

**MWRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 17, 1998  
WELLESLEY TOWN HALL  
525 WASHINGTON STREET, WELLESLEY, MA**

**MINUTES APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER 19, 1998 MEETING**

Nineteen members were present: Edward Maguire, ASHLAND; John Sullivan, BOSTON; Edward Sullivan, CANTON; Andrew DeSantis, CHELSEA; David Ravanese, EVERETT; Al Renzi, FRAMINGHAM; J. R. Greene and Barbara Wyatt, GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTEES; Bill Hadley, LEXINGTON; Bruce Kenerson, LYNNFIELD; Dana Snow, MARBLEHEAD; Peter Hersey, MELROSE; Bernard Cooper, NORWOOD; Ed Nelson, QUINCY; Ted McIntire, READING; Rod Granese, REVERE; Joe Foti, SOMERVILLE; Thomas Hayes, WAKEFIELD; Walter Woods, WELLESLEY.

Also present: Norman Jacques and Andrew Pappastergion, MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS; Eileen Simonson and Bill Elliott, WSCAC; Wilbur Bassett, MARBLEHEAD; Joe Favaloro, Cornelia Potter, Ryan Ferrara, Ann Chamberlin LaBelle, Kim Smith and Mary Ann McClellan, MWRA ADVISORY BOARD STAFF.

A. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by Chairman Joe Foti who welcomed everyone to Wellesley.

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM JUNE 18, 1998

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 18, 1998 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

C. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Joe Favaloro welcomed everyone back and reported that a quorum at the August 20th special Advisory Board meeting, which was incorporated into the field trip, officially elected Norman Jacques to serve another three-year term on the MWRA Board of Directors. He will be sworn in by Acting Governor Cellucci on October 2, 1998.

The Advisory Board, in conjunction with the Authority, will hold a community forum relating to the Year 2000 and the potential computer problems that communities could be facing. Invitations have been sent to MIS

personnel in the communities to hear speakers from the Authority, guests from DEP and other agencies. The meeting is scheduled for September 25th at the MWRA.

D. PRESENTATION - STATUS OF OUTSTANDING REGULATORY ISSUES/COURT DECREES - MWRA STAFF

Tom Powers gave a brief report on the status of drinking water consent order issues with state regulatory agencies that will have significant cost impacts for rate payers. One major consent order with DEP covers Quabbin Reservoir for the three Chicopee Valley Aqueduct communities. Nash Hill Covered Storage and a water treatment facility are moving forward. Under the Wachusett Reservoir consent order, Norumbega Covered Storage is in the permitting stage. Everything else is on schedule.

The Walnut Hill Water Treatment Plant decision between ozonation and filtration is scheduled to be made by the Board of Directors on October 21, 1998. A plan will be submitted to the state DEP by the end of October. If the Board of Directors votes to pursue a waiver of filtration, then DEP will have two months to review the plan to decide if it is in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. EPA can counter that with an accelerated review of the plan in court.

MWRA and MDC submitted a Draft Watershed Protection Plan to DEP at the end of July. MDC will hold a public hearing on this issue in October and submit a final report in November.

Norumbega Covered Storage and the Walnut Hill Water Treatment Plant are the two things to keep an eye on from a rate payer perspective.

Virginia Renick spoke regarding the Wastewater Division's court orders and schedules. The biggest project is the Deer Island Project, which is scheduled to be completed by December 1999. The most significant accomplishment of 1998 was the completion of the Inter-Island Tunnel and Nut Island Headworks. Full scale demolition of Nut Island Treatment Plant is scheduled to be completed by October 5.

The nine and one-half mile outfall tunnel has taken longer than planned. The Authority reported to the courts that the outfall tunnel will not be done until the summer of 1999. Also under the court schedule is the residual treatment facility which should be done by next year.

A major piece of the court schedule under the Boston Harbor Project is the CSO's. The key event during the past year under the CSO Program is that the Authority completed the facilities plans for 25 separate projects scattered along the Harbor, the Charles River, the Upper Mystic and Alewife Brook. MWRA has received both EPA and DEP approval for the majority of the plans.

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The Charles River CSO Program was one place where DEP and EPA were not willing to settle for the recommended plan. The agencies requested the Authority to do additional studies. Negotiations resulted in an agreement to contribute \$308,000 to a larger study of the Charles River that is going to be conducted by the United State Geological Survey. These funds will be used for the stormwater sampling part of the survey.

tudy of the Charles River that is going to be conducted by the United State Geological Survey. These funds will be used for the stormwater sampling part of the survey.

The Authority continues to expect a NPDES permit in the next few months covering the outfall at Deer Island, as well as the CSOs. An issue of concern is the extent of water conservation that was added to the permit. It's the first time ever that a wastewater permit included conditions regarding water conservation. There is also controversy about the extent of the outfall monitoring and what the contingency plan should be.

Since 1994 there has been an Administrative Order by EPA to take care of the problems in the Framingham interceptor system. A new gravity sewer and pumping station were built. That project was completed earlier this summer. One remaining piece of that order is a re-negotiation with EPA for an extension for the second half of the Framingham Extension Sewer due to design problems.

MWRA is facing another Administrative Order on another major interceptor project, the Braintree/Weymouth Project. Earlier this year DEP sent a notice to MWRA, Braintree and Weymouth advising that it was going to issue administrative orders unless a consent order could be negotiated. Both Joe Favaloro and Cornelia Potter raised concerns regarding any court or DEP involvement.

## **E. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### Executive Committee - Joe Foti

- **ACTION ITEM - Nomination and Election of FY99 Executive Committee**

On Friday, September 11, the current Executive Committee, acting as the Nomination Committee, put together a slate of nominees for the FY99 Executive Committee. Those who wish to remain on the committee, along with two new members, were presented to the Executive Committee as the FY99 slate. They voted to submit the following list to the full Advisory Board for approval:

<b><u>Chairman:</u></b>	<b>Joe Foti, Somerville</b>
<b><u>Co-Vice Chair of Finance:</u></b>	<b>Katherine Haynes Dunphy, Milton and Phil Farrington, Stoughton</b>
<b><u>Vice Chair of Operations:</u></b>	<b>Andrew DeSantis, Chelsea</b>
<b><u>Secretary:</u></b>	<b>Edward Sullivan, Canton</b>
<b><u>Treasurer:</u></b>	<b>Michael Nicoloro, Cambridge</b>
<b><u>At-Large:</u></b>	<b>Bernard Cooper, Norwood Guy Carbone, Belmont William Hadley, Lexington Peter Hersey, Melrose Frank Lagrotteria, Weymouth Steve Powers, Winchester David Ravanasi, Everett Robert Simonds, Woburn Stanley Stanzin, Needham</b>

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**John Sullivan, Jr., Boston**

**Walter Woods, Wellesley**

There being no nominations from the floor and no discussion, a vote was called. **A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED FY99 SLATE.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Joe Favaloro reported that the Acting Governor vetoed language allowing the Advisory Board to review the MDC Watershed Division's budget which had passed both the House and Senate. Staff is working with EOEAA on a formal Memorandum of Agreement to give the Advisory Board the opportunity to review the budget to ensure that the Watershed Division is held accountable to MWRA ratepayers.

The Lease/Lease Back program providing the MWRA the ability to sell an asset to a private entity and then lease it back, did not pass the Senate. The value of that for the MWRA could have been as high as \$10 or \$11 million.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is providing up to \$300,000 to have the MWRA do an extensive study (Southern High Service Extension Study) to analyze providing supplemental water service to the southern communities of Avon, Braintree, Brockton, Canton, Holbrook, Randolph, Stoughton and Weymouth.

In November the Advisory Board will come up with the Legislative Agenda for FY99 which will include debt service assistance, SRF loans, Lease/Leaseback and initiatives of that nature. Interested parties will be invited when the meeting is scheduled to work on that agenda.

**Operations Committee** - Andy De Santis

## **PRESENTATION - WSCAC Position on Water Treatment - Bill Elliott/Eileen Simonson - Co- Executive Directors**

Andy De Santis introduced Bill Elliott and Eileen Simonson of the Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee (WSCAC).

Eileen Simonson presented WSCAC's position. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires that filtration systems be built for all surface water systems, or that suppliers come up with a plan for comparable quality water. The way the law is written, watershed management must be a key element to control and operate your watershed. Those were the two standards: filter or do watershed management. The Quabbin Reservoir, the principal source of water in the system, received a waiver of the filtration requirements with a watershed plan and it has proceeded with annual review on a waiver of filtration. The Wachusett Reservoir had a bird roosting problem which was likely the source of the failure to meet the standards at that time. A watershed strategy was developed at this time. The MWRA Board saw that Wachusett wasn't going to make the standard initially and agreed to the dual track and also agreed the SDWA doesn't really include water treatment for source water quality. MWRA began assessing whether this system provided comparable water to the requirement of the act and still provide a consistent philosophy of the system which was to manage it, to operate it as simply as possible, and to provide the consumer improved water.

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Under the dual track, the Board went ahead and acted as if they had to build filtration: site it, do environmental studies.

Another oversight committee (Task 8) was established to find out what the disinfection byproducts are, what's happening in the pipes and the key treatments to meet the same public health requirements. WSCAC learned that all of the treatments would meet the current standards. All of the studies and water quality issues in the system and the results of watching incredibly rapid operating changes that the system can meet current standards on *giardia* and other pathogens reduction even while the decisions are being made. These changes, when given time to stabilize, were producing incredibly good quality water.

From WSCAC's perspective, the MWRA's public health priorities are absolutely correct. The watershed protection act, whose primary purpose was protection of this water system, was passed. The watershed communities now receive technical assistance from MDC, which has improved watershed protection over the years. WSCAC has come to feel from the technical information that filtration is in fact different than changing disinfectant. Disinfection has been used on water systems for a hundred years or more. Filtration is really a different technology. It indicates to the general public that their water supply is deficient.

Bill Elliott added that part of WSCAC's recommendation to the MWRA and the communities involves an allocation of resources. Bill asked: How can you provide to your consumers the highest quality water at the tap for a given level of resources? WSCAC feels that the distribution system is a key piece of this. Part of the WSCAC recommendation is that the Advisory Board communities, the Authority, and perhaps state agencies, work out a way to improve the distribution system more expeditiously. The water quality studies indicate that the natural treatment that occurs in these reservoirs is very effective and that the quality of water that is entering the intake at Wachusett Reservoir is comparable to the water quality of many, if not most, of the filtration plants in the country. Water quality is substantially improved through filtration considering the substance of MWRA source water, however, filtration is unnecessary. WSCAC believes that the combination of the natural treatment that already exists, plus more effective disinfection to back up that treatment, provides very high quality water. The additional expenditure for filtration carries with it risk of losing the benefits in terms of the natural treatment method that already exists.

Andy De Santis, speaking for himself as a licensed water operator and consumer, spoke in favor of filtration. He stated that the benefits of filtration are better disinfection with lower residuals and disinfection byproducts; better control of *cryptosporidium*; control of taste and odor problems through decreases in natural organic matter; and the ability to better treat the source water should something go wrong. He stated that the small incremental cost in providing better treatment is good insurance against the risk that we may take if we do not take advantage of the benefits of filtration. MWRA communities shouldn't gamble with water quality. Mr. DeSantis urged those in attendance to read WSCAC's position paper, his written statement, and the Advisory Board's primer, which provides a balanced view of this issue. Mr. DeSantis would like to thank Kim Smith and Ryan Ferrara from the Advisory Board for the amount of work that has gone into the Primer.

Dana Snow reported that continued discussions in the Town of Marblehead resulted in a pro-filtration position with support from the Board of Health. Marblehead Water and Sewer Commission feels that there are four very important issues: watershed protection, treatment, pipe-line rehabilitation, and consumer confidence.

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John Sullivan reported that discussions were being held with the Board of Health and other decision makers in the City of Boston to come up with Boston's position.

**DISCUSSION - Advisory Board role to ensure community participation in treatment decision**

The processes that the Advisory Board and the Executive Committee implemented on the water treatment decision were as follows: a tour of the Worcester Treatment Plant; distribution of the Water Treatment Decision Primer; and three Coffee and Conversation meetings that were geared to educate decision makers in the communities. Of the 44 MWRA communities that were invited, approximately 140 people attended a session, with approximately 41 of the 44 communities participating.

Members of the Executive Committee voted to hold a public hearing on September 28 at Newton City Hall between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. that would afford the communities an opportunity to put into the public record their comments and concerns. Written testimony will be accepted until 2:00 p.m. on September 28th. A transcriber will, within 24 hours, compile the record of that meeting which will be forwarded to the Board of Directors who will be holding an all day retreat on October 2 at the Weston Hotel in Waltham where the Board will have an opportunity, with a facilitator, to go through all outstanding issues before making a final treatment decision on October 21.

In addition, on September 22nd at Chelsea City Hall the monthly Operations Committee Meeting will be held. Mr. DeSantis has asked personnel of the MWRA to be there to answer questions regarding water treatment.

**F. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

**No questions or comments.**

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:35 P.M.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Sullivan, Secretary