

MEETING SUMMARY
DIRECTORS OF UTILITIES COMMITTEE
October 7, 2020
Webex

Pursuant to the declared state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to protect the public health and safety of the committee members, staff, and general public, the meeting was held on October 7, 2020 at 1:30 pm via Webex. These electronic meetings are required to complete essential business on behalf of the region. A recording of the meeting is available on the website. The following attended electronically:

Directors of Utilities Committee:

Bo Clayton, NN	Yann A. Le Gouellec, NN
J. Chris Dawson, GL	Jason Mitchell, HA
Edward G. Henifin, HRSD	Bob Montague, VB
Frank James, NN	Doug Powell, JCSA
Donald Jennings, IW	Erin Trimyer, PO
David Jurgens, CH	
Chad Krejcarek, PQ	

Directors of Utilities Copy:

Bud Curtis, NN	Paul Retel, SU
Robert Carteris, NO	

Members of the Public

Justin B. Gebhardt
Dan Holloway, Jacobs

HRPDC Staff:

Katie Cullipher	Whitney Katchmark
	Katie Krueger

1. Summary of the September 2, 2020 Meeting of the Directors of Utilities Committee

There were no comments on or revisions to the summary of the August 5, 2020 Committee meeting.

ACTION: The summary of the September 2, 2020 meeting of the Directors of Utilities Committee was approved by consensus

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. AskHRGreen Annual Report

Ms. Katie Cullipher, HRPDC, presented the AskHRgreen.org regional public outreach program and campaign results for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Campaigns included Imagine a Day without Water, the Grease Grinch, and What Not to Flush. Each campaign lasted 1-2 weeks, were staggered throughout the year, and resulted in higher web traffic to the AskHRgreen.org website during the campaigns. The resulting investments into the media campaigns and web ads led to a 1.91 return on investment. Future updates to the AskHRgreen.org website include updates to the Fats, Oil and Grease (FOG) certifications, which Ms. Cullipher will review in more detail at the November DUC's meeting.

ACTION: No Action

4. Water Supply Plan Updates

The Committee decided to save the discussion on Water Supply Plan Updates for a future meeting.

ACTION: No Action

5. 2020 Financial Capability Assessments

Ms. Katie Krueger, HRPDC, reviewed the EPA's proposed 2020 Financial Capability Assessments (FCA) for Clean Water Act Obligations. The FCA proposes two alternatives to assess the burden of wastewater bills on low income households. HRPDC staff identified three areas of concern; 1) Although low income household size may be smaller than median household size, that does not necessarily mean that their bills are also lower. HRSD, VB, and CH responded saying that in previous experience, low income households often have older and leakier faucets/pipes which can lead to a higher water consumption. 2) Not all Poverty Indicators on pg. 16 of the proposal should be weighed equally. 3) Drinking water and separate stormwater systems should also be included in the financial burden assessments. The HRPDC economics department is also reviewing the proposal.

ACTION: Committee members should send any comments to either Ms. Katchmark or Ms. Krueger.

6. SWIFT Update

Mr. Ted Henifin, HRSD, gave an update of the full-scale implementation plan for the SWIFT project. The James River treatment plant is in the procurement phase while the Boat Harbor treatment plant is finishing the pre-planning phase. The James River Treatment Plant is scheduled to start the detailed design phase after the first of the year.

Mr. Dan Holloway, Jacobs, gave an overview of the model results for the SWIFT project. The models were run with and without SWIFT injections for: 2018 Reported Use, Total Permitted with permit cuts, 2018 Reported Use with JCSA and West Point at previous (2014) permitted amounts, and Total Permitted with JCSA and West Point at previous (2014) permitted amounts. Based on the model results, the SWIFT project will improve groundwater levels within the Potomac aquifer, but more specifically it will resolve the critical cell failures related to JCSA/West Point groundwater withdrawals with or without the permit cuts.

ACTION: No Action

7. Utility Directors Roundtable Discussion

Ms. Whitney Katchmark reviewed the status of tracking Customer Assistance Programs across the region. Both Suffolk (78 applications approved with a total of \$33,687) and Chesapeake (18 applications approved with a total of \$10,609) have responded to the tracking effort. Ms. Katchmark requested that members of the Committee send her the following information: 1) Number of applications received 2) Number of applications rejected and why 3) Amount of utility assistance requested and amount received 4) How did the applicant find out about the program.

Mr. Ted Henifin, HRSD, reviewed the new effort to use text messages to encourage customers to set up a payment plan for past due wastewater bills. The effort cost \$30,000 and will be fully functional by the end of the year. HRSD will start with the customers that are billed directly by HRSD, if the program is successful they will work to set it up with the localities who have combined bills. Additionally, Mr. Henifin announced that HRSD is expanding to Accomack and Northampton counties.

8. Staff Reports

- **HRSD Integrated Plan – First Amendment to 2014 MOA** - Ms. Katchmark requested that localities send the signed MOA to Ms. Katie Krueger, HRPDC.
- **FOG MOA** – Ms. Katchmark requested that localities send the signed MOA to Ms. Katie Krueger, HRPDC.
- **Groundwater MOA** – Ms. Katchmark requested that localities send the signed MOA to Ms. Katie Krueger, HRPDC.

9. Other Business

No other Business

The next meeting of the Directors of Utilities will be on Wednesday, November 4, 2020 via Webex.