



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
FLINT BASIN ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Summary
Wednesday, April 21, 2010**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Flint Basin Advisory Council met on Wednesday, April 21, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the J. W. Smith Community Use Building in Hampton, Georgia.

Members Present

John Caldwell, Coweta Co. WSA
Ernest Curtis
Don Easterbrook, City of Fayetteville
Ted Greene, Delta Environmental
Roger A. Greuel, Fayette Co. Farm Bureau
Dorothy Harris, D. Clark Harris Inc.

Richard Little
Brice Martin, Coweta Co. Stormwater
Dale Phenicie, Fayette County Chamber
Edward Strong, Newnan Utilities
Tim Thoms, BAC Chair

Members Not Present

Vanessa Birrell, Fayette Co. Board of Comm.
Bud Butcher, Coweta Co. Farm Bureau
David Gerson, White Oaks Homeowners
Richard A. Greuel
Todd Gullekson

Michael Harp, GA Farm Bureau
Paul Jones, GA Farm Bureau
Brant Keller, City of Griffin
Ted McCarter
Christine McGehee

Non Flint BAC Members Present

Kirk Wimber, Orenco Systems

Metro Water District Staff Present

Heather Moody, Senior Program Specialist
Charlene Njoroge, Education and Public Awareness Coordinator

Welcome and Introductions

Tim Thoms, Flint BAC Chair, introduced Henry County Board Member Mayor Lorene Lindsey, who began the meeting by welcoming the group on behalf of the Metro Water District Board.

Local Government Panel Discussion of Metro Water District Plan Implementation

Local water supply, wastewater and stormwater professionals representing jurisdictions within the Flint Basin participated in a panel discussion with BAC members. The Flint panel consisted of John Caldwell from Coweta County Water and Sewerage Authority, Don Easterbrook from City of Fayetteville and Guy Pihera from Clayton County Water Authority. Panel participants shared their successes and challenges in implementing the Metro Water District's Water Management plans.

Panel participants highlighted the following successes related to Metro Water District Plan implementation:

- Conservation – 24.5 MGD water use reduction in Clayton County
- Aggressive leak detection and repair program in Clayton County
- 75% of water system lines replaced in Coweta County – unaccounted for water loss reduced from 32% to 9%
- Sewer mapping, toilet rebate program and water conservation rate structure all established in Coweta County
- Countywide cooperative plan for monitoring streams and creeks in Fayette County

Panel participants cited the following challenges related to Metro Water District Plan implementation:

- Difficult mindset to encourage the public to not use the product you produce for sale, especially following recent capacity upgrades
- Revenue decreases due to the economic downturn, drought, conservation and reduced growth
- Reduced staffing levels

Panel participants shared the following advice and lessons learned:

- A consistent source of funding is critical
- Plan implementation without a stormwater utility in place would have been much more difficult

BAC members and panel participants had the following questions and comments during the discussion:

- It is difficult to convince the public to conserve water when we have plenty available in our county.
- Is there any recourse against the manufacturers of the leaky polybutylene pipes that had to be replaced? Yes, litigation is pending.
- Since the stream monitoring project has been so successful, are there other areas for potential inter-jurisdiction cooperation? Water service areas could be improved by basing them on geography and terrain rather than jurisdictional lines.
- What can be done about the reduction in revenue due to conservation restrictions? Changing the fee structure will help. Water rates must be increased.
- Some counties with more than adequate water supply wrote to the State to ask for an exemption from conservation requirements.
- Making conservation mandates the same throughout the state helps alleviate confusion for the public.
- Recent increased water production and treatment capacity will be utilized once the economy improves and growth resumes.
- It is good for jurisdictions to be planning ahead. Things like low-flow fixtures, water reuse and constructed wetlands will become more mainstream in the future.

- The State recognizes the importance of agriculture in Georgia. However, it is difficult when the public sees that agriculture and the nursery industry can use water in ways that the public is not allowed.
- Submetering for multi-family residential developments helps in dealing with delinquent billing. With a master meter, the water authority can be faced with cutting off water to hundreds of residents if an apartment complex fails to pay its bill.

2009 Education and Public Awareness Poll Results

Charlene Njoroge with the Metro Water District presented a summary of the 2009 Education and Public Awareness telephone poll results. The purpose of this poll is to call 400 residents within the Metro Water District and gauge their level of awareness about water quality and water conservation issues. Ms. Njoroge explained that the poll results show basic water quality and conservation messages should be the focus of future public awareness and education efforts.

Clean Water Campaign Media Campaign

Ms. Njoroge gave a brief overview of the proposed 2010 Clean Water Campaign Media Plan. She discussed the messages, target audiences and suggested media for the 2010 Campaign. She then asked the BAC members for additional ideas and feedback.

BAC members had the following suggestions:

- The way people get their information has drastically changed. Consider using social media sites extensively.
- Put the messages on the plastic cups sold at sporting events.
- Big lighted billboards are a great way to get the message seen by lots of people.
- Put the messages on restaurant kid's menus or coloring books.
- Partner with Six Flags to get the messages out.
- Consider mentoring program for High Schools where students would help conduct surveys and polls.
- Reach out to networks of homeowner associations.
- Could the Clean Water Campaign partner with the Clean Air Campaign on some messages?

BAC Membership Drive

Heather Moody reminded the BAC members that the 2010 Basin Advisory Council recruitment drive is underway and asked that current members help to identify new members. Ms. Moody explained that the Metro Water District is particularly interested in finding additional members for the Lake Lanier and Oconee BACs. She said that interested individuals should be directed to the BAC webpage or provided with her contact information. Ms. Moody also reminded everyone that the deadline to submit membership applications is May 14, 2010.

The next meeting will be held on July 21, 2010. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.