



News & Notes

A publication of the MWRA Advisory Board
May 2015

Cleanest Urban Beaches in the Nation

Question: What do New York's Coney Island Beach, Virginia Beach, Florida's South Beach, California's Santa Monica Beach and Hawaii's Waikiki Beach have in common?

Answer: All of these high profile, destination beaches lost in a matchup against South Boston's Beaches for water quality. Based on comparable water quality testing data between 2012 and 2014, both Constitution Beach and Carson Beach had cleaner water than any of these urban beaches.*

Add to this last year's announcement that Boston/MWRA was voted the best drinking water in the country by industry professionals and leaders, what we have is a validation of a remarkable turnaround of both the water and sewer systems.

Many deserve credit including the MWRA and its dedicated Board and staff; Judges A. David Mazzone and Richard G. Stearns, who oversaw the projects; federal and state regulators; as well as harbor advocates.

Often overlooked, however, are those most critical to the success of these projects: the MWRA communities and their ratepayers. After all, these environmental and economic achievements came with hefty price tags totaling billions of dollars. Who paid them? The communities through their ratepayers. Undeniably, the results were worth the costs and the effort. Transforming the "dirtiest Harbor in America" into what no less than the EPA has dubbed "a great American jewel," as well as drinking water that once had regular odor and taste complaints into the "best drinking water in the country" are remarkable feats. But after congratulating all those who rightly deserve credit for their work, let's not forget to give credit to the unheralded champions of these successes: the ones who pay the bills.

**Study was conducted by Save the Harbor/Save the Bay*

Advisory Board Reduces Combined Rate Assessment Increase by 18% for FY16

Upcoming Events

June 3rd -
Board of Directors
- Hearing on AB
Comments and
Recommendations
Charlestown
at 10:00 a.m.

June 4th -
Water Supply
Protection Trust -
Charlestown
at 10:00 a.m.

June 12th -
Executive
Committee Meeting -
Charlestown at 8:30
a.m.

June 17th -
Massachusetts
Molybdenum in
Biosolids Workshop
- Chelmsford from
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

June 18th -
Advisory Board
Meeting - Lexington
at 11:30 a.m.

June 18th -
MWRA 30th
Reunion -
Boston - 5:30 p.m. to
9:00 p.m.

June 24th -
Board of Directors -
Charlestown
at 10:00 a.m.

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At its May 21st meeting, the Advisory Board voted to reduce the MWRA's proposed combined rate assessment from 4.1% to 3.36%, a reduction of 74 basis points or 18%.

The Advisory Board also voted to recommend:

- That the FY16 contribution to the newly established OPEB Trust Fund of \$5.06 million not be subject to the operating reserve requirement, saving \$843,745 in FY16 and that this contribution, and any future contribution, be made on the final day of the fiscal year in the event that the funds are required to fill a budget shortfall, as the contribution is not required by law.
- To convene a working group to develop a rate structure for "direct source water" - i.e. untreated water, directly from the Quabbin and/or Wachusett reservoirs.
- That the Authority join with the Advisory Board to actively pursue MassDEP primacy of wastewater and stormwater, removing direct control of NPDES permitting from the EPA.
- That DCR pursue Green Certification for the Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP) through the Forest Stewardship Council, and that they look to increase forestry revenues in conjunction with the findings of the STAC Report.

The Advisory Board will present its *Comments and Recommendations* to the MWRA Board of Directors on June 3rd. To access all of the Advisory Board's *Comments and Recommendations*, go to: <http://wp.me/P5KMkd-13n>.

House/Senate Names FY16 Budget Conferees

Ways and Means Committee Chairs, Representative Brian Dempsey of Haverhill and Senator Karen Spilka of Ashland will lead a six-member State Budget Conference Committee. They will be joined by Representatives Stephen Kulik of Worthington and Todd Smola, a Warren Republican; Senators Sal DiDomenico of Everett and Vinny deMacedo, a Plymouth Republican.

The Advisory Board hopes that the Senate will adopt the House version's language in line item 1231-1000, which includes \$1.1 million for the Commonwealth Sewer Rate Relief Fund (Debt Service Assistance - DSA).

Save the Date/Spread the Word 30th Anniversary Reunion

The MWRA and MWRA Advisory Board's 30th Anniversary Reunion is being held on Thursday, June 18, 2015 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Metropolitan Waterworks Museum,

any other important updates regarding the Advisory Board, please subscribe to our mailing list. Thank you!



Website & Twitter

If you are interested in finding out more about the Advisory Board, [click here](#) to visit our website. You can also follow us on Twitter by clicking on the link below.



2450 Beacon Street, Boston.

\$40 Per Person - Hot and Cold Hors D'oeuvres - Cash Bar - Free Parking. To reserve your ticket, contact Maggie Debbie at MWRAReunion@gmail.com or 617-953-6332.

Has it really been 30 years?