



# News & Notes

A publication of the MWRA Advisory Board  
November 2014



## In Memoriam Michael Ralph (1947 to 2014) "You're the Best!"

*By Joseph Favaloro*

This is the fourth memoriam I have written in the past year and is the most difficult for me.

I considered Mike a mentor and a friend, showing me the political ropes. I look back fondly at our times together.

Mike and I had a regularly scheduled meeting in my office every Tuesday to discuss issues. In reality, we talked every day. (His job was to gauge my temperature on any given issue and to tone me down.)

Everyone liked Mike and Mike knew everybody. He had an uncanny ability to get right to the heart of the matter and provide sage advice, be it to the four Executive Directors he worked for, legislators, local officials, fellow staffers, or just plain old me. We all wanted Mike's thoughts.

The Authority, today, would not be where it is if not for his contributions.

Michael ended most conversations with this trademark phrase, "You're the best!" In reality, it was Mike who was the

### Upcoming Events

December 3rd -  
Water Supply  
Protection Trust  
Meeting -  
Southborough  
at 10:00 a.m.

December 17th -  
MWRA Board of  
Directors -  
Charlestown  
at 10:00 a.m.

December 25th -  
MERRY  
CHRISTMAS!

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best.

Can you imagine the havoc Sen. Havern and Mike Ralph are causing in Heaven?

## **Governor Patrick 9cs (Eliminates) Debt Service Assistance from FY15 State Budget**

Last July, the approved FY15 State Budget contained \$1.1 million in Debt Service Assistance (DSA) - an increase of 10% from FY14.

Last week, in order to bridge a state revenue shortfall, Governor Patrick cut the funds from the budget. This is the fifth time in my 26-year tenure that DSA has been 9c'd. As always, Advisory Board staff will work to get DSA restored.

Please note: there is no impact to communities' FY15 assessments because the Authority accepted the Advisory Board's recommendation that "any Debt Service Assistance received from the Commonwealth will be utilized in the fiscal year immediately following its receipt in the form of a direct reduction to the rate revenue requirement."

## **MWRA Advisory Board Legislative Goals for 2015 - 2016 Legislative Session**

At its regular meeting in November, the Advisory Board approved a legislative package for the two-year session beginning in January.

The principal focus is to ensure appropriations for Senate Bill 2342, The Water Infrastructure Bill, to:

- Provide 50/50 matches for communities looking to enter the MWRA Service Area
- Reimburse the MWRA for community Inflow/Infiltration Programs
- Increase the annual SRF spending cap from \$88 million to \$138 million

In addition, the Advisory Board voted to support:

- H242/S368 - An Act Relative to the Sewer Rate Relief Fund
- H1704 - An Act to Eliminate Duplicate Payments for the PILOT Program in the Quabbin Reservoir Under MGL CAAP 59, Section 56
- HB59 - An Act Providing Retiree Healthcare Benefits Reform

## For Your Information...

The 2014 Water and Sewer Retail Rate Survey will be officially released in December. The document will be available on thumb drive and on the Advisory Board's website at <http://mwraadvisoryboard.com/>.

The November Advisory Board Green Sheet Video is also available on the website. This month's topic is a Capital Financing Overview that answers the following questions:

- What percent of the Authority's budget is capital financing?
- What are the drivers of MWRA's debt service costs?
- What year will MWRA debt service be less than it is today?

Click [here](#) to view the Green Sheet Video.



William A. Brutsch

### **MWRA Dedicates Water Treatment Facility in Ware in Honor of Bill Brutsch**

On November 12, 2014, family, friends, colleagues and public officials gathered to dedicate the William A. Brutsch Water Treatment Facility in Ware, Massachusetts.

The facility treats drinking water for MWRA's three Chicopee Valley Aqueduct Water System communities: Wilbraham, Chicopee and South Hadley Fire District No. 1.

Mr. Brutsch began his career with the Metropolitan District Commission in 1970, holding many positions including Director of the Water Division and Chief Water Supply Engineer. After the creation of the MWRA, Bill was appointed Director of the Waterworks Division in 1986.

During the agency's first ten years, the foundations were laid for the modernization of one of the country's great water systems, under Bill's steadfast leadership. Since then, nearly \$2 billion has been invested in a new, redundant 17.6-mile aqueduct, two state-of-the-art water treatment plants, covered water storage facilities around the service area, and newly cleaned and lined pipelines have been built to ensure clean, safe and reliable drinking water for over 2.3 million people in 50 communities and for generations to come.

