

Delaware Water Supply Coordinating Council
October 7, 2015
Final Minutes

ADMINISTRATIVE – John Barndt, Chair

John Barndt called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Introductions were made around the room and new members were introduced. The attendance list is below.

REVIEW OF JULY 29, 2015 DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

John Barndt asked if anyone had any questions or comments about the July 29, 2015 draft meeting minutes. Joe DiNunzio and Lorraine Fleming provided edits prior to the start of the meeting. Vic Singer motioned to approve and Ed Hallock seconded. All were in favor.

Final minutes will be posted online at <https://egov.delaware.gov/pmc/Event/Details/27415>

John mentioned he will keep the Council posted on phase 2 of the DGS Groundwater Monitoring Project that is for work in Kent County. It is being recommended for approximately \$712,000 for the state FY17 budget.

John also mentioned the USGS project that looked at arsenic and radon in southern New Castle County in the Rancocas Aquifer is near completion. Results are being provided to the homeowners who participated but the official report has not been released. Ed Hallock said he has received calls already and resampling has occurred. Ed also said he has been working with Anita Beckel and her staff on this project. Naturally occurring arsenic and radon have been found above standards in some wells.

WATER CONDITIONS REPORT – Stefanie Baxter, DGS

Stefanie Baxter presented a handout summary as of September 30, 2015 of hydrologic conditions which is considered a snapshot of water conditions and are tracked on a monthly basis (see attachment titled Northern Delaware Drought Advisory Guidelines).

Stefanie said if we were meeting last week she would have been reporting different results but the end of the month rainfall helped. Since this report goes through the end of September, the early October rainfall Delaware had will appear in October's chart.

Stefanie stated that Delaware was very close to being in a drought watch with Brandywine Creek, White Clay Creek-Stanton and White Clay Creek-Newark if we hadn't received the late month rainfall.

- Precipitation for a 12-month period at the Wilmington Airport is +1.49" and +0.95" for a 6-month period which are both normal.

- Brandywine Creek (30-day moving avg) is at 100 mgd. White Clay Creek-Stanton (30-day moving avg) is at 51 mgd. White Clay Creek-Newark (30-day moving avg) is at 21 mgd. All of these are significantly higher because of the early October rain event e.g. the Brandywine Creek is now 137 mgd. The flow for White Clay Creek Newark is lower than it would be likely due to Newark starting to refill the Newark reservoir.
- Well Db24-18 is at 12.10 (fbls) and is normal.
- The Water Conditions Index is 5.86. Anything above 5 is good.
- Continuing to monitor chlorides. Chlorides were interesting due to rainfall and salt but have returned to low levels although UWD had instituted monitoring of chlorides prior to these last rain events.
- Hoopes Reservoir (City of Wilmington) is currently at -1.5 ft and not -1.8 ft as stated on the handout for 9/8/15. Matt Miller noted that all of this is due to the recent rainfall and not pumping from Brandywine Creek. Newark Reservoir – 2.5 ft (9/2/15) – was down 8.5 as of last Friday.
- Aquifer Storage and Recovery: United Water ASR is at 75 mgd (9/20/15) and Artesian Water ASR is at <1 mg (10/5/15). Joe DiNunzio noted that AWC will be redeveloping the ASR well prior to resuming injection.
- Chlorides on the Delaware River (10/1/15) are currently at River Mile 76 and the normal River Mile is 72. [Note – Mile 78 is the DE-PA state line.]
- Reservoirs in New York City (DRBC 10/2/15) storage 186.5 bg or 76 bg above drought watch. Stefanie noted that the Cannonsville Reservoir repairs have been completed and testing indicated it was successful. They may have already started to refill it.
- The Kent County Hydrologic Conditions: precipitation Dover 12-month -2.61”, 6-month -3.14”, 5-month -2.32”. Streamflow for the St. Jones River at Dover 30-day moving average for September 1 through September 30 at 10 mgd and is normal. As of yesterday it was at 37 mgd. Groundwater level for Mc51-01a (September 2015) is 15.5 ft below land surface and is normal. These do not reflect the early October rainfall which was significant.
- The Sussex County Hydrologic Conditions: Precipitation Georgetown 12-month -2.85”, 6-month -3.77”, 5-month -3.70. Streamflow for the Nanticoke River at Bridgeville 30-day moving average for September 1 through September 30 at 13 mgd and is below normal. Groundwater for Qe44-01 (September 2015) is 10.3 ft. below land surface and is normal. These do not reflect the early October rainfall which was significant.

Stefanie said recharging is perfect and since it was a nice gradual rainfall over a five day period there was no flooding that occurred in the northern part of the state.

Stefanie asked if there were any questions. Vic Singer asked what triggered chloride monitoring? Robert Penman stated that when there is less than 37 mgd they monitor chlorides and it was never up all the way.

DGS' full analysis is found on <http://www.dgs.udel.edu>

FORECAST SYNOPSIS – Daniel Leathers, State Climatologist

Dan Leathers presented (see attachment titled Weather Summary and Forecast). Dan stated that January through August the Delaware temperature was approximately 1.1° F below the 1981-2010 “normal” and precipitation during 2015 was 1.69” above the 1981-2010 “normal”. Seasonal precipitation started with dry conditions in northern Delaware and wet conditions down southern Delaware. Spring was dry through the entire state. The summer at the beach and parts of New Castle County were 7-8” above normal and some parts of Kent County were below normal. This spottiness reflected the general patterns of summer thunderstorm rainfall patterns.

Above normal precipitation occurred in January but February through April was low. May was very low and June was very high. July and August below normal. September may be below normal again.

November through January precipitation will probably be better than average. Not a strong above average chance but is above average. Temperature probability showing above normal. Very strong El Nino conditions are taking place in the Pacific Ocean. 3° C above normal. All models showing strong El Nino and will continue through spring 2016.

Little bit more than average snowfall predicated from December through February due to El Nino. Possibly adding an extra inch or two of snowfall.

The rainfall last week was due to a high pressure system. It was not a storm. Delaware had a lot of rainfall from September 29 through October 3. There was around 7” of rainfall in the south. There was around 4 ½” of rainfall in the north. No real flooding in the north but the rainfall helped with the water issues.

Dan asked if there were any questions. Ed Hallock asked how do you define a strong El Nino? Dan stated that the Oceanic El Nino Index is how they define whether an El Nino is strong, moderate or weak.

WATER UTILITY REPORTS

Artesian – Joe DiNunzio presented: Nothing exciting currently going on. Normal day to day. September about average at about 17 ½ mgd. The ASR has been completely withdrawn and the well is being redeveloped prior to injection occurring. Iron treatment is currently being installed at the New Castle Airport area facility, which will bring 800,000 gpd of supply back on-line around month-end. Jefferson Farms is now available due to completion of the carbon treatment system.

Newark - Mark Neimeister presented: The reservoir is presently down as of September but with the last rainfall the City will begin to refill it with pumpage from White Clay Creek. Demand is at a normal 3.5 mgd. Work is or will be occurring on the new mixer and the City will be cleaning and painting the Windy Hills water tank.

New Castle – Jay Guyer presented: Demand is at 0.5 mgd. Still operating on one well due to PFOS contamination. Normal infrastructure progress. Up and testing in October and on-line in November. Everything going good with Crossroads well. New well constructed by the end of November. The permanent carbon unit was delayed 6 weeks. Water main testing will begin in October.

United Water Delaware – Robert Penman presented: Demand is at 17 ½ mgd which is normal. Low flow conditions occurred in both Red and White Clay Creeks. TCS currently down from October 15 through November 15 for migration. The inflatable dam was used when flows were down and chlorides began to inch up. SCADA upgrade will be completed in October. Three of the four tanks have been painted and the fourth completed by the end of October.

Wilmington– Matt Miller presented: Demand is at 16 ½ mgd. Drops off when everyone leaves during the weekend. Currently we are experiencing a drop in demand of approximately 3 mgd during the weekends. Hoopes Reservoir is about 1.5 feet down and Brandywine still down. Raceway project little bit ahead of schedule. Should be completed around late spring 2017.

Tidewater – Sheila Shannon presented: Southern Shores plant down. The new Bayside tank is 0.4 MG in volume. 7.26 mgd which is 5.4% over 2014 (New Castle County systems at 0.64 mgd, Kent County systems at 1.9 mgd, and Sussex County systems at 4.72 mgd .)

Sheila added they are proud to say the Southern Shores Treatment Plant won best tasting water in Delaware.

Sussex Shores – Not present.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY REPORT UPDATES – United Water Delaware, City of Wilmington, Artesian Water Company, City of Newark, City of New Castle

John Barndt stated that Stefanie Baxter and Jerry Kauffman met about a month ago and reviewed the reports in Jerry's office and that everyone received written comments if added information or questions were being asked. Vic Singer also provided written comments to the entire Council. United Water Delaware and the City of Wilmington stated they are currently working on addressing these comments. John would like to have resolved by the next meeting.

Tom Hubbard stated that he did some research regarding the code and the code is based on what the General Assembly approved. The code is different than what is reflected in the legislation. John said that this is being looked into as changes did happen with the legislation more than once, therefore, it has been turned over to one of DNREC's paralegals to research. Vic stated he went by the code on the website and Tom stated they are incorrect. John again stated this is being looked into and the WSCC will be informed.

Vic stated that the self-sufficiency report should be freestanding. John has discussed with the water companies and he is trying to make sure we do have everything correct and current and on file. We are gathering that information. Some agreements may have expired and need to make sure they are currently active.

Vic stated that there could be accusations from outside that we have required overbuilding of system capacity and wasted public money. This report looks three years into the future. John stated he doesn't think anyone would argue "over-cushioning". John stated he hasn't heard these accusations. Matt Miller said he has no problem submitting documents. Hoopes agreement he has to figure out how to enter that information as it allows for a range of releases and reservation amounts. They use the maximum amount they say in the agreement as a caution. Jerry discussed with Matt on how to determine number and referred to WSCC Report #8.

Tom said at a future meeting we need to look into the 2006 Eighth Report as it needs to be revisited. Jerry stated in the upcoming Thirteenth Report we need to review demands and projections and perhaps project to 2030.

Lorraine Fleming reviewed Vic's written comments and said maybe some tweaking of the law may be in order. Three years in the future in New Castle County is not useful. It should be looking out further years. John said we had talked about changing the law when we were looking at renewing the WSCC and he was told to just do the extension then. This has been done. Some suggestions were going to a five year cycle, John said, and this will come up in a future WSCC meeting once the current reports are resolved and accepted and sent to the PSC.

Vic said it would be a good idea to categorize the comments and suggested changes and when we want to see the changes. One depends on how strange the weather report is up north and how things look. Vic said to focus on when we would like to see these changes occur.

Stefanie asked what happens if a water company shows they don't have enough water? What are the consequences? Vic said we just had a circumstance like that this past spring. Contamination of flow in New Castle County. Everything was handled in routine fashion and a sensible fashion. The system worked. Stefanie said that was an emergency situation and not the same as her question. She said we all know that everyone will pull together in an emergency. But during routine reports, what will happen if water companies are short? Joe DiNunzio said we are moving ahead and there is enough of a margin in available water supplies to cover emergencies. Vic said the system works because the systems make sense. Robert Howatt said that if there is a necessity to take action, it would fall to the Public Service Commission to take regulatory action.

Stefanie said that answered her question. Mark Neimeister said that's why a five year plan would be better.

Matt said we just need to show we have supply and not how we can get it to our customers? Mark introduced the problem with aging infrastructure and a discussion was held that described the flexibility that the investor owned companies had for this as opposed to the municipalities. Ed Hallock noted that the Drinking Water SRF won't fund system growth but it will fund, maintain and replace as needed. Jerry suggested there could be some general guidance provided in a WSCC report that identified this as an important issue for the Governor and the General Assembly.

John asked for any other comments on the Self-Sufficiency reports from others. Joe DiNunzio had no comments for Artesian. Jay Guyer had no comments for the City of New Castle.

John stated the "draft" Self-Sufficiency Reports are on the website and they are draft until council agrees to approve them. Council is not ready to do that today but would like to approve them in a reasonable time. Lorraine said if all of the reference materials that are part of the Self-Sufficiency Reports could be listed and guaranteed that they are in a file with DNREC, they don't need to go on the website. Stefanie agreed they don't have to be made public but if verified by DNREC that they are in fact on file. Vic said if it's not covered by a confidentiality agreement it should be on the website. John said we can post what we can and if it's confidential we will withhold in a file. Tom said that's fair and to move forward. John said we will revisit this at the next WSCC meeting on what should and should not be on the website.

NEXT MEETING – John Barndt

John Barndt said the next meeting has been tentatively set. but Jerry Kauffman stated he was unable to attend this date.

The next council meeting has now been scheduled for Thursday, February 4 at 10:00 am at the Kent County Administration Building, Room 220.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. by John Barndt.

These minutes are not intended to be a detailed record. They are for the use of the Water Supply Coordinating Council members in supplementing their personal notes and recall of Council discussions and presentations and to provide information to Council members unable to attend. Minutes recorded and submitted by Kimberly Burris.

WSCC Final Minutes
October 7, 2015

Attendees are listed below alphabetically, last name first:

Barndt, John - DNREC, Division of Water
Barr, J. Kent - DRBC
Baxter, Stefanie - University of Delaware, DGS
Beattie, Jessica – Artesian Water
DiNunzio, Joseph – Artesian Water
Eisenbrey, Virginia – Artesian Water
Fleming, Lorraine – Delaware Nature Society
Gray, Mary Ellen - Kent County
Guyer, Jay - New Castle County
Hallock, Ed - Department of Public Health, Office of Drinking Water
Hayes, Wilbert - DEMA
Homsey, Andrew – University of Delaware, Water Resources Agency
Howatt, Robert – Public Service Commission
Hubbard, Thomas – United Water
Kauffman, Gerald (Jerry) - University of Delaware, Water Resources Agency, Director
Leathers, Daniel – State Climatologist
Miller, Matt - City of Wilmington
Neimeister, Mark – City of Newark
Paul, Arthur - DEMA
Penman, Robert – United Water
Rudd, John - State Fire Marshal
Shannon, Sheila - Tidewater Utilities
Singer, Victor - Civic League for New Castle County