which results in it being overlooked. He also urged the Commonwealth to consider ways to update the Bottle Bill to include deposits on bottled water, which would be used to fund water and sewer infrastructure projects. The amount of need in Massachusetts for these projects is quickly outpacing the available dollars.

An intersection in downtown Boston is marked for construction work. The usually unseen water and sewer (and other main lines) are highlighted on the street surface. The Advisory Board is advocating for increased funding from the State for water and sewer projects, which have become "the forgotten infrastructure."



SECRETARY BOWLES ADDRESSES AB

Ian Bowles, Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and Chairman of the MWRA Board of Directors (pictured left), spoke at the MWRA Advisory Board meeting this month. He spoke about the landmark Environmental Bond Bill and other legislation that was passed this session as well as the many renewable energy initiatives underway at EEA.

LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

MWRA Advisory Board staff is working to compile Legislative Priorities for the upcoming 2009-2010 Legislative Session. A major initiative underway is an effort to expand the Commonwealth's Bottle Bill to include a deposit on bottled water. Under this expanded bottle bill, the unclaimed deposits from bottled water would be directed to a dedicated fund to be used by entities that maintain and replace water and sewer infrastructure. With over \$8 billion needed to fix the state's aging drinking water infrastructure, this legislation would provide a dedicated source to address neglected infrastructure needs. This type of innovation within an updated Bottle Bill would create a win-win situation for communities, ratepayers and the environment. The Advisory Board will work with the MWRA Legislative Caucus to file this bill and other important pro-ratepayer initiatives.

For questions, comment, and suggestions regarding the Legislative Agenda, contact Christine at the Advisory Board.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

OCTOBER 10: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / 8:30 AM - BOSTON
OCTOBER 15: MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS / 10 AM - CHARLESTOWN
OCTOBER 16: ADVISORY BOARD MEETING / 11:30 AM - WELLESLEY
NOVEMBER 6: JOINT WAC-WSCAC-ADVISORY BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING / 10AM - SOUTHBOROUGH

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