



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District**  
**GOVERNING BOARD**  
**Minutes**  
**August 27, 2014**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Governing Board met on Wednesday, August 27, 2014 at 9:00 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  
Hon. Buzz Ahrens  
Hon. Danny Dunagan  
Hon. Charlotte Nash  
Hon. Steve Taylor  
Ms. Pamela Burnett  
Mr. Brad Currey  
Mr. Chuck Huling

Mr. Gerald Pouncey  
Mr. Tim Thoms  
Mr. Steven Woodruff  
Cobb County Designee: Ms. Judy Skeel  
Coweta County Designee: Mr. Jay Boren  
DeKalb County Designee: Mr. Charles Lambert  
Douglas County Designee: Mr. Gil Shearouse  
Forsyth County Designee: Mr. Tim Perkins  
Fulton County Designee: Mr. Nick Ammons  
Rockdale County Designee: Dwight Wicks

**Members Not Present**

Mr. Birdel Jackson, Secretary/Treasurer  
Hon. Kasim Reed  
Hon. Steve Brown  
Hon. Tommy Smith

Hon. Jeff Turner  
Ms. Kit Dunlap  
Mr. William Thomas Craig

Chairman Boyd Austin called the meeting to order.

**Water Plan Integration Panel Discussion**

Chairman Austin introduced the moderated panel discussion on Plan Integration. Four panelists including Ms. Evelyn Cortez Davis (City of Los Angeles), Ms. Christine Carlson (South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)), Mr. Dan Buhman (Texas's Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD)), Ms. Karen L. Sands (Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District) shared their respective accounts of progress and success resulting from collaboration and integrated water planning.

The panel was moderated by integrated water planning expert and panel moderator Mr. Paul R. Brown, of Paul Redvers Brown Inc. Mr. Brown opened the discussion by discussing the three

primary drivers for integrated planning: 1) economic growth in the face of uncertainty, 2) advancements in technology, and 3) customer awareness.

Ms. Cortez-Davis discussed how the City of Los Angeles developed an integrated plan to recognize water supply, stormwater and wastewater as “one” adopting the slogan “One Water LA.” Ms. Cortez-Davis estimates that for every \$1 million spent on water quality projects, the city saves approximately \$22 million in added benefits or avoided costs.

Board Members asked the following questions:

What does Los Angeles charge for reuse water? The city charges 80-85% of potable rates which is the maximum allowed in the state of California.

Is there consideration for returning water to its source for other users? Not currently due to the long distance for return. [Water sources are not all local to LA.]

How do you engage universities in your work? We have a number of academics on our review panel.

Were stakeholders more concerned over cost or quality? The stakeholders were concerned about quality but the controversy has been about cost. The response to the cost concerns was answered by showing what the cost is to do nothing. It would cost us more in the long run and be less reliable.

Ms. Carlson discussed how the South Florida Water Management District uses integrated modeling techniques and stakeholder driven metrics to identify priority projects within the Kissimmee basin in central Florida.

Ms. Sands discussed how the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District uses integrated planning techniques to address non-point source pollution through its multi-jurisdictional ownership and varied geography. Since Milwaukee’s water supply comes from Lake Michigan, which also receives stormwater runoff and treated wastewater, the city felt it important to not “foul the nest.” Integrated management programs included addressing ortho-phosphate control in water distribution systems, streambank restoration efforts, funding of green infrastructure projects and fixing leaking sewer laterals to control inflow and infiltration.

Mr. Buhman discussed the integrated planning efforts embraced by the TRWD to coordinate their water supply project with neighboring utilities. The TRWD is a water supply purveyor serving almost two million people in more than 60 cities and 11 counties. The TRWD utilized integrated planning to assess the possibilities of combining efforts with the Dallas Water Utilities to build an integrated pipeline to provide water for both parties. TRWD determined that they would spend an additional \$500 million on the pipeline if they did not combine efforts with the Dallas Water Utilities. The drivers for integrated planning included population growth that is expected to double in the next 50 years and the increasing likelihood of drought. The TRWD

cannot enforce water conservation or direct how stormwater should be managed so it focuses on public education.

Board Members asked the following questions:

How did you fund the reservoirs and infrastructure? We used bonds and some state funding.

How do you prioritize the delivery of water supply to the local utilities? TRWD has contracts with the utilities for unconditional provisions to supply water. TRWD has one rate that all customers pay.

Does that preclude wastewater systems to not create reuse water as a source of water supply? The issue of reuse water is complicated and locally specific.

Does TRWD have condemnation authority? Yes.

Can you speak to your role in economic development? Economic development was added to our mission. The TRWD has been a partner in determining how development occurs along the river corridor.

Questions to the entire panel:

Is the effort for integrated planning worth the outcome?

Ms. Cortez-Davis – Yes. It took over \$11 million to develop our integrated plan but the communication that resulted from the effort opened doors and created the valuable dialogue that didn't exist before.

Ms. Sands – After a major investment in CSO separation, we met our water quality goals for reduced sewer overflows, however, the public expected we achieve zero overflows. Integrated planning efforts have now built the stakeholder's trust back up.

Do you have any ideas on how to get cooperation amongst states similar to our "water war?"

Ms. Cortez-Davis – Los Angeles has had a conflict with San Diego over cost sharing as well as conflicts with the multi-state/international Colorado River basin parties. The models developed to have helped solve these conflicts. We need to deal with what we have and not what we don't have.

Are the utility contracts in TRWD negotiated or statutory?

Mr. Buhman – The contracts were negotiated in the 1980's.

Does your agency have any cost sharing for industrial reuse?

Ms. Cortez-Davis – Los Angeles has done this and has recovered the cost over time. Sometimes the payback may not be effective.

What are your recommendations for us for integrated water planning?

Ms. Carlson – Look at ways that you can display leadership and develop funding mechanisms.

Ms. Sands – Encourage primary parties to enter a memorandum of understanding.

Ms. Cortez-Davis – Remember the three I's – Integrate, Innovate, and Include

Mr. Buhman – Who leads the effort is important.

Do you have any policies for irrigation with respect to water supply?

Ms. Cortez-Davis – Los Angeles has a Water Conservation Crew who educates and enforces water restrictions/conservation ordinances. The city is aware that reductions in demand hit their bottom line but recognize the integrated benefits. We also want to achieve permanent change through incentivizing turf replacement at \$3 per square foot for California native plants. We also made it illegal to serve water at restaurants unless the customer asks.

Ms. Carlson – SFWMD encourages xeriscaping.

Is there a way to get stakeholder input from the folks in the “middle” who don't typically provide it?

Ms. Sands – We often have a hard time getting folks to show up at our meetings.

Ms. Carlson – We ask to get on local organizations agendas for outreach. This has helped us build trust in the community.

Ms. Cortez-Davis – Self-selected stakeholder input does not make an effective program. The neighborhood councils became engaged in our processes. We use Twitter and Facebook to send community messages. We also use a water advisory group for outreach advice.

Chairman Austin stated that it is clear that we should all recognize the importance of partnering with our neighbors.

**Approve Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Austin called for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion to approve the June 4, 2014 meeting minutes was made by Vice Chair Katie Kirkpatrick, seconded by Ms. Charlotte Nash and passed without opposition.

### **Chairman's Report**

#### **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 34 inches of rainfall which matches what is typically observed. Lake Lanier is currently at 1069 which is three feet below the summer conservation pool. The water level is four feet below where it was this time last year.

#### **Water Wars Update**

Ms. Zitsch provided an update on Water Wars. Florida and Georgia are currently waiting on the Solicitor General's recommendation to the Supreme Court as to whether or not the court should accept the case. Florida has hired Lathem and Watkins as legal counsel for the case. Lathem and Watkins has a former US Solicitor General on staff. The District will notify governing board members once the decision is rendered.

The ACT water control manual is expected to be released by the end of this year. The draft ACF water control manual is expected in 2015-2016.

Chairman Austin asked if the public will be privy to the Solicitor General's recommendation. Ms. Zitsch replied that it would be made public.

#### **EPD Drought Rule**

Ms. Zitsch provided an update on Georgia EPD's Drought Rule update. The District is coming up with a recommendation for EPD to consider incorporating into the current draft.

#### **Clean Water Act**

Ms. Zitsch updated the governing board on the proposed modifications to the Clean Water Act. The District will continue to monitor the progress of the modifications but does not intend to provide comments at this time.

#### **2014 Essay Contest**

Chairman Austin announced the 2014 Middle School Essay Contest. Students will be asked to "Explain why water quantity (how much water we have) and water quality (how clean the water is) are equally important." The City of Atlanta and each County winners' prize is \$100. The entry deadline is October 17th. The District winner prize is \$500. The City of Atlanta and county winners will be notified on November 14th. An awards reception will be held in the South Wing of the Georgia Capitol on Thursday, December 4th from 10 am -12 pm. District-wide winner and runner-up will be announced at the awards reception.

### **2015 Calendar Photo Contest**

The District recently held a Calendar Photo contest called “Water Reflections: Highlighting Metro Atlanta’s Water Resources” to promote awareness and appreciation of our shared water resources through digital photography. The contest is primarily an outreach activity directed at the District’s adult population. Participants were asked to capture the beauty, heritage, activities and character of Metro Atlanta’s water resources and to describe what the water resource in their photo entry meant to them. 120 photo entries from locations all over the region were submitted from 62 participants. The grand prize winner was Dave Di Cristina of Avondale Estates. His picture will be featured on the cover of the calendar and for the month of February. All board members will receive a calendar at the December Governing Board meeting in December.

Ms. Kirkpatrick suggested the District look at the potential to generate revenue from calendar sales next year.

### **Water Sense/Energy Star Tax Free Holiday Weekend**

Chairman Austin noted that Friday, October 3rd to Sunday, October 5th is a sales tax holiday for Water Sense and ENERGY STAR labeled products. All Water Sense and ENERGY STAR labeled products with a sales price of \$1,500 or less purchased for non-commercial home or personal use will be Georgia state and local sales tax-free.

### **Environmental Land Use Committee Toto Tour**

Chairman Austin announced that ARC’s Environmental Land Use Committee (ELUC) will be touring the Toto facility in Morrow, GA on September 11th. A limited number of additional spaces are available. Any governing board members wishing to join may contact Lora Amedu at [Lamedu@atlantaregional.com](mailto:Lamedu@atlantaregional.com).

### **Other**

Mr. Tim Perkins asked if the Governing Board could review the membership policies for the TCC and voting recommendations for TCC members at the next Governing Board meeting. District staff was asked to provide a recommendation to the Board at that time to consider.

Ms. Kirkpatrick reminded the Governing Board to be aware of the proposed Drought Rule changes from EPD and provide comments if so inclined.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.