



CHESAPEAKE BAY and WATER RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY March 17, 2017

1. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Size called the meeting to order at 10:10, and welcomed new committee member, District of Columbia Councilmember Silverman.

2. APPROVAL OF DRAFT SUMMARY FROM NOVEMBER 18TH CBPC MEETING

The draft summary of the January 27, 2017 meeting was approved as submitted.

3. COG REGION WATER SUPPLY PLANS

Mr. Walz, COG DEP Director, presented an overview of COG's multiple ongoing water security and resiliency efforts. The following are highlights from his Power Point presentation, posted to the CBPC website.

Introduction

- A map of the Potomac River illustrated that there are numerous water intake points along the Potomac from Frederick, Maryland to the District of Columbia.
- Water service is critical for drinking water, public safety, power, and industry.
- While a water service disruption of greater than 24-hours has a low probability, it has a high impact.
 - If the region were to lose water for 3 days, it is estimated that the regional economic impact would be greater than \$1B.

Potomac Sheen Event - After Action

- Simultaneous with the CBPC meeting, on March 17th, regional water utilities held an "After Action" meeting with EPA's Emergency Response Team and others to discuss the November-December 2016 Potomac Sheen event, noting what went well and areas for improvement. Some initial lessons learned from the event included:
 - EPA's Emergency Response approach:
 - Focused on the environmental protection aspect, and determining the responsible party(ies) – and not on the potential risks to water treatment facilities and the need to protect drinking water
 - Therefore, it did not include water utilities in the inner circle of communication.
 - Key conclusions: a) The primary Emergency Response objective also needs to include drinking water protection; and b) Water utilities need a role in the Unified Command during spill events affecting water supplies.
 - The region also needs to develop a Non-tidal Potomac Spill Response Plan to:
 - Prioritize spill prevention (e.g., water utilities are already initiating proactive channels of communication with Colonial Pipeline)
 - Prepare to assess human health effects from a spill, and communicate potential risks early in case of an event.
 - Emphasis regionally-coordinated data collection (e.g., sampling and monitoring).
 - The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin's (ICPRB) spill model does not effectively model the behavior of petroleum products in

the water column. This will need to be pursued.

Water Supply and Drought Planning

- ICPRB manages a flow model to gauge normal versus low flows.
- There are several agreements and plans involved in regional coordination on water supply and drought conditions. These include:
 - 1978 Low Flow Allocation Agreement (Signed by the Army; ICPRB manages) - *governs regional water withdraw during drought conditions, both for equity and to maintain river's ecology.*
 - 1982 Water Supply Coordination Agreement (ICPRB and water utilities manage)- *coordinates regional water withdraw during low-flow conditions*
 - 1994 (updated 2009) Water Supply Emergency Plan (COG manages)
 - 2000 Water Supply & Drought Awareness Response Plan (COG manages) – *COG monitors drought conditions, and coordinates drought watches and warnings with state agencies and within metropolitan Washington*
 - 2008 NCRWARN (National Capital Region Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network) – *voluntary mutual aid network for metropolitan Washington utilities, and connects with state WARNs.*

Regional Resiliency Study

- Funded by Urban Area Security Initiative (DHS)
- Core findings:
 - There is a limited ability for the COG region's water utilities to transfer raw stored water and finished water between them, due to limited storage and limited interconnections.
 - River contamination events pose the greatest regional risk in terms of water outages, societal and economic risks.
- Recommendations:
 - Look for optimum balance between reducing risk and costs (i.e., as redundancy is very expensive).
 - Over short-term, could work on upgrading existing connections between WSSC and DC Water, and the Dalecarlia Reservoir Bypass.
 - Longer-term implementation could include the addition of quarries, and adding additional connections between WSSC and DC Water.

Ongoing and Planned COG Resiliency Efforts

- Maintaining source water protection partnerships and collaboration
- Updating and exercises of the Water Supply Emergency & Drought Management Plan

Member Discussion:

- Mr. Peterson noted that ICPRB has played a major role in the water supply planning; and acknowledged that their latest plan only goes through 2040, and recognizes that additional storage will be needed beyond 2040.
- Ms. Gross stated she was pleased by the presentation and had the following recommendations for staff:
 - Plan to share the Resiliency Study/COG's water supply planning efforts with the CEEPC committee.
 - Convene another Water Summit (such as one held in 1999) to reexamine the state of the region's water supply, given population growth, climate change/drought, opportunities for quarry storage and for water reclamation, and noting new constituents of concern (such as microfibers).

- Asked whether COG needs to update the Water Supply Emergency Plan (2009) and/or the Drought Response Plan (2000)
 - Mr. Walz responded that COG is planning to update the Water Supply & Drought Awareness Response Plan.
- Hold a future meeting on reclaimed water (purple pipes).
 - Ms. Spano responded that reclaimed water/reuse issues will be explicitly included in the Regional Water Quality Management's FY 2018 Work Program as a technical consideration for the Water Resources Technical Committee (WRTC), and to bring those findings/recommendations back to the CBPC at a future date.
- Ms. Garvey said she would like today's information to also be presented to the Emergency Preparedness Committee, and cautioned that the region needs to think about what our plans would be if in the future Federal agencies are not able to assist in time.
- Mr. Rice said it is important to keep these plans updated to reflect changing pressures to the water supply, including climate change; and for elected officials to be able to share the plans. For example, there is agriculture in his district, so in times of drought it helps to be able to say the region is planning accordingly. And he also requested that the Resiliency Study report be sent to the CBPC members once it is finalized.
- Mr. Karimi requested staff to schedule an ICPRB presentation to the CBPC members — about the roles of ICPRB, and the Co-op. And noted that consumptive use of water upstream of the region is increasing, and that the region will need to identify creative ways to conserve water.
 - Ms. Spano replied that staff will add an annual or biannual presentation about water quantity/resiliency/emergency preparedness (provided by COG or ICPRB, as applicable) to the CBPC's planning calendar.

Chair Sze summarized the discussion into the following themes for future CBPC updates and discussion.

- Emergency preparedness (i.e., updates on studies/efforts discussed today)
- Reclaimed/reuse water
- Water use/water rights partnerships: States, Co-op (1978 Low Flow Allocation Agreement); federal agencies (EPA/Coast Guard)

4. EPA AND CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM FUNDING: POTENTIAL FOR IMPACTS AND CBPC ACTION

Mr. Walz and Ms. Spano provided an assessment of what the OMB Budget Blueprint for the federal budget, released the day before, may mean to metropolitan Washington.

- Mr. Walz said this is the budget blueprint, but that the fate of the EPA and CBP funding lie with Congress, who passes the federal budget.
- Ms. Spano noted that:
 - If the CBP budget were to be reduced from its current FY17 \$73 M was reduced to \$5 M (as was initially presented) that it might be just enough to keep the CBP office running; but would essentially eliminate the program. As a significant portion of the current \$73 M is passed to states in the form of grants. Likewise, there would be insufficient funding to continue the critical modeling and monitoring work which is critical for quantifying what nutrient reductions are needed, and measuring progress towards meeting those reductions.

- Meanwhile, the water quality obligations that local governments and water utilities bear will continue, since permits and the potential for third- party lawsuits would continue.
- It appears EPA's State Revolving Funds (SRF) funding remains intact in the budget blueprint, to support water infrastructure.
- There are cuts proposed to enforcement, and other areas of EPA. See COG's Budget Blueprint Initial Briefing paper (3/17/17) for more details.

Member Discussion:

- Ms. Davis said the National League of Cities (NLC) wrote a letter in response to the budget blueprint, noting that:
 - A \$54B increase to the United States defense budget would effectively cut 3,200 positions in EPA, which would impact this region's jobs and economy.
 - It shifts environmental program responsibility to the locals, without funding.
- Ms. Feldt stated that the cuts are consistent across the Chesapeake Bay, the Great Lakes, and the Gulf water bodies. While the degree is alarming, there will be other Congressional districts pushing back, and there is room for alliance.
- Ms. Garvey said it is time to remind the public why the EPA was created and why it is important, such as rivers that were on fire, etc. Also, that EPA supports local jobs and the economy. She suggested a *Washington Post* ad.
- Mr. Karimi noted that:
 - Usually when one federal agency receives a funding cut, states and local governments can turn to other sources of funding. However, in the case of the proposed budget blueprint there are cuts across the board – FEMA, NOAA Sea Grants, U.S. FWS, all would have budget reductions.
 - If the federal agencies were to not be held accountable for federal facility stormwater implementation because of these budget cuts, then that would have a negative impact on the implementation of the District of Columbia's and other local governments' stormwater programs.
- Mr. Rice stated that messages should be about the importance of Bay jobs – economic development, workforce development, green jobs, and environmental stewardship. COG may wish to consider partnering with others such as Maryland Waterman's Association.
- Mr. Male said President Trump has issued an Executive Order calling for Agencies to develop staff reorganization plans, which could indicate plans for staffing reductions. He also pointed out that the CBPC should also follow what happens with the Department of Justice, since it has the judicial authority over the Clean Water Act and water issues.
- Ms. Holman stated that while the SRF funds appear to be held steady within EPA, the USDA budget proposal would eliminate funding for rural water infrastructure, and refers rural areas in need to seek SRF funding.
- Ms. Nagle also noted that a reduction or elimination of block grant programs would impact emergency response and rural water programs (e.g., Maryland Rural Water) would be forced to reduce technical assistance for smaller plants.
- Chair Sze summarized the conversation and potential follow up actions, including:
 - Coordination with other regional groups, and with other water organizations outside of metropolitan Washington
 - Making use of social media and ads to convey our messages about the importance EPA's water programs to our economy, jobs, and emergency response
- Ms. Davis said the NLC is using the same approach, to focus on jobs and the economy.

- Ms. Spano closed by mentioning that National Water Week is the week of March 20th, and NACWA and WEF organize an annual national lobbying event on the Hill, focusing messages on these very themes—the “Value of Water,” and the need for water infrastructure investments.

5. MEMBER UPDATES

A. Member Program/Activity Highlights — DC Water

Ms. Holman shared information regarding DC Water’s issuance of its first century green bond, to help fund its Clean Rivers Project, noting:

- Having a 100-year life for the bond means that costs of the tunnels project can be more equitably be spread across generations.
- The bonds are getting good reception from the investment community.
- In addition, the Green Infrastructure Bonds spread the risk of the green infrastructure investments between DC Water and investors:
 - If the green infrastructure succeeds the investors will realize a 5% bump in their profits;
 - But if DC Water must revert to gray infrastructure, the investors will pay 3% on the back end, helping to cushion DC Water’s expenses.

Ms. Holman also said DC Water is investigating futuristic investment mechanisms, such as Resiliency Bonds, to increase capital investment for resiliency projects.

6. STAFF UPDATES

A. Advocacy Workgroup’s Legislative Updates & CBPC Outreach Activities

Ms. Bonnaffon provided a recap of the Virginia and Maryland General Assembly legislation that the Advocacy Workgroup tracked; and noted that the Maryland wipes legislation that the CBPC members supported passed in the Maryland Senate, but is awaiting House decision.

Ms. Bonnaffon also directed members to review the CBPC Outreach Plan, with focus on:

- National Infrastructure week, May 15-19. COG will be promoting water infrastructure, and planned events by metropolitan Washington utilities via its social media.
- Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week is the second week of June.

Members requested that staff share copies of the CBPC member sample resolutions. Ms. Bonnaffon will send them via email.

B. Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) Updates

Ms. Spano provided updates on CBP activities and the Midpoint Assessment (MPA) schedule, as detailed in the written CBP General Updates. She noted that the condensed timeline for the watershed model calibration, and the subsequent MPA schedule has been delayed. She also noted that as she continues to be an At-Large Member of the Water Quality Goal Implementation Team, she continues to be able to address the needs and interests of COG’s members. She requested and received CBPC member support for working with Chairman Sze to advance any potential CBPC advocacy actions as needed.

C. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Coastal Storm Risk Management Study – Highlights of proposed COG co-sponsored study

Ms. Spano reviewed the proposed USACE Study, for which COG and the National Capital Planning Commission are co-sponsors, and COG is the non-federal partner. They will be seeking additional cost-share partners.

- The study is timely because climate change, subsidence, and storm surge collectively increase flood risk.
 - This study is intended to address a gap in assessing regional flood risks, be non-duplicative (i.e., will incorporate/utilize existing data and studies), will engage a broad suite of stakeholders, and while focused on coastal flooding, the analysis of factors such as changes in precipitation, groundwater levels, sea level rise and similar findings will also be applicable to other metropolitan Washington localities beyond those with direct coastal shorelines.

The study is assumed to take three years and cost \$3M, with half of that contributed by the UASCE via Congressionally approved funding the next step in this process is to secure non-federal cost-share funding partners.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sze adjourned the meeting at 12:10 P.M.

The next CBPC meeting & stormwater tour will be **Friday, May 19**, from 10:00 to 12:00 in Montgomery County.

ATTENDANCE:

Members and Alternates:

Christine Nagle, College Park
Craig Rice, Montgomery County
Dan Sze, Chair, Falls Church
Elissa Silverman, DC Council
Gretchen Mikeska, DOEE
Hamid Karimi, Vice Chair, DOEE
J Davis, Vice Chair, Greenbelt
JL Hearn, WSSC
Karen Pallansch, Alexandria Renew Enterprises (phone)
Libby Garvey, Arlington County
Lisa Feldt, Montgomery County
Mark Peterson, Loudoun Water
Maureen Holman, DC Water
Penelope Gross, Fairfax County

Sam Rosen-Amy, Office of Councilmember Sliverman

Tim Male, Takoma Park

Walter Ficklin, Bladensburg

Guests:

Amy Tarte, VA Department of Emergency Management

Andrew Fellows, UMD

Mike Fowler, Wildlands Engineering

COG Staff:

Heidi Bonnaffon, DEP

Steve Walz, DEP Director

Tanya Spano, DEP

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