



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
OCMULGEE BASIN ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Summary
January 22, 2010**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Ocmulgee Basin Advisory Council met on Friday, January 22, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. at the Fairview Public Library in Stockbridge, Georgia.

Members Present

Larry Allen
Jimmy Carter, Jr.
Tom Harrison, H2O Reps
Wayne Haynie, Jordan, Jones & Goulding Inc.
Lawrence Kaiser
Tonja Halton Mincey, Henry Co W&SA
Petra Parker, Comm. Atlanta Board of Realtors

Cassandra Barber
Richard Edinger, Jr.
Roger Hatch, Rockdale/DeKalb Farm Bureau
Shirley House
Mark Landers, U.S. Geological Survey
Paul Morgan
Luis Torres

Members Not Present

Michael Blackburn
Scott Cole, Sr.
Martin McElhenny
Jack Tanner, City of McDonough
Michael Walker

Scott Brumbelow, GA Utility Contractors
Deirdre Faye Lyons-Gary, DeKalb Co LWV
Vikki McReynolds, BAC Chair
Susan Varlamoff, UGA
Steve Williams, Building Greener LLC

Metro Water District Staff Present

Heather Moody, Senior Program Specialist
Corey Babb, Senior Environmental Planner

Welcome and Introductions

Heather Moody with the Metro Water District introduced Board Member Lorene Lindsey, Mayor of Locust Grove, who welcomed the group on behalf of the Metro Water District Board and thanked everyone for attending. Heather Moody asked the group if there were any objections to modifying the agenda to talk about grease education and water conservation first instead of last to allow more time for discussion. There were no objections to modifying the agenda.

Grease Management Public Education

Corey Babb of the Metro Water District presented ideas for a new public education initiative about the harmful impacts of fats, oils and grease (FOG) on local sewer systems and asked the BAC members for their suggestions.

BAC members shared the following ideas and suggestions:

- Do any private residences have grease traps? Is that something that could be required for new construction?
- Require grease traps for apartment complexes.
- Include grease information in homeowner education packet.
- Residents produce more grease than commercial sites. However, in Henry County most residences are on septic.
- Grease is bad for sewers and septic.
- Garbage disposals are a large part of the problem. Education efforts should address this.
- Educate children about grease disposal.
- Children are not the primary cooks or dishwashers in a home.
- Is there any way to break the grease down chemically?
- Could septic tank haulers put their loads through some kind of grease trap when they empty their trucks at the wastewater treatment plants?
- Grease in the wastewater plants really isn't the problem. Bacteria can digest most of the grease.
- What can people do with the grease once they collect it?
- Water utilities can distribute grease collection containers.
- Bill inserts could be used but should be the only inclusion or be send as a separate mailing.
- Bill inserts are often thrown away without being read.
- Include grease information in the water utility newsletters.
- Include grease disposal information on the county's annual waste collection calendar that is distributed to homeowners. Those are often posted in the kitchen.
- Send speakers to schools to educate kids about grease.
- Consider public service announcements and TV spots through the Ad Council.
- Send a spokesperson to speak about grease on radio shows.
- The free market is the best solution. Who could profit from using the grease and would pick it up for free?

Discussion of Potential New Water Conservation Measures

Heather Moody of the Metro Water District lead a discussion on potential new water conservation measures that are being considered in addition to those already included in the Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan. She explained that this is a proactive step in response to Judge Magnuson's ruling regarding Lake Lanier and the 2012 deadline.

BAC members shared the following ideas and suggestions:

- Need to clarify exactly what is meant by measure requiring all fire lines to be metered.
- Encourage use of class A and B surfactants instead of water to fight fires.
- Look to the west to see what has been successful in other states. Don't reinvent the wheel.
- What about replacing 1.6 gallons per flush toilets, or at least phasing out their availability for purchase?
- Incentivize use of cisterns. Users could save on stormwater fees.

- Offering too many stormwater credits will reduce income to utilities. If an incentive program gets too successful, rates would have to be raised. Eventually it would lead to doing away with the stormwater utility.
- The problem with decentralizing the stormwater infrastructure would be figuring out who would do the maintenance.
- The harm to downstream users must be considered. In 15 to 20 years when poorly maintained decentralized systems stop working, extensive regulatory action will be needed. Because of regulatory and maintenance problems, we are trying to centralize septic and waste collection, but now we are doing the opposite with stormwater.
- It will be difficult to convince large businesses to go after a couple thousand dollar savings. It just won't be cost effective for them.
- Retrofit should be mandatory for all commercial buildings.
- Make finding and repairing leaks mandatory for all jurisdictions in the District.
- Communities could make a substantial difference by reducing water loss through repairs, but it is cost prohibitive.
- Make cisterns mandatory for irrigation. Only allow outdoor watering with captured rainwater.
- Incentives for cistern installation should be offered. However, because water is so inexpensive, the return on investment will take a long time.
- Irrigation rain sensors are a very cost effective option. Offer incentives to retrofit older systems.
- Irrigation systems should require separate meters so they can be monitored and billed at a higher rate.
- The price of a second meter is way too high. They have been priced out of the market.
- Cows drink a great deal of water so farmers need to be able to drill wells. A regulation prohibiting private wells will put cattle farms out of business in times of drought because County water is just too expensive.

BAC members were asked to email additional feedback on FOG public education and additional water conservation measures to Heather Moody by January 29th.

2009 Annual Report & Implementation Report

Heather Moody of the Metro Water District reviewed the 2009 Annual Report and the 2009 Plan Implementation Review. She described the two documents and how they interrelate and showed members where to locate information.

Joint Water Council Meetings / State Resource Assessment Update

Corey Babb of the Metro Water District provided an overview of the upcoming Joint Water Council meetings and State Resource Assessments. Mr. Babb informed the group that the resource assessments will be the basis for the state water planning process moving forward and will guide permitting decisions in the future. He explained that the state is conducting three different resource assessments for each river basin in the state; a surface water quality assessment, a surface water quantity assessment and a groundwater availability assessment. He told the group that the resource assessments will affect the Metro Water District and that staff will follow the process.

Mr. Babb explained that GA EPD is planning two rounds of Joint Water Planning Council meetings; one in January to present the assessments based on current use and another round later this spring to discuss the assessments based on future use. GA EPD will release a formal report in February for the current resource assessments followed by a public comment period. He told the group that staff will forward the resource assessment documents to the BAC members when they become available.

Metro Water District's 2010 Legislative Agenda

Heather Moody of the Metro Water District reviewed the 2010 Metro Water District Legislative Agenda. The BAC members were provided with a copy of the 2010 Legislative Agenda adopted by the Metro Water District Board on December 3, 2009.

The next meeting will be held on April 23, 2010. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.