



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
GOVERNING BOARD
Minutes
February 27, 2019**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Governing Board met on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. in the Harry West Board Room at the Atlanta Regional Commission office in Atlanta, Georgia.

Members Present

Hon. Charlotte Nash, Chairman
Ms. Katie Kirkpatrick, Vice Chair
Hon. Harry Johnston
Hon. Mike Boyce
Hon. Randy Ognio
Hon. Boyd Austin
Mr. Mark Berry
Ms. Pam Burnett
Mr. Brad Currey
Mr. Tim Lee

Mr. Tim Thoms
Mr. Glenn Page
Clayton County Designee: Mr. Bernard Franks
Coweta County Designee: Mr. Jay Boren
DeKalb County Designee: Mr. Ted Rhinehart
Douglas County Designee: Mr. Gil Shearouse
Forsyth County Designee: Mr. Tim Perkins
Fulton County Designee: Mr. Nick Ammons
Hall County Designee: Mr. Ken Rearden
Henry County Designee: Mr. Tony Carnell

Members Not Present

Mr. Birdel Jackson, Treasurer
Hon. Keisha Lance Bottoms
Hon. Oz Nesbitt

Hon Steve Taylor
Ms. Kit Dunlap
Mr. Gerald Pouncey

Chairman Charlotte Nash called the meeting to order.

Recognition of New Board Members

Chairman Nash welcomed two new members to the board: Cherokee County Chairman Harry Johnston and Fayette County Chairman Randy Ognio.

Public Comment

Mr. Jack Wilson – Mr. Wilson, an attorney representing the City of Auburn, provided comments supporting the amendment request by the city for a raw water storage pond and water treatment plant.

Mr. Roger Wilhelm – Mr. Wilhelm, the Utility Director for the City of Winder, provided comments supporting the amendment request by the City of Auburn for a raw water storage pond and water treatment plant.

Mr. Aaron Meyer – Mr. Meyer, an attorney representing Barrow County, provided comments in opposition to the amendment request by the City of Auburn for a raw water storage pond and water treatment plant.

Approve Meeting Minutes

Chairman Nash called for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion to approve the October 19, 2018 meeting minutes was made by Mr. Tim Thoms, seconded by Mr. Tony Carnell and passed without opposition. Chairman Nash noted that the December 5, 2018 board meeting did not achieve quorum, therefore approval of the meeting minutes is not required.

Water Supply Status

Ms. Katherine Zitsch noted that the water level at Lake Lanier is at 1075.97, almost five feet above full pool. The record water level for Lake Lanier is 1077.20. While 2018 was the second wettest year in recorded history, Ms. Zitsch noted that wettest year, 1948, was followed by a statewide drought from 1950-1957.

Litigation Update

Ms. Zitsch provided an update on the Florida v. Georgia Supreme Court case. The court has appointed a new Special Master – Special Master Kelly who is with the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Ms. Zitsch noted that he has recently ruled against new discovery and/or depositions, but instead the two states will need to work with the current evidence in the record. The first briefs were due by the two states on January 31, 2019 with responses due on February 28, 2019. Ms. Zitsch stated that she does not know if a formal trial before the Special Master will be held. After the Special Master makes a new recommendation, the case will go back to the full Supreme Court.

Education Update

Ms. Allison Henry provided an update on education and outreach activities coming up. Ms. Henry presented the winning T-Shirt design for the 7th Annual Water Drop Dash 5K. Ms. Henry noted that the race will be held at the Chattahoochee Nature Center on March 23, 2019. Ms. Henry shared the 2019 High School Video Contest theme, which asks students “How do you value water?”

Mr. Danny Johnson shared a new initiative the District staff have been working on to provide place-based education materials and interactive lessons for teachers in elementary through high school on water resources around the state. In the long term, staff would like to pursue updates to the state curriculum to include place-based water resource educational components.

Schedule for 2019

Ms. Allison Henry provided an update on education and outreach activities coming up. Ms. Henry presented

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

2017 Year End Budget Revision

Mr. Johnson presented the Finance and Executive Committee's recommendations on the 2018 year end and the 2019 budget revision. A motion to approve the 2018 year end budget revision was made by Hon. Boyd Austin, seconded by Mr. Gil Shearouse and passed without opposition. A motion to approve the 2019 budget revision was made by Mr. Mark Berry, seconded by Vice Chair Katie Kirkpatrick and passed without opposition.

Basin Advisory Council (BAC) New Member Approval

The District received three applications for BAC membership since December. The Executive Committee approved three individuals for membership during their morning meeting.

City of Auburn Amendment Request

Chairman Nash presented the City of Auburn's request to amend the Water Resource Management Plan to include the City's proposed raw water storage pond and water treatment plan in the Oconee River basin. Chairman Nash noted that the Executive Committee convened on November 15, 2019 and voted to categorize the request as a major amendment subject to a legal notice being placed in the newspaper following a 30-day public comment period. Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the comments received.

Mr. Glenn Page noted that his concerns over debt service implications were outweighed by the need for additional drought resilience. Hon. Randy Ognio questioned why Barrow doesn't see the benefit of drought resilience that this project provides.

A motion to approve the City of Auburn amendment to the Water Resource Management Plan was made by Hon. Austin, seconded by Vice Chair Kirkpatrick and passed without opposition.

Legislative Update

Mr. Andrew Morris provided an overview of legislative activity related to water resource bills and District funding requests.

Mr. Morris noted that Cornerstone has been working to restore funding in the State's budget for the District. The House budget proposal currently includes \$100,000 for the District. Mr. Morris stated that Cornerstone will continue to work with the Senate to seek the additional amount.

House Bill 49 – This bill relates to the specific language in the District Act that prohibits the District from studying or including in its plan, an interbasin transfers from outside of the District area. The proposed language would create an exception for interbasin transfers from a river with an average annual average flow of at least 15 billion gallons per day.

House Bill 411 – This bill would prohibit the addition of fees on property tax bills and would affect the way many of the District's local governments collect fees for stormwater programs. This method of payment is recognized as a highly effective tool for fee collection by many local governments.

House Bill 465 – This bill would enact the Georgia Water Customer Bill of Rights Act which would provide for standards related to customer service and disclosures, refunds and credits, administrative and civil remedies and other related items.

Education Program Overview

Mr. Johnson presented an overview of the District’s education program requirements for local governments and water and wastewater providers including planning challenges, plan requirements and the District’s work on technical assistance.

Mr. John Butler, Gwinnett County’s Water Resources Outreach Manager, presented an overview of Gwinnett County’s education program. Mr. Butler noted that Gwinnett County appreciates the District’s list of example education activities that will help fulfil the Water Resource Management Plan’s requirements and applauded the flexibility built into the action items. Every year, Gwinnett County provides both lecture-based and hands-on workshops, two water festivals including treatment plant tours, and multiple stream cleanups which have removed 13 tons of trash with the help of 587 volunteers total. Mr. Butler stated, “the District’s plan sets you on the right path and the county continues to recognize the benefit.”

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.