



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
GOVERNING BOARD
Minutes
June 4, 2014

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Governing Board met on Wednesday, June 4, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. in the Allen S. Hardin Amphitheater 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. Steve Brown
Hon. Charlotte Nash
Hon. Danny Dunagan
Ms. Pamela Burnett
Mr. Brad Currey
Ms. Kit Dunlap

Mr. Gerald Pouncey
Mr. Tim Thoms
Mr. Steven Woodruff
Clayton County Designee: Mr. Mike Thomas
Cobb County Designee: Ms. Judy Skeel
DeKalb County Designee: Mr. Charles Lambert
Douglas County Designee: Mr. Gil Shearouse
Forsyth County Designee: Mr. Tim Perkins
Fulton County Designee: Mr. Nick Ammons
Hall County Designee: Kelly Randall

Members Not Present

Hon. Kasim Reed
Hon. Steve Taylor
Hon. Bob Blackburn
Hon. Tommy Smith

Mr. Chuck Huling
Mr. Gerald Pouncey
Mr. William Thomas Craig

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 February 26, 2014 meeting minutes was made by Ms. Kit Dunlap, seconded by Ms. Katie Kirkpatrick and passed without opposition.

Chairman's Report

Welcoming New District Board Members

Chairman Austin welcomed the new District Governing Board Member for Hall County: Mayor Danny Dunagan of Gainesville, GA as well as the new District Governing Board Designee for

Douglas County: Mr. Gil Shearouse, Director of the Douglasville/Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority.

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 18.5 inches of rainfall which is about two inches lower than what is typically observed. Lake Lanier is currently a little above 1071 which is the summer conservation pool. The water level is one foot below where it was this time last year.

Update on Water Resources Reform & Development Act

Ms. Zitsch provided an update on the Water Resources Reform & Development Act (WRRDA). The WRRDA bill passed both the Senate and House of Representatives and is awaiting the President's signature.

EPD Drought Rule

Ms. Zitsch provided an update on Georgia EPD's Drought Rule update. EPD met with stakeholders in May to discuss proposed elements that will go into the updated drought rule. The Metro Water District provided comments to EPD generally requesting that we have more involvement during the process along with our representative utilities.

Clean Water Act

Ms. Zitsch updated the governing board on the proposed modifications to the Clean Water Act. EPA has broadened the definition of jurisdictional waters to include ditches and ephemeral streams. EPA has received a large amount of comments on the impacts of this change. The Metro Water District staff will continue to track the process.

Mr. Gerald Pouncey gave his compliments to the District staff, the Georgia delegation, and their representatives for their work on WRRDA.

Water Drop Dash 5K

The Metro Water District's 2nd annual Water Drop Dash 5k race and Kid's Fun Run was held in March of this year. It was a great event, with over 750 runners in the 5k race. Fifteen water utilities partnered with the District on the event. Douglasville-Douglas County WSA sent a team of 40 runners. Cobb County won the award for largest race team with over 270 runners. We got a lot of praise from our member local governments on what a success it was.

2013 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and Audit

Copies of last year's audit were made available to those who requested a copy.

Schedule for 2014/2015

Chairman Austin noted the remaining dates in 2014 and proposed dates for 2015 District Board Meetings as follows:

- August 27, 2014
- December 3, 2014
- February 25, 2015

- May 27, 2015
- August 26, 2015
- December 2, 2015

Executive Committee Report

2014 Legislative Agenda Wrap-up

Chairman Austin noted that the Legislative Committee last met on March 12, 2014. The final Legislative Agenda was included with the meeting materials. A few highlights of bills from the 2014 legislative session that passed and have been signed into law were noted.

- SB 213 Flint River Drought Protection Act – Passed
 - The bill changes the mandatory drought declaration requirement that triggers a buy-out of agricultural irrigation which was made possible by tobacco settlement funds (now long gone). The buy-outs were largely ineffective, and there has been no funding to support them in recent years. The bill will set target efficiencies for agricultural irrigation units, to be met by 2020. Further, the bill clarifies the extent of the affected area to be the 4 creeks in the Lower Flint Basin, and further clarifies the EPD Director's authority to restrict surface water permittees from withdrawing augmented stream flows.
- HB 549 Water Pollution; Establish water emergency response procedures - Passed
 - The bill establishes emergency response procedures for discharges or spills of a pollutant into a waterway that would endanger the health or property of downstream users of the water. The bill was introduced in 2013, generally in reaction to the King Finishing incident.
- SB 299 Provide Flexibility for Establishing Watershed Protection Standards – Passed
 - Under the Georgia Planning Act, EPD/DNR is required to set minimum standards for watershed protection to be followed by local governments. This bill permits local governments to submit watershed protection plans that may include smaller buffers than required under current DNR regulations. There are two other sections of code that provide for stream buffers: the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act and the Metropolitan River Protection Act. This bill does not affect those code sections.

2015 Budget

Chairman Austin opened the discussion on the 2015 budget and work program. The Finance Committee met and approved the 2015 budget on April 28, 2014. The proposed budget was taken to the Executive Committee and was approved. In 2013, the Governing Board was

presented a plan for a three step increase over a three year period to help fund the 2016 water resource management plan updates. This year represents the second year in that process.

Mr. Tim Thoms requested that he would like to see the proposed contracts listed with the proposed budget. Mr. Danny Johnson followed up with Mr. Thoms following the meeting and directed him to the supplemental information provided to the Governing Board for the August 28, 2013 board meeting.

Mr. Birdel Jackson made a motion to approve the 2015 budget and work program. Chairman Austin explained that a recommendation of a committee of the Board does not require a second. The 2015 budget passed without opposition.

BAC Membership Drive

Chairman Austin provided an overview of the BAC Membership Drive. Every two years, District staff holds a BAC membership recruitment drive in an effort to increase the membership in BACs that lack the 20 member minimum and to maintain a balance of interests among members. This year, we were interested in recruiting more members from the Flint, Lake Lanier and Oconee BACs.

The recruitment period lasted from March 13 to April 30. Press releases were sent to local media outlets throughout the three basins of focus and contacted other Regional Commissions, academic institutions, environmental groups, recreation groups and civic groups. The Executive Committee approved 24 new applicants during its June 4, 2014 morning meeting.

Chairman Austin announced that the next BAC meeting will be on July 24th, at the Loudermilk Center from 8:30am to noon. Board members and designees were invited to attend.

New MNGWPD Logo

Mr. Danny Johnson presented a new logo for the District. The logo was presented to the Executive Committee as well. The logo will be used for all new educational material and publications moving forward. Later this year, District staff will begin updating the NorthGeorgiaWater.com website as well.

Election of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer

Hon. Buzz Ahrens provided a report from the Nominating Committee. The committee met on May 23, 2014 to recommend nominations for the offices of Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer due to the expiration of the current three year terms. The committee nominated Hon. Boyd Austin as Chairman, Ms. Katie Kirkpatrick as Vice Chairman, and Birdel Jackson as Secretary/Treasurer. Hon Buzz Ahrens called for a vote. All nominees were elected without opposition.

ARC Board Retreat – Water Resources Aspirational Goal

Ms. Zitsch presented the outcomes of the April 2014 Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Governing Board Retreat in an effort to make sure the District Board understands the cross connection between the two boards. One outcome of the retreat was an overarching aspirational

goal of “Winning the Future.” The aspirational goal for water resources was identified as “Secure a long-term water supply.”

Mr. Doug Hooker, Director of ARC, noted that ARC will pass the resolution later in June. ARC will be soliciting feedback from the public to bring back to its governing board in August. This feedback will feed the next comprehensive plan.

2014 “F.O.G. Clogs” Video Contest Winners

Ms. Kostoula Vallianos presented the winners for the high school video contest where this year’s theme was “F.O.G. Clogs.” F.O.G. stands for Fats, Oils and Grease that are often poured down the drain and can cause buildup leading to clogged sewer pipes and potentially to sewer overflows. The District received 76 video submissions from high schoolers within the District. The top three winners were presented their official awards and prize money. The winners included:

First Place – Benjamin Lewin, Lanier High School

Second Place – Trent Abbey, Imani Miller and Turner Ivey, Mill Creek High School

Third Place – Kendrick Washington, Ariel Turner, Mykal North – Centennial High School

The 2015 Video Contest will feature the theme “Scoop the Poop.”

2016 Plan Update Discussion

Ms. Zitsch provided an overview of the 2016 District plan update process including a schedule update, brief history of stakeholder input received in early 2014, and a few highlights of issues addressed with the Technical Coordinating Committee in May. Chairman Austin noted that technology and litigation have changed and it will be important for us to look at our responsibilities to stakeholders and to the State of Georgia. Ms. Kirkpatrick stated, “Now is the time to roll up our sleeves and get to work.” She added, “We were in a rough spot 14 years ago. We need to continue to be a leader.”

Ms. Pamela Burnett asked where do we start with projecting our demands? Do we start with what the State is giving us? Ms. Zitsch stated that the District is waiting on guidance from Georgia EPD. We anticipate that guidance will direct us to utilize the office of Planning and Budget’s (OPB) population projections. Water use demands would then be projected with the selected consultant.

Mr. Pouncey asked how often the OPB projections are updated. Ms. Zitsch replied that they are typically updated every two years.

Mr. Brad Currey asked if we will have any influence on the other 10 regional councils. Ms. Zitsch replied that this was also a question from several BAC members and that we are waiting on guidance from the State to direct us in this regard.

Chairman Austin stated that the water wars are really Georgia’s water war. Hopefully we’ve gained some good relationships that will help us lead the next update for the regional councils. We need to recognize that we are all interconnected.

Hon. Charlotte Nash felt strongly that we need to change the conversation for highly treated effluent being recognized as an asset, not a liability and capture what many folks are already doing. Our reuse of highly treated effluent should be held in the same regard as recycling solid waste.

Ms. Zitsch asked if the District needs to change the name of the Wastewater Management Plan. The board expressed interest in changing the name, but recognized that a name change might overlook septic planning. Hon. Nash stated that the long-term aspiration should be to progress to putting our effluent back into the receiving basin.

Ms. Zitsch discussed how plan integration is being considered for the next update. We need to look at how decisions we make today affect other issues in the future. The BAC provided several goals and objectives to District staff that focused on integrated planning objectives. A TCC workgroup was established and will meet in July to discuss how plan integration can be improved within the District plans. Some of the major issues include: benefits of a given practice on water resource issues; understanding of cost/benefits; linkages between plan elements; and consistency among plan elements.

Hon. Nash stated that we have an artificial separation of a natural single water cycle. The three separate planning documents have to look at one another. She believes the more integration, the better. It will make for harder work but can give us better results.

Mr. Thoms agreed that more integration was better. We should encourage thinking outside of the box. It may make the plan more valuable given the projected cost of the plan update.

Ms. Burnett asked if the District is thinking of going to one planning document. Ms. Zitsch stated that we don't have an endpoint defined today. We are also looking to go more digital with the final planning document. Ms. Kirkpatrick asked staff to memorialize the final plans electronically.

Georgia DOT's MS4 Implementation Program

Mr. Roger Cox of URS provided an overview of the Georgia DOT MS4 Implementation Program. The new stormwater manual is more digitally streamlined. The focus of the update is mostly on post construction runoff. Linear construction was a major focus of new BMPs. Other initial planning concepts included environmentally sensitive area avoidance, minimizing disturbance, and overall footprint reduction.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.