



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
GOVERNING BOARD
Meeting Notes and Minutes
September 3, 2009**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Governing Board met on Thursday, September 3, 2009 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. Sam Olens, Vice-Chairman
Mr. Birdel Jackson, Secretary/Treasurer
Mayor Boyd Austin
Mr. Bradley Currey
Mr. Jack Elkins
Ms. Katie Kirkpatrick
Mayor Lorene Lindsey
Mr. Gerald Pouncey
Mayor Kenneth Steele
Mr. Steven Woodruff

City of Atlanta Designee: Mr. Rob Hunter
Bartow County Designee: Mr. Jim Stafford
Cherokee County Designee: Mr. David Kubala
Clayton County Designee: Mr. Mike Thomas
Coweta County Designee: Mr. Ellis Cadenhead
DeKalb County Designee: Mr. Charles Lambert
Forsyth County Designee: Mr. Jon Heard
Fulton County Designee: Mr. Chris Browning
Hall County Designee: Mr. Kelly Randall
Rockdale County Designee: Mr. Dwight Wicks

Members Not Present

Ms. Kit Dunlap, Chairman
Commissioner Tom Worthan
Commissioner Charles Bannister
Mr. William Thomas Craig
Mr. Bob Fountain
Ms. Suzanne Sitherwood

Approve Meeting Notes and Minutes

Vice-Chairman Sam Olens called the meeting to order and asked Mayor Kenneth Steele to lead the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting notes and minutes from the June 4, 2009 Board meeting were approved without opposition.

Chairman's Report

Vice-Chairman Olens welcomed new Board members in attendance: Mr. Jack Elkins, Mayor Lorene Lindsey and Mayor Kenneth Steele.

Pat Stevens was asked to give a water conditions status update. Ms. Stevens reported that Lake Lanier is 8.9 feet higher than it was a year ago. Allatoona Lake's level is tracking the historical average lake level and is projected to continue to do so over the next month.

Vice-Chairman Olens reminded the Board that Georgia's Energy Star Tax Free Holiday would take place October 1-4 this year. WaterSense and Energy Star products are eligible for the tax free holiday. Vice-Chairman Olens directed the Board to the flyer in their meeting packet about the tax free holiday.

The annual Clean Water Campaign essay contest deadline is September 25 and all middle school aged children are encouraged to participate. This year's essay contest is being dedicated to the memory of Sergeant First Class John C. Beale, a member of the Georgia Army National Guard, who was killed while serving in Afghanistan in June. John was an integral part of Clayton County's public education efforts and also served as a member of the Metro Water District Education Technical Coordinating Committee. Vice-Chairman Olens asked that the Board promote the contest within their jurisdiction and participate in the awards presentations when county winners are chosen later this fall.

Vice-Chairman Olens gave an update on the Federal Funding Research Group. He asked for more local jurisdictions to participate in this effort to secure federal funding for water related projects. He noted that this effort needs to be regional and suggested every jurisdiction participate. He referred the Board to the memo from Chairman Kit Dunlap in their meeting packet.

Status of Lake Allatoona Chlorophyll *a* TMDL

Vice-Chairman Olens introduced Dr. Elizabeth Booth with GA EPD to give the Board an update on the Lake Allatoona Chlorophyll *a* Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Dr. Booth clarified that Chlorophyll *a* is the green pigment found in plants and it's the parameter GA EPD uses to measure algal growth and thus nutrients in the water. Dr. Booth highlighted how the weather patterns consistently affected the Chlorophyll *a* readings in all the lakes they monitor. She noted that there has been improvements in Lake Allatoona's water quality since Cherokee County WSA removed a chicken plant discharge from the lake and connected it to the sewer system. Dr. Booth shared numerous charts and graphs showing the nutrient reading in the lake. She noted that the nutrient standards are being reevaluated and the TMDL will be revised as a result.

Dr. Booth explained that the point source dischargers are doing a good job and in fact in wet years those discharges actually help to improve water quality. She also explained that Lake Allatoona is a Phosphorous limited system and there is no need for Nitrogen limits since that is not the cause of the water quality problem.

The Board thanked GA EPD for their willingness to reevaluate this TMDL and the nutrient issue. The Board asked if poultry houses are moving out of the area and what effect that industry might have on the nutrient levels in the lake. Dr. Booth explained that their model uses historical land uses and what is already in the soil. She also stated that 50% of the chicken litter is being moved out of the area. A question about nutrient trading was asked and how that concept is being incorporated into the revised TMDL. Dr. Booth suggested that a stakeholder group be established to help EPD develop nutrient trading guidance.

ACF Litigation Update – The State’s Perspective

Vice-Chairman Olens introduced Mr. Nels Peterson the Deputy Executive Counsel to Governor Sonny Purdue. Mr. Peterson talked about the history of Lake Lanier and the recent court ruling. Mr. Peterson explained that the ruling requires congressional action. He also outlined that the court ruling does not limit Georgia’s future ability to use water from our rivers or allocate water between the states or guarantee flow levels to any downstream water needs.

Mr. Peterson walked through the details of the Governor’s four pronged approach: Appeal, Contingency Planning, Congressional Reauthorization, and Negotiations. He emphasized that this is a Georgia issue and the entire state needs to have a unified voice. He explained that the next phase of the litigation deals with endangered species.

Mr. Peterson gave an update on the court case concerning Lake Allatoona and the ACT Basin. He explained that Alabama has requested that the ACT case be stayed longer. He views this as an opportunity for reaching resolution with Alabama.

The Metro Water District Board can help the state by contributing suggestions for contingency planning. Those suggestions can be sent to either Nels Peterson, Matt Baxter or Lonice Barrett. He requested that the Board reach out to the congressional delegation to keep this issue on the high priority list.

The Board asked what affects it had that people in our own state sided with other states. Mr. Peterson responded that it’s unclear but it certainly did not help. He further stated that we need to better communicate all the good things we currently do to conserve water. The Board also asked how the 600 cfs and the 230 mgd relate. Mr. Peterson explained that the 600 cfs refers to the flow in non peak hours and that the Judge did his own analysis and disregarded the Corps calculations. The Board then asked about return credits. Mr. Peterson explained that GA EPD encourages returns and they are looking very closely at this piece of the ruling. The Board asked if the state is considering emergency funding to accelerate the creation of alternate drinking water sources. Mr. Peterson said that this will get serious consideration. The Board asked if there are any other areas in the nation with a similar dependency on Corps lakes. Mr. Peterson explained that there are 47 Corps reservoirs in 17 states that are being used for drinking water when that is not an authorized use. This ruling will have impact not just to Georgia but other communities in the nation as well.

Basin Advisory Council Update

Vice-Chairman Olens asked Matt Harper to give the Board an update on the recent activities of the Basin Advisory Councils. Mr. Harper informed the Board that each of the new members of the six BACs have elected BAC Chairs. Mr. Harper explained that each of the BACs met in July 2009 to review the Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan and to take a tour of a water supply related facility. The BACs then met again in August 2009 to review the Wastewater Management Plan and take a tour of a wastewater facility. In October 2009 the BACs will meet to review the Watershed Management Plan and tour a stormwater related facility. Staff is working with the BAC Chairs to establish regular quarterly meeting dates for 2010 and those meetings should be scheduled by December. Ms. Pat Stevens introduced Mrs. Heather Moody as the staff person that organized these BAC meetings and explained that she will be managing the BAC process moving forward.

Status of ACF Stakeholder Collaborative Effort

Vice-Chairman Sam Olens asked Ms. Pat Stevens to give an update on the ACF Stakeholder organization. Ms. Stevens reported that the group has developed a charter and organizational structure. The group is now seeking charter members, Ms. Stevens referred the group to the application included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Bradley Currey thanked Ms. Stevens for her efforts in helping to create the charter. Mr. Currey made a motion for the Metro Water District to join as a charter member of the group. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition. A motion was made for Mr. Currey to serve as the Metro Water District Board representative on the ACF Stakeholders group. The motion was seconded and passed without opposition.

The Board asked if this same type of group will be developed in the other river basins. Vice-Chair Olens stated that this group could be used as a model for how to do this in the other basins. Ms. Stevens gave credit to Joe Maltese with the City of LaGrange for his work on creating this organization. One Board member made it clear that the ACF Stakeholder group is a separate independent entity from the Metro Water District. Vice-Chair Olens requested the Board's help in seeking membership for this new organization.

Next Meeting

Vice-Chairman Olens announced the next Board meeting would take place on Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the Loudermilk Center Amphitheatre. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.