



NEWS & NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE MWRA ADVISORY BOARD
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GOVERNOR RELEASES HOUSE ONE; ADVISORY BOARD'S EXPANDED BOTTLE BILL APPROACH IS FEATURED

Governor Patrick released his \$28 billion budget proposal for the state's FY10 budget on January 28, 2009. The Governor championed an MWRA Advisory Board initiative that expands the existing Bottle Bill to include deposits on bottled water. The budget proposal includes \$20 million in projected revenue from unclaimed deposits, of which \$10 million would be used for water and sewer rate relief. The other \$10 million would be split between local recycling programs and other project priorities. The expanded Bottle Bill is one of four new initiatives supported by the Advisory Board and the MWRA to generate new sources of funding for water and sewer infrastructure needs. The Advisory Board thanks the Governor for including rate relief as a priority in his budget and looks forward to continuing discussion on this approach and others in the upcoming budget season.

In the Legislative Branch, the 186th General Court convened its first formal session this month, kicking off a new two-year session. The MWRA Caucus will gain ten new members from within the service area. The Advisory Board and the MWRA hosted a joint bill-signing day where Legislators signed onto eleven pieces of legislation that were filed for this month's bill filing deadline. Four new initiatives address funding for water and sewer infrastructure; other legislative priorities include lead service replacement programs, PILOT payments and Infiltration & Inflow assistance.

Reports of the state's budget outlook continue to be grim. Governor Patrick recently used expanded 9C powers to cut \$128 million in local aid for FY09. FY10 revenue is projected to be \$3 billion lower than FY09.

Information on Governor Patrick's proposal for an Expanded Bottle Bill in House One can be found here:

<http://www.mass.gov/bb/h1/fy10h1/exec10/hbudbrief27.htm>

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FEBRUARY 11: MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS / 10 AM – CHARLESTOWN
FEBRUARY 13: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / 8:30 AM – BOSTON
FEBRUARY 19: MWRA ADVISORY BOARD / 11:30AM – BOSTON - TBD



RATEPAYERS THANK DiMASI FOR LEADERSHIP AND WELCOME SPEAKER DELEO

After thirty years serving in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, Speaker Salvatore DiMasi announced that he was stepping down from his seat, effective January 27, 2009. On behalf of the cities and towns in the MWRA service area, the Advisory Board extends its sincere appreciation to Speaker DiMasi for his leadership during his time in office. From his role as Representative to Majority Leader to Speaker of the House, DiMasi has been a strong advocate for ratepayers.

Chairman Robert DeLeo of Winthrop was elected to replace DiMasi as Speaker of the House. DeLeo is the former Chairman of the MWRA Caucus and former Chairman of House Ways & Means Committee. He has worked tirelessly on behalf of ratepayers throughout his career on Beacon Hill. Ratepayers welcome Speaker DeLeo and look forward to continued work with him in the future.

ADVISORY BOARD ASKS FOR RATES MEETING

In a recent letter to MWRA Board Chairman Ian Bowles and Fred Laskey, Executive Director of the MWRA, Katherine Dunphy, Chairwoman of the MWRA Advisory Board, called for a meeting to address the pressing concerns of the fiscal climate and the development of the FY10 budget. The meeting of the MWRA Board of Directors, the Advisory Board's Executive Committee, and both staffs would address key topics including capital financing, interest rate assumptions, non-rate revenues and investment income, use of rate stabilization funds, and assumptions for Authority operations. The difficult financial circumstances on the federal level are impacting the local level and ratepayers; a rate summit would allow early collaboration in the budget process to strengthen the Authority's budget proposals. Read the Advisory Board's letter here: www.mwraadvisoryboard.com

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