



## MWRA Advisory Board

# Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, January 9, 2015  
8:30 AM

Advisory Board Conference Room  
100 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Building 39-4  
Boston, MA 02129

### Attendees

Michael Rademacher	Arlington	Bernie Cooper	Norwood	Carol Antonelli	Wakefield
Tim MacDonald	Cambridge	Michael Coffey	Quincy	Joseph Favaloro	Staff
William Hadley	Lexington	Nick Rystrom	Revere	Matthew Romero	Staff
Katherine Dunphy	Milton	Brendan O'Regan	Saugus	Cornelia Potter	Staff
John Carroll	MWRA Board	Rob King	Somerville	Travis Ahern	Staff
Lou Taverna	Newton	John DeAmicis	Stoneham	Mary Ann McClellan	Staff

### MINUTES APPROVED AT THE MARCH 13, 2015 MEETING

#### I. Approval of the November 14, 2014 Minutes of the Executive Committee

Chairman Katherine Haynes Dunphy called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. A Motion was made **TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 14, 2014 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**. It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

#### II. Status:

##### A. Co-Digestion

MWRA Advisory Board Executive Director Joseph Favaloro noted that the Advisory Board does have an influence in what goes on at the Authority. In regard to co-digestion, the Advisory Board wanted the state to come up with funding and ensure that the Authority had a “get out of jail free card” in the event of an issue with the co-digestion process at Deer Island. It is now January and no funding has been received from the Commonwealth.

Additionally, Waste Management will not move forward unless it receives funding from the Commonwealth or the MWRA for additional costs for barging.

If this office hadn't slowed this process down, the Authority would have been spending a lot of money for nothing to be happening at Deer Island. Slowing this process down was the right decision.

At this point, staff does not know what the new administration's position is going to be on co-digestion and food waste.

John DeAmicis noted that meanwhile the law still says that large entities have to dispose of their organic waste separately from other waste. Mr. Favaloro said that is correct and these entities have all found sources so there is currently no market for co-digestion at this point. The previous administration had said they had no plans to expand the program.

Mike Coffey asked if the MWRA has spent any money on the co-digestion pilot study. Mr. Favaloro said the Authority has spent a nominal amount.

Joseph E. Favaloro, Executive Director

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## **B. Co-Permittee Suit vs. EPA**

Mr. Favaloro said one of the advantages, for short money, that the Executive Committee allowed the Advisory Board to spend to help in the appeal process regarding the co-permittee provision for the Charles River Pollution Control District (CRPCD) is that the Advisory Board now has access to all of the court documents and hearing notes. At the hearing in Washington DC, EPA asked the same questions that the Advisory Board posed. How can you make a community a co-permittee if you have never allowed them into the process? Why would this apply only to Region 1 and not the rest of the country? They posed a lot of difficult questions at EPA.

John Sanchez asked who is funding the lawsuit. Mr. Favaloro said it is a combination of the communities in the CRPCD (Bellingham, Franklin, Medway and Millis), the South Essex Sewer District, the Upper Blackstone Water Pollution Control District and the Advisory Board, with about \$50,000 being raised.

## **III. Changes to MWRA Board of Directors / MWRA Staff**

Mr. Favaloro noted that there have been some significant changes at the Authority. First, Rachel Madden, Director of Administration and Finance, has left the MWRA and has accepted the position of Under Secretary of Administration and Finance for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Authority plans to separate the Administration and Finance functions and assign a Director to each. Should these positions be filled from within the MWRA, it will also trigger further openings to fill the spots of the people that were promoted. These appointments are expected at the next Board meeting.

Last month, they also had some significant changes. For instance, the head of Human Resources was moved to a position in Operations. Karen Gay-Valente became the Director of Human Resources. The head of government relations left and he is being replaced by Sean Navin.

Secretary Bartlett is gone and is being replaced by Representative Matthew Beaton. Board Member Joel Barrera is going to be Deputy Chief of Staff for Cabinet Relations and Brian Swett is leaving from the City of Boston.

## **IV. Advisory Board Tracking Process / Website Changes**

The Advisory Board is developing a tracking mechanism to follow recommendations that are made by staff and approved by the Advisory Board. This will be posted to the website and people will be able to check the status of these recommendations.

Staff has narrowed the tracking to “big picture” items that identify four or five of the major things that the Advisory Board has been involved with over a series of years. Interested parties will be able to sign on and get a history of these recommendations from the most recent developments to the early days of the recommendations.

Director of Communications Matthew Romero provided members with the link to the website to follow along: <http://mwraadvisoryboard.com/advocacy/current-activity/>. Mr. Romero said “big ticket” items that staff is tracking will be posted to this location and will be updated as developments occur.

Examples of items to be tracked are co-digestion, inflow and infiltration, molybdenum, co-permittees, OPEB, etc.

Each topic will be listed along with the biggest goal that the Advisory Board would like to reach and then updates along the way. Staff intends to update this information on a quarterly basis.

Links to the original recommendation will be available at each of the items being tracked.

Bernie Cooper asked if this is where he would find a link to the existing spreadsheet that exists by community related to I/I. Mr. Favaloro responded that it can be added and it would allow you to get an immediate picture and the long-term picture. Mr. Romero noted that staff hadn’t thought about adding this spreadsheet to the sight but it can be done; should anyone else have ideas on things to track or other resources to link in, please let staff know. It is a great idea to cross-reference this to information that is useful for the communities as well.

For example, staff plans to send a letter to the Authority requesting that molybdenum be banned from the MWRA system. EPA has a limit of 25 mg/kg, while DEP’s limit is 75 mg/kg. DEP will not lower the limit, which means that the Authority is not allowed to sell its pellets in Massachusetts for part of the year. This could easily be resolved by raising DEP’s number by a small amount.

Mr. Hadley said he thinks this is a great tool.

Mr. Romero noted that the MuniWorks videos have been posted to the website as well and can be viewed by speaker or in its entirety.

Mr. Cooper requested that future mailings of thumb drives be labeled as to the thumb drives content on the outside of the thumb drive.

Chairman Dunphy noted that “green sheets” may not be identifiable to everyone and staff may want to transition over to a new title.

Mr. Favaloro stated that the Advisory Board attended a news conference in regard to the first distribution of I/I funding from the new increased phase. Newton Mayor Setti Warren received the first check and it garnered some news coverage.

The MWRA put the Advisory Board up for the “Stormy Award,” which is given by a combination of the New England Water Works Association and other organizations. It is regarding innovation and education on stormwater. Staff believes that stormwater will be playing a larger role for communities in the future.

## **V. Legislative Update / Advisory Board Legislators of the Year**

Debt Service Assistance is not likely to come back after having been 9c'd by the Governor. Staff's focus this session will be appropriations for the items that were approved in the Infrastructure Bill in the last session.

Two bills will be filed early next week regarding payments in lieu of taxes and Debt Service Assistance.

Legislators that will be receiving "Legislator of the Year" awards from the Advisory Board in the coming months are Representative Carolyn Dykema, House Majority Leader Ron Mariano and Senators Anthony Petruccelli and James Eldridge.

## **VI. Office Updates**

Mr. Favaloro noted that the Advisory Board has signed off on a new five-year lease. All of the computers are in, less one of the laptops, which will be in during the next six weeks. Staff has begun to look at SMART boards to purchase.

All of the thumb drives with the water and sewer survey have been sent out, except for the legislature, which will be hand delivered to save postage.

## **VII. Approval of the Advisory Board Agenda for January 15, 2015**

A motion was made **TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA FOR THE JANUARY 15, 2015 MEETING.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

A motion was made **TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:32 A.M.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,



William Hadley, Secretary