

**MWRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
OCTOBER 18, 2007  
QUABBIN VISITORS' CENTER  
485 WARE ROAD, BELCHERTOWN, MA – 11:30 A.M.  
MINUTES APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER 15, 2007 MEETING**

Forty-eight people were in attendance, including nineteen voting members: John Bean, ARLINGTON; E. A. Maguire, ASHLAND; Peter Castanino, BELMONT; John Sanchez, BURLINGTON; Ed Sullivan, CANTON; Jerry F. Sheehan, EVERETT; J. R. Greene and Barbara Wyatt, GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTEES; Ed Bates, MAPC; Doran Crouse, MARLBOROUGH; Ben Lagman, MELROSE; Katherine Haynes Dunphy, MILTON; Tim Dooling, NATICK; Lou Taverna, NEWTON; Bernie Cooper, NORWOOD; Lawrence Barrett, STOUGHTON; Walter Woods, WELLESLEY; Bob Angelo, WESTWOOD; Zig Peret, WILBRAHAM.

Also present: Wayne Bates, ASHLAND; Mike Bishop, BELMONT; Danusha Chandy, BWSC; Dave McLelland, CANTON; Mayor John Hanlon, David Ravanese, Jon Norton, Ralph Pecora, Janice Vetrano, Joseph Pedulla, EVERETT; Mr. and Mrs. George Burnell, LEXINGTON; Ron Seaboyer, Lourdes Lagman and Mimi Strickland, MELROSE; Bill Oliver, NORWOOD; Ana Singleton, STOUGHTON; Roger Hagopian, WATERTOWN; Owen Dugan, Mary Ann Cluggish, Robert Sechrest, WELLESLEY; John Bertorelli, WESTWOOD; Ed Bretschneider, WAC; Pam Heidell, MWRA STAFF; Joe Favalaro, Cornelia Potter, Matthew Romero, Christine Hevelone-Byler and Mary Ann McClellan, MWRA ADVISORY BOARD STAFF.

A. **WELCOME** – William Pula, Regional Director, Division of Water Supply Protection  
Chairman Katherine Haynes Dunphy called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. and introduced Bill Pula, the Regional Director for the Quabbin and Ware watersheds. Mr. Pula welcomed everyone to the Quabbin.

B. **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*[Note: Due to the breakdown of the bus transporting members to the Quabbin Reservoir, the majority of the business scheduled for the Advisory Board meeting was rescheduled for the November meeting to allow time for tours of the Reservoir and the fish hatchery.]*

C. **PRESENTATIONS:**

- **A QUABBIN PERSPECTIVE** – J. R. Greene, Gubernatorial Appointee to the MWRA Advisory Board  
J. R. Greene, who represents the Quabbin and Ware Watersheds, was appointed to serve on the Advisory Board because of his extensive knowledge of the history of the Quabbin. Mr. Greene has written many books about the history of the reservoir and the towns that were flooded by it and also does slide programs on the history of the towns, the reservoir and the MWRA water system.

Mr. Greene offered a human perspective on the history of the reservoir. The Quabbin Reservoir is the largest body of water in the metropolitan Boston water system and also serves the towns of Wilbraham, Chicopee and South Hadley, which are in the Connecticut River Valley. None of the towns that border the reservoir get their drinking water from the Quabbin; most of the towns are quite small and have their own supplies.

The fact that four towns were destroyed and parts of seven others completely wiped out for this reservoir is a sensitive point in the Western part of the state. Approximately 2,500 people had to move from their homes and there was no job or housing relocation assistance. Even the graves were moved out of 40 cemeteries, many of them relocated to a new cemetery.

Mr. Greene stated that the Quabbin Reservoir is a beautiful place and has been vital in bringing Bald Eagles back to the state. Some limited deer hunting is allowed to support forestry management goals.

The Quabbin facilities are well managed. Although this is not a recreation area, staff works to accommodate the wishes of the people in the area allowing enough access for hiking, fishing, bicycling and picnicking so people can enjoy the Quabbin in a safe and responsible way. No camping or swimming is allowed because it is a water supply/watershed area.

Ed Sullivan added that he has had the opportunity to take Mr. Greene's walking tour of the area and found it was well worth the trip.

• **WATERSHED PROTECTION – OVERVIEW AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY07 –**

Jonathan Yeo, Director, Division of Water Supply Protection

Jonathan Yeo, Director of the Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP), stated that the DWSP makes an investment of time and effort to educate people on the Water Supply System. The DWSP is part of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and part of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Division is responsible for the Quabbin, Wachusett and Sudbury Reservoirs, the Ware River and the watersheds. DWSP manages the system in close cooperation with the MWRA in terms of water quality in the reservoirs and reservoir operations. When the water leaves the reservoirs, it becomes the MWRA's responsibility.

The Quabbin and Wachusett each have a staff of about 75. John Scannell is the Regional Director at Wachusett. The DWSP is responsible to protect, preserve and enhance the environment of the Commonwealth and assure pure water for future generations.

DWSP owns a considerable amount of land around the Quabbin, a fair amount of land at the Ware River and in the last twenty years has focused strategically on land acquisition in the Wachusett watershed. The land acquisition helped get the waiver from filtration by assuring EPA and the federal judge that a considerable amount was being done to protect the drinking water supply.

The Quabbin is a 120,000 acre watershed with a 412 billion gallon reservoir. Water is transferred from the Ware River on a seasonal basis. The reservoir has been kept high because demands are low. DWSP releases water down into the Ware River. There are all sorts of requirements in terms of releases; a minimum of 20 million gallons a day is released. Because demand now is 100 MGD lower than it used to be, more releases are being made.

Many billions of gallons of water per year are now discharged both to the Swift River at Quabbin and the Nashua River at Wachusett; this year the releases are going to be 68 and 37 million gallons per day respectively. These are extra releases, water that is not earning revenue.

DWSP has a close working relationship with State Fisheries and Wildlife; the fish hatchery is located nearby. Moose are now on the rise at Quabbin; staff is working to collar the moose with tracking devices for research purposes.

In terms of DWSP's relationship with the MWRA, every year staff produces a work plan with over 100 specific projects. The work plan is developed in cooperation with MWRA's staff every quarter and staff reports on its progress on each of the items. At the end of the year, an annual report is issued.

There are various wildlife programs, including a controlled deer hunt; controlling certain wildlife like beavers and muskrats to keep them away from the intakes; and bird harassment when the birds get too numerous. There is a fishing program that operates seven days a week. Rangers, both at the Quabbin and the Wachusett, control access and work in cooperation with the State Police who are next door.

While there are rules about public access, it is fair to say for a large unfiltered supplier, there is a fair amount of recreation. Certain areas are off limits such as the Prescott Peninsula, the islands, and certain other areas around the intakes; other areas have rules about what can and cannot be done in those areas. People generally abide by these rules.

DWSP has a team of scientists that monitor the reservoirs and watersheds. DWSP staff does a lot of work with the MWRA, particularly around emergency response planning and how to deal with a spill.

About \$4 million worth of land has been acquired in the last year based on a computer model to identify critical land acquisitions. Nineteen parcels were purchased last year. Staff is trying to focus on conservation restrictions where DWSP does not actually buy the land, which helps to avoid making payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) to the communities. All of the parcels have to go through a rigorous process by experts and then have to be approved by the MWRA Board of Directors. Gifts have been given as well by people that donate land for tax purposes. The Watershed Protection Act regulates development in the watersheds.

DWSP finance staff has a close working relationship with the MWRA's finance staff and with the Advisory Board. All financials and revenue are reported on a monthly basis to the MWRA and on a quarterly basis to the Water Supply Protection Trust, of which Katherine Haynes Dunphy is a member. Controls are in place in terms of spending. The Division's budget is a little over \$13 million per year to run the program. In addition to the operational budget, the MWRA pays about \$6 million in PILOT payments to the watershed communities, which is a program that watershed communities may not fully appreciate in terms of the amount of money they are receiving considering that no demands are being made by the MWRA or DWSP on their schools or municipal services. Additionally, there is debt service on old debt for some old land purchases and other projects.

Mary Ann Cluggish asked why there has been a decrease in water demand. Mr. Yeo said the decrease has been caused by a number of things; it is price, technology and change in industry. The increase in price, largely due to sewer costs, led people to value water, which in turn led to

better technology in bathrooms, kitchens, washrooms, industries and commercial sectors. Everything has transformed in terms of fixtures over the years. Those things together have driven down demand. The biggest factor for the decrease of water use is that leaks have been repaired. Communities have tightened up their systems to a large extent. Further, industries have changed; there has been a decrease in large scale water guzzling industries.

Pam Heidell added that people have a greater consciousness about conservation of water as well.

- **PCB REMOVAL AT THE WACHUSETT DAM** – Michael Hornbrook, MWRA Chief Operating Officer  
*[Rescheduled.]*

**D. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee** – Katherine Haynes Dunphy

❖ **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

*[Rescheduled.]*

**Finance Committee** – Bernard Cooper

❖ **CIP/CEB UPDATE**

*[Rescheduled.]*

**E. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

**F. ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 12:30 P.M.** It was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Sullivan, Secretary