

**INTERSTATE COMMISSION ON THE POTOMAC RIVER BASIN
SECTION FOR COOPERATIVE WATER SUPPLY OPERATIONS
ON THE POTOMAC RIVER (CO-OP)**

**THIRD QUARTER 2021
JUNE 15, 2021**

**VIRTUAL MEETING
ROCKVILLE, MD**

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Seltzer called the Third Quarter 2021 CO-OP Meeting to order at approximately 8:30 a.m. on June 15, 2021. The following Commissioners, staff, and guests attended the meeting in whole or in part.

Commissioners

United States

Robert Sussman (Commissioner)
Amy Guise (Alt. Commissioner)

District of Columbia

Jeff Seltzer (Chair, Commissioner)
Willem Brakel (Commissioner)

Maryland

Robert Lewis (Commissioner)
Lee Currey (Alt. Commissioner)

Virginia

Paul Holland (Commissioner)
Scott Kudlas (Alt. Commissioner)
Mark Peterson (Alt. Commissioner)

West Virginia

John Wirts (Alt. Commissioner)

Staff

Michael Nardolilli (Executive Director)
Bob Bolle (General Counsel)
Heidi Moltz (Dir, Program Operations)
Cherie Schultz (Dir, COOP Operations)
Harold Hodges (Dir, Administration)
Curtis Dalpra (Manager, Communications)
Sarah Ahmed (Senior Water Resources Engineer)
Alimatou Seck (Senior Water Resources Scientist)
Christina Davis (Senior Water Resources Planner)
DeeDee Hunter (Administrative Coordinator)

Guests

Valerie Cappola (COE, NAD)
Anastasiya Kononova (COE, Baltimore)
Summer Kunkel (PA DEP)
Chris Kemple (PA DEP)
Joel Caudill (WSSC)
Greg Prelewicz (Fairfax Water)
Christopher Ramo

Mr. Nardolilli explained that this "virtual" meeting is being conducted under Section V(g) of the Commission By-Laws that allows for the Commission or any of its Sections to conduct public meetings by virtual conferencing under the state of emergency declared by either the President of the United States or the Governor of the state in which Commission headquarters are located, currently in Maryland. Section V(g) was approved by an e-mail vote of the Commission on April 17, 2020 pursuant to Section XIII of the By-laws. Maryland Governor Larry Hogan declared a state of emergency related to the covid pandemic on March 5, 2020, and renewed the emergency declaration several times, most recently on May 12, 2021. Accordingly, the emergency declaration by Governor Hogan is still in effect.

Chairman Seltzer then thanked the participants for joining this meeting.

ROLL CALL

This meeting being virtual, Mr. Nardolilli called the names of the attendees by jurisdiction, the staff, and guests. Those in attendance acknowledged their presence when called.

ADOPTION OF REVISED AGENDA: Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve the revised agenda, which was seconded by Commissioner Kudlas. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 2, 2021 MINUTES: Commissioner Kudlas suggested one change to the draft minutes on page 3: that a consistent spell of “lidar” be adopted. With that one change, Commissioner Kudlas made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Currey. All were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Follow-up from March Action Items: Dr. Schultz informed the Section that there were no action items.

Section’s Quarterly Report

Dr. Schultz gave an overview of the last quarter’s progress. The details are included in the meeting book in Tab 3, Attachment 3.

Dr. Schultz reported that two meetings occurred during the 3rd Quarter: 1) a meeting of the Operations Committee; and 2) the annual meeting of the Low Flow Allocation Agreement (LFAA). These meetings occur under the regional water supply agreements. At the Operations Committee meeting (March 2), the group welcomed Rudy Chow, Acting Director of Washington Aqueduct. Because Mr. Chow was new to group, the recommended measures of the 2017 Water Supply Alternatives Study were reviewed and status reports were given on the implementation of these measures. In addition, WSSC reported on the Little Seneca dredging project (this will be a cost share effort), Sarah Ahmed presented on CO-OP’s withdrawal forecasts, one of the measures which will help improve river flow forecasting, and the proposed ICPRB Resolution was discussed.

The LFAA annual Meeting (April 29) was largely informational, but at the end of the meeting, the LFAA Moderator, Brian Ramaley, announced the expiration of his term. The District Dept of Energy & Environment appointed a Stand-by moderator in the late spring. Subsequent to the LFAA meeting, signatories agreed to extend Mr. Ramaley’s term to 12/31 as they conduct a search for a new Moderator. They agreed that work should start soon, and Commissioner Seltzer asked for a volunteer to take the lead on the selection process. Commissioner Kudlas asked if Commissioners were interested in fully re-opening the search, or if they were comfortable with current Moderator, pointing out that Reds Wolman of Maryland served as Moderator for many years. Commissioner Currey expressed interest in reopening the search, or at least meeting to discuss the search process. Dr. Schultz will follow up by scheduling a meeting of a search committee.

Dr. Schultz reported that the update of the Potomac OASIS Model, an alternative water supply planning tool used by stakeholders, is just about complete. The goal was to ensure a logic parallel to CO-OP’s PRRISM model. Overall testing results match – with a few exceptions which include simulation of the storage in Milestone Reservoir. According to Dr. Schultz, we need to declare the project complete, though CO-OP staff plan to revisit Potomac OASIS later this summer to continue trying to identify the source of the discrepancy in the Milestone Reservoir results. In talks with current owners (Hazen & Sawyer) of the OASIS software platform, ICPRB staff are asking that a version number be added to Potomac OASIS in the form of an OASIS model variable, to help avoid future confusion in case multiple organizations participate in model development. Also, CO-OP would like to house the input files and databases of Potomac OASIS on Github, whereas Hazen would like to house the model in-house on their server.

Commissioner Kudlas stated that he was fully in support of providing the model to stakeholders via Github.

The COOP staff assisted Commissioners in the development of three (3) documents to be included in a potential Congressional briefing package on Washington metropolitan area water supply vulnerability. This was part of the Supplementary Materials distributed to Commissioners last week. In addition, a Teams website was set up to share information and allow collaboration as the Congressional outreach effort continues. Unfortunately, at least two organizations are prohibited from accessing the site: Loudoun Water and Washington Aqueduct. According to Commissioner Peterson, they are not allowed to even have their names posted. There was a brief discussion on whether Google Docs would provide a better solution.

Finally, Dr. Schultz talked briefly about the status of the 2D Potomac Spill Model effort. The original project deadline was extended from May 31 to September 30. CO-OP staff are now building models in two different software platforms: Delft3D and iRIC, to allow comparisons.

Update on 2D Potomac Spill Model, v1.0

Dr. Alimatou Seck (Sr. Water Resources Scientist) presented on the 2D Potomac River Spill Model. She explained the goal of the project was to develop a tool to estimate the travel time of oil and other downstream contaminants to water supply intakes. The current model used by CO-OP in spill response is one dimensional and unable to simulate the lateral distribution of a contaminant. She is using two different bathymetric data sets, the lidar dataset collected in the joint ICPRB/USGS project in October 2019, and a publicly available from NOAA. She has constructed a two-dimensional flow model using the Delft3D software platform. The study area extends from the Point of Rocks gage to approximately Chain Bridge.

Financial Statement

Dr. Schultz stated that the CO-OP Section is on budget and on track, with \$478,612 in the CO-OP reserve fund.

NEW BUSINESS

Effort to secure Federal funding for supplemental storage

Commissioner Seltzer gave a summary of recent efforts on securing supplemental storage. A joint letter from the region's three environmental agency heads has been drafted to show a unified request for Federal funding of \$800 million. Also, a PowerPoint presentation has been created for use in briefings of Congressional members and committees. A meeting took place on May 21st with Christophe Tulou, a staff member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) and this Wednesday Commissioners will meet with Ryan Seiger of the House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee. We have provided both of these individuals with the joint letter and the presentation and we hope soon to also provide a summary of the MWCOG report on the redundancy study to demonstrate that Travilah Quarry is a no regrets solution to drought and contamination events. Commissioners also have met with water suppliers to provide information and to coordinate efforts. To facilitate coordination, the new Teams Supplemental Storage Work Group website has a document with an initial list of desired meetings with members of Congress. Concurrently, the Washington Aqueduct included Travilah on list of shovel-ready projects that was sent to the North Atlantic Division. Lastly, one piece that is missing is an economic impact analysis, and someone on Commissioner Seltzer's team is evaluating the usefulness of an EPA tool for estimating economic impacts to help better quantify the benefits of the Travilah project. WSSC Water has indicated that they may be able to assist in conducting such an analysis.

Staff at the Senate EPW Committee felt the of getting funding for Travilah was low, though there is a chance through the reconciliation process, but more likely later through a Water Resources and Development Act bill.

Commissioner Currey gave an update on progress in getting signatures for the joint letter. He is coordinating through the Maryland Secretary of Environment and working with Governor's office but doesn't yet have a date. Commission Seltzer reported that all necessary approvals have been obtained to allow Director Wells to sign the joint letter.

Commissioner Sussman pointed out that a critical missing piece is a statement of strong interest and support from the Corps. Commissioner Guise replied that the Baltimore District Office can provide and has provided information and analyses and has discussed the project with Department of Defense and emergency management agencies. However, for any kind of public statement, she said we have to be aware of not crossing the line with regard to lobbying. Commissioner Brakel asked where is the Travilah proposal in the process of making its way up the chain? Commissioner Guise replied that there is not a proposal, rather, there was a request for a list of shovel-ready projects, but she has no information on its status, but can only say it's been submitted. Commissioner Sussman asked if there was a way for the Corps to communicate support for Travilah. Commissioner Guise replied that she doubted that the Corps would provide any statement that pre-selects solutions, because that would jump ahead of any national evaluations of alternatives or NEPA studies. This would have to be reviewed from a national security perspective. Dr. Schultz commented that in the past, the ICPRB Executive Director and staff have met with staff at the Corps Headquarters to discuss ICPRB priorities and asked if such a meeting would be appropriate at this time, and if so, would it be possible for Commissioner Guise to suggest contacts. Commissioner Guise said that determining who to talk to is a challenge even for Baltimore District staff, but that she could try to help to put ICPRB in contact with General Tickner, who would be part of process.

Commissioner Currey asked how close Travilah is to being "shovel-ready" and whether that could be a barrier? Should the Commission be doing more to get a more complete package with more of the NEPA aspects in it? Commissioner Guise replied that it wouldn't hurt to continue to advance analyses since this will ultimately have to be done if the Federal government is involved. Anything done now could reduce time and money needed later. ICPRB General Counsel Bolle asked for the definition of "shovel ready" and Commissioner Guise replied this generally means it has been through a study phase. The value planning study is what was used in this case, which involve some evaluation of alternatives though that was not official NEPA document but could be large part of one.

Commissioner Sussman expressed the view that a meeting at Headquarters is the right next step and asked that Commissioner Guise and Dr. Schultz work to set up such a meeting. Commissioner Guise responded that a purpose of the meeting would need to be defined. Dr. Schultz asked if an informational meeting, making use of existing briefing material, would be appropriate. Commissioner Guise agreed that this was.

Going back to the topic of signatures for the joint statement, Commissioner Kudlas said that Virginia is in a similar situation to that of Maryland. There was a conversation at the Executive Committee meeting related to many things that could be done as signatories and entities to get to a positive result. Right now, Virginia is in a little bit of a holding pattern.

Brief update on proposed Resolution

On behalf of Maryland, Commission Currey expressed appreciation for the extra time that was allowed to work on the language of the Resolution. He said that the Resolution is an important document that sets a strategic direction for the Commission and also provides a path for bringing in new members if they so desire. This direction is especially needed in a nonstationary environment and Maryland's perspective is that this is a positive direction forward. Commissioner Kudlas echoed these sentiments, thanked

Commissioner Currey for the time spent together working on the language of the Resolution, and thanked everyone for their efforts.

Selection of Nominating Committee for FY2022 CO-OP Section Officers

Commissioner Seltzer turned to the last item on the agenda, the selection of a Nominating Committee for next year's CO-OP Section Officers, and asked if Commissioner Currey would chair that committee. Commissioner Currey agreed and Commissioner Kudlas said that he was also willing to serve on the committee. A representative from a third jurisdiction is also required, and Director Nardolilli suggested Commissioner Karimi. Commissioner Seltzer said that he would find out if Commissioner Karimi was available.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Currey made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Sussman. All were in favor. The CO-OP Section meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Draft Minutes written by: Harold Hodges, Director, Administration
Reviewed by Cherie Schultz, Director, CO-OP Operations
Approved by: Michael Nardolilli, Executive Director