

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**DIRECTORS OF UTILITIES COMMITTEE**  
**January 6, 2021**  
**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 January 6, 2021 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:**

David Jurgens, CH  
Jason Mitchell, HA  
Donald Jennings, IW  
Doug Powell, JCSA  
Yann A. Le Gouellec, NN

Robert Carteris, NO  
Chad Krejcarek, PQ  
Paul Retel, SU  
Bob Montague, VB  
Edward G. Henifin, HRSD

**Directors of Utilities Copy:**

Erin Trimyer, CH  
Alan Benthall, NN  
Kate Bernatitus, NN  
Bud Curtis, NN  
James J. Young, NN  
Dennis Beale, SH  
Joe Sisler, YK

Shonia Holloway, CDM Smith  
Julie Laferriere, DEQ  
David, Taylor, DEQ  
Kim Butler, DEQ  
Dan Horne, VDH  
Adam Wood, VDH

**HRPDC Staff:**

Katie Cullipher  
Whitney Katchmark

Rebekah Eastep  
Katie Krueger

**MEETING OF  
DIRECTORS OF UTILITIES COMMITTEE  
AGENDA  
January 6, 2021  
1:30 PM**

**1. Summary of the December 2, 2020 Meeting of the Directors of Utilities and Health Directors Committee**

There were no comments on or revisions to the summary of the December 2, 2020 Committee meeting.

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

**2. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**3. SSORS Discussion**

Ms. Julianne Laferrier, DEQ, and Mr. Adam Wood, VDH discussed expectations for sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) reporting. Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC, stated that SSORS support has been switched over to CDM Smith with Ms. Shonia Holloway being the new point of contact. Ms. Laferrier reviewed the requirements for reporting overflows and what needs to be reported. Additionally, she reviewed the two ways that DEQ uses the SSO data including: enforcement and compliance actions and pollution response programs.

Mr. Wood reviewed how VDH Shellfish Group uses the SSORS notifications. He would prefer that the utilities give them an overestimate of the spill amount so that they can be proactive in closing the shellfish farms. There have been issues with no reporting during heavy rainfall when they feel that there should be an overflow or when a utility inputs a volume unknown amount. They are trying to avoid issuing a recall. If there is a determination that the shellfish could be a health threat, VDH has to track down all of the shellfish, which may involve multiple distributors and retailers. The recalls are much more difficult than ceasing harvesting temporarily to assess the potential impact of an SSO. To support this point, VDH showed a video from Mike Oesterling, Executive Director Shellfish Growers of Virginia, that discussed the hardships of shellfish recalls.

Suffolk, Chesapeake and HRSD explained to VDH and DEQ that it is often hard to make an initial overflow estimate. The Committee also expressed hesitation to make a maximum estimate for fear of penalties from DEQ. Mr. Wood and Ms. Laferrier suggested that a comment box be added to the SSORS system so that utilities can make a maximum estimate for VDH but that estimate is not used for DEQ penalties. Mr. Wood also suggested that he would welcome a phone call with any initial thoughts on

overflows to inform his decision to cease harvesting. Additionally, DEQ reiterated that legally the utilities are required to report any overflow within 24 hours.

**ACTION:** HRPDC will discuss options with the utility directors on how to improve communication about overflow volumes including the idea of adding a comment box for reporting initial volume estimates to VDH.

#### 4. Lead Service Line Replacement Program

The City of Chesapeake was recently awarded \$500,000 from the drinking water state revolving fund (DWSRF) for a lead service line replacement/removal program. David Jurgens, CH, described how they plan to use the grant funds for residential homes to replace the service line that falls on private property (from the meter to the side of the house). They estimated that each property will cost approximately \$2,500, allowing them to fund 200 homes. Chesapeake modelled their program after the City of Richmond's LSLR program.

The program is set up so that funds will go directly to the plumbers who replace the lead service lines of the property. In order to be a part of the program, plumbers will have to apply and undergo program training. The contract to replace the lead service lines will be directly between the plumbers and the property owners and the plumber will be directly reimbursed using grant funds.

Chesapeake also discussed the grant application process, which involved hiring an outside consulting company (Hazen and Sawyer) to assist. In order to apply, localities must have their governing body's approval to apply and a Lead Action Plan. Additionally, Chesapeake recommended mapping out where probable lead lines would be so that funds can be distributed efficiently.

The Committee discussed the availability of additional funds in future years through the program so that the private side LSLR can be completed. Dan Horne, VDH, state that it would likely be easier to apply for funds after the initial application since the locality would already have a Lead Action Plan and active LSLR plan in place. HRPDC staff stated that if there was interest, they could complete a needs assessment and reach out to regional caucus members to advocate for continued, stable funding for LSLR programs. **Applications for 2021 are due 4 pm April 1.**

**ACTION:** None

#### 5. Utility Directors Roundtable Discussion

The timeline to return the CARES Act money to the state has been pushed back. HRSD has been working hard to get the doortags out, they have put out 40,000 so far and will have the full 58,000 tags out by the end of the week. Over 20,000 have sent in attestations to receive reimbursement. Once the funds from the CARES Act reaches them, they will be able to reimburse their customers.

Chesapeake has received their money a couple of days prior to the first of the year but will not be able to use the money until January 19. They have received 1,400 applications, with \$120,000 (10% of CARES Act Funds) are due to applications without any issues, Chesapeake feels that they will actually run out of money before they are required to return the money to the state. Virginia Beach has just over a couple thousand applicants so far with 135,000 delinquent accounts, with \$8-9 million dollars in delinquent accounts. This time last year they only had \$4-5 million dollars in delinquent accounts. Newport News has committed about \$180,000 to applicants. They are going to hire a call center to field the applications because their call center is overwhelmed. Newport News believes they will not be able to use all the money by the deadline.

HRPDC asked if the utilities were interested in more media opportunities. HRSD asked to wait a week so that if the utilities are running out of money, they aren't continuing to encourage people to apply. Katie Cullipher, HRPDC, suggested updating the HRPDC website and a press release at the end of next week once the utilities know the status of their program.

HRPDC has access to delinquency data now that HRSD's servers are working again and discussed the three different maps available: 1) Heat Map where there is a high density of delinquent accounts 2) Census Block level, with median household income and delinquent accounts 3) individual accounts that you can zoom in on. HRPDC staff asked who should have access to the data and what level of access they should have. Newport News was supportive of sharing the data, starting with the heat map. HRSD suggested also adding where the CARES Act money got applied and where there are still significant arrearages to the datasets.

The Committee's discussion concluded discussing COVID vaccinations, including whether they are prioritizing within their utilities. Newport News will prioritize water treatment plant operators, essential maintenance, and lab staff. HRSD is going to try and get everyone vaccinated at the same time. It was agreed that the utility workers will be vaccinated within group 1c.

**ACTION:** Per discussion.

## 6. Staff Reports

- **HRSD Integrated Plan – First Amendment to 2014 MOA:** Staff reviewed the status of locality approvals of the MOA.
- **Regional FOG MOA** – Staff reviewed the status of locality approvals of the regional MOA
- **Groundwater MOA** – Staff reviewed the status of locality approvals of the MOA
- **State FOG MOA** - Staff met with DHCD and building code representatives and received suggestions on how to improve the regional FOG technical guidance.
- **Rate Survey Updates** – Staff will begin the annual Regional Rate Survey in February.
- **Water Supply Plan Updates** – Staff have received comments from Franklin, Newport News, and Norfolk.

## 7. Other Business

There was no other business

DRAFT