



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
GOVERNING BOARD
Minutes
February 26, 2014**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Governing Board met on Wednesday, February 26, 2014 at 10:30 a.m. in the Board Meeting Room at the R. Charles Loudermilk Center for Regional Community in Atlanta, Georgia.

Members Present

Hon. Boyd Austin, Chairman
Ms. Katie Kirkpatrick, Vice Chair
Mr. Birdel Jackson, Secretary/Treasurer
Hon. Buzz Ahrens
Hon. Tim Lee
Hon. Steve Brown
Hon. Charlotte Nash
Ms. Pamela Burnett
Mr. Brad Currey
Ms. Kit Dunlap

Mr. Chuck Huling
Mr. Tim Thoms
Mr. Steven Woodruff
City of Atlanta Designee: Ms. Jo Ann Macrina
DeKalb County Designee: Mr. Charles Lambert
Douglas County Designee: Mr. Pete Frost
Fulton County Designee: Mr. Nick Ammons
Hall County Designee: Kelly Randall
Rockdale County Designee: Mr. Dwight Wicks

Members Not Present

Hon. Steve Taylor
Hon. Jeff Turner
Hon. Bob Blackburn
Hon. Pete Amos

Hon. Tommy Smith
Mr. William Thomas Craig
Mr. Gerald Pouncey

Gerald Pouncey was excused from the meeting due to health reasons.

Chairman Boyd Austin called the meeting to order.

Approve Meeting Minutes

Chairman Austin called for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion to approve the December 4, 2013 meeting minutes was made by Ms. Kit Dunlap, seconded by Mr. Brad Currey and passed without opposition.

Chairman's Report

Welcoming New District Board Members

Chairman Austin welcomed the new District Governing Board members: Mayor Danny Dunagan – Gainesville, GA, Pam Burnett and Steven Woodruff.

Welcoming New ARC Board Chair

Chairman Austin welcomed the new ARC Board Chair, Kerry Armstrong, who was elected in December to serve a two-year term that began in January 2014. Chairman Armstrong noted that the MNGWPD is a flagship organization and praised the board members for their leadership and service. He noted that the District has boundless opportunities for growth and our repeated bouts with droughts have brought us closer together to address our challenges.

Lake Level and Drought Conditions Update

Ms. Katherine Zitsch gave a brief update on lake levels and rain accumulation. Year to date, we have received seven inches of rainfall which is about one inch lower than what is typically observed. Lake Lanier is currently a little above 1071 which is one foot above the top of the winter conservation pool. The water level is more than four feet above where it was this time last year and about five feet above the historical average.

Water Wars Update

Ms. Zitsch provided an update on the Supreme Court filing by Florida. The Supreme Court is expected to make an announcement on March 3, 2014 that it will either 1) deny the case 2) agree to take the case or 3) request the solicitor general to review the merits of the case and make a decision at a later date. Option 3 would likely not render a decision until sometime during the fall of this year.

Update on Water Resources Reform & Development Act

Ms. Zitsch provided an update on the Water Resources Reform & Development Act (WRRDA). At this time, the WRRDA bill has passed the Senate and House of Representatives subcommittees and is still in the legislative conference committee. Two sections related to Georgia are currently under consideration. We will continue to track the bill's progress.

Legislative Breakfast

Chairman Austin provided an overview of the Legislative Breakfast held at the State Capitol on February 20th. The breakfast was a great success. Fifty to 60 people were in attendance including several state legislatures from inside and outside the metro area. A few notable attendees included Gary Black, Georgia Agricultural Commissioner, Representative Lynn Smith, Chair of the House Natural Resources and Environment Committee and Senator Ross Tolleson, Chair of the Senate Natural Resources and Environment Committee.

Chairman Austin referenced the legislative agendas that were placed around the table and asked if there were any specific items anyone wanted to raise for discussion. No questions were raised.

Water Drop Dash 5K

Chairman Austin provided details on the upcoming Water Drop Dash 5K Race. The Race will kick off national WaterSense Fix a Leak Week, and encourages metro Atlanta residents to conserve water and check their plumbing fixtures for leaks. There will be a 5K Run/Walk, a Kid's Fun Run and a post-race family Water Festival. The event is hosted by the Metro Water District and our local water providers. The race will be held on Saturday, March 15th at the

Chattahoochee Nature Center in Roswell. For more information you can visit www.waterdropdash.com.

Fix a Leak Week Proclamation

Chairman Austin announced the upcoming WaterSense Fix a Leak Week and officially recognized the District's participation by reading a proclamation. The proclamation is attached to the end of the meeting minutes.

Schedule for 2014

Chairman Austin noted the remaining dates for District Board Meetings in 2014 as follows:

- June 4, 2014 – This date does not align with the ARC Board Meeting due to scheduling conflicts
- August 27, 2014
- December 3, 2014

2016 Plan Update Status

Ms. Zitsch presented a schedule for the 2016 plan update. The Basin Advisory Councils (BACs) have already begun preparing a vision for the update and will be providing input on the goals and objectives for the scope of work along with the Technical Coordinating Committee in the upcoming months. The results of these exercises will be presented to the Governing Board during the June 4th meeting.

Vice Chair Katie Kirkpatrick noted that the District does a good job of establishing metrics and meeting goals but we really haven't vetted commercial water use. Ms. Kirkpatrick would like to see the District begin conversations with the business community and water providers to see what good stories can be found. Chairman Austin agreed that there is a lot that we can do.

Mr. Kelly Randall noted that the hotels and motels in Gainesville are very familiar with each other's efforts and many have participated in the toilet rebate program. Mr. Randall suggested that the District consider looking further into rebate programs for these larger scale commercial replacements. Additionally, the District should look at what can be done in commercial and industrial applications.

Mr. Pete Frost noted that the District's water providers are not experts in process applications for industries and that while we could provide education, private sector efficiencies will be driven by cost. Mr. Frost stated that the Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority retrofitted its buildings and recognized a 50 percent water savings. This savings equated to a 15 year payback on the investment. The economics are going to make efficiency upgrades a business decision.

Vice Chair Kirkpatrick noted that the District should identify best management practices. Mr. Brad Currey hoped the exercise would reinforce what we've been doing well which is reinforcing quality and quantity of return flows. We have been a leader in many issues but we can't let up on quality and quantity of wastewater return flows.

Mr. Tim Thoms asked Ms. Zitsch if she anticipated having three separate management plans again. Ms. Zitsch said we need to look at an integrated plan on a staff level and then let the Board decide what direction to go. Chairman Austin noted that with a complete staff turnover since the last update, we will hopefully have additional perspectives going in to the next update. Ms. Zitsch stated that based on the discussion, District staff will move forward to discuss commercial conservation.

Update on EPD Activities

Mr. Jud Turner, Director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, opened the floor for an open dialogue. Mr. Turner noted that the regional planning efforts have brought a better understanding of the problems faced across the state. Board Members had the following questions and comments:

Q. What is your vision for integration of the District with other regional councils?

A. The first round of planning was somewhat of an experiment. It is a little too early for me to answer that question at this time.

Q. Can you talk about the recent restructuring at EPD?

A. We moved the Branch Chiefs around. Jack Cap came from the Air Protection Branch and is now over Water. I have appointed a Director of Compliance who reports directly to me. I am trying to bring consistency to compliance. I've hired an external affairs director, Russ Pennington. Russ helps a lot at the state legislature. With the lack of a good pension plan and benefits, it is increasingly difficult to maintain staff for longer than five-years.

Q. Where do you see numeric nutrient criteria moving forward?

A. We do not have enough resources to chase all of the river reaches that EPA wants us to monitor. Our biggest goal is to address lakes and reservoirs. Once we get a numerically defensible permit, it will be issued. We don't want to wait for permit renewals.

Comment - I see engagement of top level leadership as a long term problem but I appreciate the approach that you and your team have taken and I am happy the top state leaders have shown the level of attention they have. Thank you!

Comment – It would be good to bring the other regional council chairs to a District Governing Board Meeting to discuss their issues with us.

Comment – All of the regional councils are just as diverse as the Coosa/North Georgia and Lower Flint Regional Council. We are all working toward the same goal. We need to stick together as a state.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



WHEREAS, water conservation, including the finding and fixing of leaks, is a critical component to the stewardship of water resources in metro Atlanta; and

WHEREAS, finding and fixing leaks is as easy as check, twist, replace (e.g., check toilets for silent leaks; twist to tighten fixture connections; replace broken fixtures with WaterSense labeled models); and

WHEREAS, many common household leaks, including worn toilet flappers, leaking showerheads, and dripping faucets, are easily correctable; and

WHEREAS, fixing leaks can save homeowners and businesses a significant amount of water; and

WHEREAS, WaterSense is a voluntary partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to protect the future of our nation's water supply by promoting water efficiency and WaterSense labeled products; and

WHEREAS, EPA's WaterSense program celebrates Fix a Leak Week the third week of March as a time to remind Americans to check their household fixtures and irrigation systems for leaks; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District is partnering with WaterSense to encourage Americans to detect and fix leaks and promote efficient water use to ensure adequate water supplies for future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE, I Boyd Austin, Chairman of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, do hereby proclaim March 17 – 23, 2014 to be **FIX A LEAK WEEK** in the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and urge all citizens and businesses in the 15 counties and 92 municipalities that make up the District to find and fix leaks, and use water efficiently.