

**Attachment 1A**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**DIRECTORS OF UTILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**March 7, 2018**  
**Newport News**

**1. Summary of the February 7, 2018 Meeting of the Directors of Utilities Committee**

There were no comments on, or revisions to the summary of the February 7, 2018 Committee meeting.

**ACTION:** The summary of the February 7, 2018 meeting of the Directors of Utilities Committee was approved.

**2. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**3. Affordability of City Services**

The Committee continued the February 7, 2018 meeting discussion on preparing for a future affordability briefing to the HRPDC Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) Committee (see [Summary Minutes](#), page 3). HRPDC Principal Water Resources Engineer Whitney Katchmark provided additional information, based on the Committee's comments from the February meeting, on the income required to make the mid-range projected bill equivalent to 4.5% of annual household income (see Attachment 1C).

Newport News Waterworks Enterprise Manager Steve Carpenter briefed the Committee on the implementation of [LIFT-UP](#) (Local Interventions for Financial Empowerment through Utility Payments), a financial empowerment program that helps low-income families pay municipal utility bills. The LIFT-UP approach, which is endorsed by the National League of Cities, helps utilities collect overdue water payments with less reliance water shutoffs and debt collection agencies, while program participants are given the opportunity to restructure their outstanding balances and receive financial counseling.

Newport News Waterworks issued a contract to the Urban League of Hampton Roads in March 2017 to begin enrolling program participants on July 1, 2017. Waterworks and the Urban League developed enrollment criteria for program participants and incentives to complete the program. Every two months, Waterworks provided the Urban League with a list of 250 randomly selected customers that met the enrollment criteria. The Urban League contacted all customers on the list by mailed postcard and by phone to invite them to enroll in the program. Over the first eight months, 128 of the 1,000 invited customers agreed to participate. Only 72 of those customers showed up for the required appointment with Urban League staff for counseling services and payment plan setup; lack of transportation was often cited as the reason for no-shows.

Most of the 72 customers that completed their counseling appointment and agreed to a payment plan did not make a payment, or missed a payment over their 6 to 12 month plan; missing a payment triggered automatic unenrollment in the program. So far, four customers have paid off their bills. The average past due customer account is \$400.

Ms. Katchmark noted the potential for a joint meeting with the HRPDC Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) Committee on affordability and customer assistance programs. Ms. Katchmark will follow-up with the chairman of the CAOs Committee on the goals for such a meeting and potential agenda items. An update will be provided to the Directors of Utilities Committee at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** No action.

#### **4. HRSD Draft Amendment to the 2014 Memorandum of Agreement**

HRSD General Manager Ted Henifin reviewed the revised working draft of the amendment to the 2014 Memorandum of Agreement proposed in coordination with the Integrated Plan/Regional Wet Weather Management Plan submitted to the EPA on September 29, 2017. The committee's suggested edits from the February 7, 2018 have been incorporated.

As there were no further comments, HRSD will provide the final MOA language, along with talking points, to the Committee members for coordinating council/board approvals. All MOAs should be executed by December 2018. It was emphasized that the signatory parties to the MOA must adopt the same MOA amendment; localities cannot customize the language in the document.

**ACTION:** HRSD will provide the final MOA language and talking points to Committee members for execution by boards/councils by December 2018.

#### **5. Irrigation Meters**

The Committee participated in a roundtable discussion on irrigation submeters and the cost of service associated with these submeters. Water conservation continues to be an important organizational goal for utilities, and effective practices and policies to reduce outdoor water use for irrigation are of interest. Committee members shared how replacing irrigation submeter programs with irrigation-only meter programs has allowed customers to save money on sewer charges while eliminating the costs and customer service issues associated with monthly call-in customer submeter readings. In the past, some utilities have incentivized irrigation-only meters by discounting the connection fee for a limited time or by setting the connection fee at a certain percent of the regular fee. A separate water rate for the irrigation meters can also be established.

**ACTION:** No action.

## 6. Hampton Roads Economic Development Sites Inventory

HRPDC Senior Regional Planner Matt Smith briefed the Committee on the status of a regional effort to identify large, development-ready sites in support of economic diversification and job growth in Hampton Roads (see Attachment 1D). The initial analysis focused on sites of at least 100 acres in size. Sites that are not properly zoned for development were excluded from the short list of developable sites. Sites that required any discretionary action by council to enable development were not considered “shovel ready” for the initial analysis. Land use conversion issues are also being considered.

The collection of information on water and sewer service, as well as other information, continues. The consultation with water and wastewater utilities initiated earlier this year will help ensure the analysis remains sensitive to system expansion considerations, including the costly infrastructure needed to provide for the heavy fire flow requirements of certain types of facilities. Mr. Smith will contact individual utilities to follow-up on additional information needed.

**ACTION:** No action.

## 7. Water Supply Plan Update

Ms. Katchmark summarized preliminary water demand projections and revised estimates of water supply for the 2018 Regional Water Supply Plan update. She noted that this information will be included in her [March 15, 2018 presentation to the HRPDC](#) on groundwater management and regional water supply impacts.

Assuming that the allocations in the 2017 groundwater permit remain the same, the regional water supply will be able to meet the demands projected through 2040. The differences between the demand projections developed for the 2011 Water Supply Plan and the draft demand projections developed in March 2018 can be attributed to a decrease in per capita water use and lower rates of population growth.

**ACTION:** No action.

## 8. Legislative Update

The status of [HB 771](#) (Establishes additional oversight mechanisms for the HRSD SWIFT groundwater replenishment project) was noted: 02/13/18 House vote passage (97-Y 0-N 1-A); 03/05/18 Senate Constitutional reading dispensed (40-Y 0-N); 03/06/18 Senate read third time, reading of amendment waived, committee amendment agreed to, passed by for the day; 03/07/18 Senate passed by for the day.

**9. Other Business**

The Committee participated in a brief roundtable discussion on the current connection fee charges based on meter size.

**ACTION:** No action.