

**MWRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 16, 2003
STATE HOUSE
ROOM 350, BOSTON, MA**

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER 20, 2003 MEETING

Twenty-three members were present: John Sanchez, ARLINGTON; E. A. Maguire, ASHLAND; Peter Castanino, BELMONT; John Sullivan, BOSTON; Ed Sullivan, CANTON; Andrew DeSantis, CHELSEA; Jon E. Norton, EVERETT; J. R. Greene and Barbara Wyatt, GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTEES; William Hadley, LEXINGTON; Bruce Kenerson, LYNNFIELD; Doran Crouse, MARLBOROUGH; Katherine Haynes Dunphy, MILTON; Gerald C. Rovner, NEEDHAM; Bernard Cooper, NORWOOD; Jay Fink, QUINCY; Ted McIntire, READING; Joan Lastovica, SOMERVILLE; Silvio J. Baruzzi, SWAMPSCOTT; Don McCabe, WALTHAM; Walter Woods, WELLESLEY; Earl Forman, WESTON; Robert Antico, WILMINGTON.

Also present: John Carroll and Joseph Foti, MWRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS; Eileen Simonson, William Elliott, Alice Clemente and Martha Stevenson, WSCAC; Jim Moran, CANTON; Gino Cresta, Jr., SWAMPSCOTT; Ed Bretschneider, WAC; John Gresh, RJN GROUP, INC.; Richard Trubiano, Charles Calapa, Marcis Kempe, Pam Heidell and Steve Estes Smargiassi, MWRA STAFF; Joe Favaloro, Cornelia Potter, Ryan Ferrara and Mary Ann McClellan, MWRA ADVISORY BOARD STAFF.

Prior to the meeting, the House/Senate Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on Senate 1259, a bill to transfer the (former) MDC Division of Watershed Management to the MWRA.

A. WELCOME

Chairman Katherine Haynes Dunphy called the meeting to order at 12:11 p.m.

B. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 18, 2003

A Motion was made **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 18, 2003 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

C. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Joe Favaloro, MWRA Advisory Board Executive Director, thanked members for showing their support for Senate 1259 by attending the House/Senate Natural Resources Committee hearing. An editorial appeared in the October 16, 2003 Boston Herald that endorsed the concept of transferring the former MDC Division of Watershed Management to the MWRA.

Eileen Simonson of the Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee commented that the August Advisory Board Field Trip made a remarkable difference in what organizations like the Swift

River Historical Society think about the MWRA. People in central and western Massachusetts have now seen the extent of the professional management for these services and they were impressed with the character, quality and demeanor of all the people that attended the field trip. Ms. Simonson thanked Advisory Board members for their support of the legislation, as it not only benefits MWRA communities but watershed areas as well.

D. PRESENTATION: SCHEDULE AND PROCESS TO REPLACE WASTEWATER METERS RESPONSIBLE FOR MEASURING COMMUNITY FLOWS – Richard Trubiano, Director of Field Operations

Rick Trubiano, Director of Field Operations for MWRA, thanked the Advisory Board and members of the Board of Directors for their assistance in developing the transition process between the old and new systems. The Board of Directors has awarded the \$5.1 million Contract No. 6793 to replace wastewater meters to RJN Group, Inc, which was ranked first by nine out of ten members of the Selection Panel.

The MWRA system has 43 sewer communities, with 200 metering sites out in the system. The interim system was completed in 1991 and the permanent meter system in 1994. Rates are assessed based on the amount of flow generated by each community. The current meters are ultrasonic depth and velocity sensed meters that have been installed in the sewer for over ten years. Currently, data is received via telephone lines at the Operations Control Center in Chelsea.

The system needs to be updated because the equipment is deteriorating. The software is DOS based, which is outdated and hard to maintain.

Some key aspects of the Request for Proposals criteria were accuracy, cost, safety, upgrading communications to a wireless system and going to a Windows operating system to allow quicker access to data, as well as a warranty/service program.

John Gresh, Project Manager for RJN Group, stated that RJN specializes in wastewater collection systems; Marsh-McBirney is the manufacturer of the flo-dar meter; MGD is the manufacturer of the ADFM meter (to be used in the larger pipe installations); Telog will provide the software and communications; and PEER Consultants will work on development of training and other planning aspects of the project.

The Marsh-McBirney flo-dar meter has a radar-based sensor that allows it to be placed outside of the flows and eliminates the need for confined space entry. That radar bounces off of the water and measures the velocity of the flow. It also has an ultrasonic sensor that shoots straight down and detects the level of the pipe.

Ms. Simonson asked if there is a back up power supply that covers all of these meters already. Mr. Gresh responded that the meters are going to be battery operated; all of the meters have back up batteries for preservation of data. Ms. Simonson asked if the meters would signal when the batteries are running out. Mr. Gresh responded that the battery voltages will be monitored remotely and will have an alarm condition for instantaneous notification.

Charles Calapa, MWRA Manager of Metering and Monitoring, gave a demonstration of the

equipment that will be installed. The MGD meter will sit at the bottom of a pipe and submit beams up within the flow to measure the average velocity in the pipe.

The flo-dar sensor will be installed outside the flow in the chimney of the manhole and will allow technicians to do maintenance from the top of the manhole; a hook would be lowered to bring the equipment to the surface. The radar beam shoots down into the flow and a sonic sensor measures the depth of the flow. In a surcharge event, this unit gives coverage via secondary velocity and depth sensors.

Telog will handle the software and communications aspects of the Project. Communication will be done through a Telog unit that is mounted within the sensors. Data will be transmitted via wireless transmission from a unit installed in the pavement at the manhole cover. Currently, MWRA collects data from its wastewater meters three times a week; this system will give MWRA the capability of receiving data from 200 meters every fifteen minutes simultaneously.

Walter Woods asked if there are factors that could affect the accuracy of these meters. Mr. Trubiano replied that these meters are the most accurate devices on the market today. The sensors will be cleaned regularly and the units will be calibrated quarterly.

John Sullivan asked if testing of the meters included surcharges to see how its accuracy is. Mr. Calapa replied in the affirmative and noted that other manufacturers use the Marsh-McBirney meter to test their meters.

Ed Sullivan asked if there is a schedule for installation by community yet and will there be any constraints or restrictions put on the sewer departments in the local communities. Mr. Trubiano replied that an installation schedule has not yet been set and is one of the first tasks to be worked on. The installation process should have very little impact to the communities. Updates will be provided monthly to the Operations Committee during the project.

Mr. Trubiano summarized that the contract calls for 196 replacement meters and 24 replacement remote terminal units; an upgrade of all data handling and communications capabilities; a three-year fixed-price unconditional product support agreement; O & M training for staff; and the development of a complete system O & M and diagnostics manuals. The next step will be the issuance of a Notice to Proceed some time next month. The first step is the software database transition to merge data and the fabrication of the meters.

Andy DeSantis asked if there is a guarantee on how long the product will be supported. Mr. Trubiano replied that the contract is for 6½ years; 1½ years for the installation, a three-year warranty, and a two-year fixed price on components. Marsh-McBirney has been in business for a long time and the meters have a 7 to 10-year life expectancy. Mr. Calapa also noted that the two vendors are the meter manufacturers, so they are going to support their product line.

E. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – Bernie Cooper

❖ CIP/CEB UPDATE

Bernie Cooper introduced himself as the new Chairman of the Finance Committee and introduced Cornelia Potter.

Ms. Potter stated that through September, the Authority has spent just over \$40 million in operating expenses, which is \$2.2 million less than budgeted. More than half of that variance comes from lower spending on *Wages and Salaries* and lower spending on *Maintenance*. Thus far, lower debt service expense of nearly \$1 million has been offset by lower investment income.

On the capital side, spending through August (the most recent period for which spending reports were available) has reached \$50 million, 6% over the budgeted amount for the two month period, primarily due to earlier distribution of the Local Water Pipeline Improvement Loan Program.

Over the last several weeks Advisory Board staff has attended budget briefings with Authority staff to review the current and capital spending for the first two months of the year and to discuss program priorities and initial directions for the appropriation of the FY05 budget, which is already under way.

Mr. Favaloro noted that, to date, 13 former MDC employees have opted for the early retirement incentive and have left as of September 30. Additionally there are 90 MWRA employees that have filed for early retirement, who have the option between now and the end of June to retire or not. Two top position employees within the Finance Division that have been associated with the Advisory Board have opted for early retirement, Treasurer Ken Wissman and Budget Director Ron Joseph. There will be a lot of changes at MWRA, which further cements the concern that staff has raised regarding ongoing Operations & Maintenance issues.

Operations Committee – Jay Fink

❖ **UPCOMING MEETINGS/TOPICS**

Jay Fink stated that initial discussions regarding the presentation on wastewater metering took place in the Operations Committee. If communities want to be involved in the “nuts and bolts” of the operations, please come to the meetings or get on the mailing list for announcements.

The next Operations Committee (November 5) Agenda will include two items for discussion: 1) renewed funding of the I/I program and 2) a presentation by the Town of Reading to connect to the MWRA water system.

F. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

G. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 1:08 P.M. It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Sullivan, Secretary