

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

**THIRD QUARTER FY2024  
JUNE 18, 2024**

**VIRTUAL MEETING  
ROCKVILLE, MD**

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Robert Sussman called the Third Quarter FY2024 CO-OP Section Meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on June 18, 2024. The following Commissioners, staff, and guests attended the meeting in whole or in part.

**Commissioners**

**United States**

Robert Sussman (Chair, Commissioner)  
Darryl Madden (Commissioner)  
Amy Guise (Alt. Commissioner)

**District of Columbia**

Willem Brakel (Commissioner)  
James Tsai (Alt. Commissioner)  
Tiffany Potter (Commissioner)  
Steve Saari (Commissioner)  
Kimberly L. Jones (Alternate  
Commissioner)

**Maryland**

Lee Currey (Alt. Commissioner)  
Birthe Kjellerup (Commissioner)  
Catherine McCabe  
(Commissioner)

**Virginia**

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

**West Virginia**

Mindy Neil (Alt. Commissioner)

**Pennsylvania**

Susan Weaver (Alt. Commissioner)

**Staff**

Michael Nardolilli (Executive Director)  
Cherie Schultz (Dir., CO-OP Operations)  
Serena Moncion (Outreach Program  
Manager)  
Laurel Glenn (Director of Administration)  
Heidi Moltz (Director of Program  
Operations)  
Carlington Wallace (Associate Director,  
Water Resources)  
Sarah Ahmed (Senior Water Resources  
Engineer Analyst)  
Stephanie Nummer (Water Resources Scientist)  
Alimatou Seck (Senior Water Resources  
Scientist)  
Emily Young (Habitat & Living Resources Data  
Manager)  
Mike Selckmann (Assoc. Dir of Aquatic  
Habitats)  
Rick Masters, General Counsel

**Guests**

Megan Jadrosich (USACE)  
Joseph Chandler (USACE)  
Anne Spiesman (Fairfax Water)  
Joel Caudill (WSSC Water)

## 1. REVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS LIST and QUOREM VERIFICATION

Executive Director (ED) Nardolilli opened the meeting and certified a quorum was present.

## 2. WELCOME

Commissioner Robert Sussman, Chair of the CO-OP Section, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 3. ADOPTION OR MODIFICATION OF DRAFT AGENDA

Commissioner Sussman asked if there were any additions or modifications to the agenda that anyone would like to propose, and there were none. **Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the agenda, and this was seconded by Commissioner Potter. All were in favor.**

## 4. MINUTES FROM MARCH 12, 2024

Commissioner Sussman asked if there were any comments or corrections to the March minutes, which appear under Tab 3, Attachment 2 of the Commission Meeting Book. The ED then highlighted two typographical errors on page 3 that required correction. The first error referred to the term “Disruptions in Water Supply and It’s Threat to National Security.” The apostrophe in the word “Its” should be removed. The second error references the same term where quotation marks should be removed because the title is already italicized. **A motion to adopt the March 12, 2024, minutes as modified was made by Commissioner Brakel and was seconded by Commissioner Jones. All were in favor.**

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

**A. Follow-up on March 2024 Action Items:** Dr. Schultz reported on the following March meeting agenda items that required follow-up:

- Commissioner Brakel asked to be forwarded language on the feasibility study and this was completed.
- Commissioner Brakel also asked for more details on the additional FY26 (and onward) funding plan for CO-OP. Dr. Schultz said discussions on this have been proceeding at the Executive Committee (EC) level. The ED confirmed that discussions at the EC level have been about increasing jurisdictional contributions and making use of the ICPRB’s Federal appropriations.

**B. Section’s Quarterly Report:** Dr. Schultz reviewed the CO-OP Section’s Third Quarter activities, which are described in detail in the Section's Quarterly Report, available in Tab 3, Attachment 3 of the Commission Meeting Book. Highlights of Dr. Schultz’s brief was:

- She shared slides that displayed the Water Supply Outlook, noting that it’s not really a quantitative tool but rather a “heads-up” indicator of the seasonal outlook that is based on a quantitative model. Dr. Seck is publishing the outlook every month this year; the outlook for June was lower than historic probability of reservoir releases in this summer/fall season which she reported is very good news. The river flow is currently below median, and ICPRB may wind up in daily drought monitoring this summer, but it is unlikely. Dr. Schultz briefed that the CO-OP water supply outlook model is a non-parametric probabilistic model that is

based on four different types of data: the Potomac River past 30-day low flows; the past 365 days of precipitation, current groundwater levels and the Palmer Drought Severity Index. It was originally designed more than 40 years ago by Jim Smith of CO-OP. ICPRB engaged with Jim Smith last year (upon his retirement from Princeton University) to review the outlook model and make improvements. He has created some new tools for CO-OP to work with and CO-OP is excited to start incorporating these in the coming year.

- Dr. Seck has two interns working for her this summer and she has both working on the GRACE satellite groundwater data. The GRACE satellite uses very refined gravity measurements to estimate groundwater storage in various portions of the world. The interns are looking for groundwater data in the Potomac Basin and evaluating it for the purpose of improving low flow forecasts.
- Dr. Schultz briefed on the progress of the Supplemental Storage Work Group (SSWG). She noted that this group has been meeting quarterly for several years now and strives to include a variety of stakeholders, keep everyone informed and give members a voice. Recent meetings have focused on the rollout of ICPRB's economic and national security impact papers, which Dr. Seck is taking the lead on. Also, recently, the focus has shifted to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) because USACE is launching a feasibility study for a secondary storage site. ICPRB participated in a March 26 meeting with USACE where the project timeline was presented. Dr. Schultz then asked Amy Guise of USACE to discuss this endeavor. Ms. Guise clarified that the study won't actually start until the feasibility cost sharing agreement is signed and that will take place between COG and USACE before the end of September.
- Dr. Schultz then highlighted that the CO-OP staff had submitted a requested scope of work for the 2025 water supply study to the USACE Baltimore District Office. This study is under consideration as an in-kind cost-share for the feasibility study.
- Dr. Schultz noted that the 2023 Drought Report is almost finalized and that both Fairfax Water and WSSC had provided very helpful comments that have been incorporated into the report which will be posted on CO-OP's website soon.
- Dr. Schultz shared that the CO-OP real time data portal exchange website has migrated to Amazon Web Services (work of Sarah Ahmed) and the team is still in the process of updating the content management system from Drupal 8 to Drupal 9. Dr. Seck has been migrating the Low Flow Forecast system to a new workstation which will increase its reliability and there has been a migration to a new operating system as well.
- Dr. Schultz briefed Commissioners that CO-OP began working on the 2025 Water Supply Study (which must be completed every 5 years) during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of FY24. The primary objective of the study is to determine if available supplies will meet forecasted demands over the next 25 years. One major uncertainty in the current project is the impact of climate change; on average, the basin will be getting wetter but there is a wide range of predictions on how climate will affect extreme drought flows. Another source of uncertainty that CO-OP is considering is the impact of new data centers in the Basin. CO-OP uses a scenario approach that develops various storylines of the way things may play out and then creates quantitative results for those scenarios.
- Regarding data centers, Mr. Nardolilli mentioned that ICPRB had a recent meeting with the

Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) that reports directly to the General Assembly in the Commonwealth of Virginia. JLARC has been tasked by the legislature to review the impact of data centers. They are looking at electrical grid issues and their impact on consumptive water use in the Basin. ICPRB has provided JLARC with studies and will be working with them more in the future as new information and data becomes available.

### **C. Efforts to secure Federal funding for supplemental storage**

Mr. Nardolilli began his brief by asking Amy Guise of USACE when she expected that the Corps would receive the \$500,000 for the supplemental storage study and also about the status of the cost share agreement with COG. She responded that the supplemental storage funds were in the pipeline, and it would hopefully be soon. She stated that the overarching goal for getting the cost sharing agreement signed is in September.

Mr. Nardolilli briefed that DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton is attempting to get language into the House version of the WRDA bill (which the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee of the House is slated to review) which will make the supplemental storage study a 100% Federal obligation.

He also stated that ICPRB is working with COG and their lobbyist, the Banner Group, in planning a rollout of the study that ICPRB commissioned on the economic impact of losing access to the Potomac River. The study is now complete and ICPRB is planning a press conference in the near term with all participants to roll report on the devastating impact that loss of water would do to the economic vitality of the Basin region.

Mr. Nardolilli ended his brief by stating that the next meeting of the Supplemental Storage Group is scheduled for July 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **D. LFAA Next Steps**

Commissioner McCabe briefed that the USACE attorneys in the Baltimore District Office have reviewed the latest version of the LFAA thereby effectively approving language that the Corps has final decision-making power about not only what the environmental flow-by needs are but also the that a balance would be struck between the environmental flow-by needs and the human needs. Accordingly, there is a document ready for the attorneys of the other governing bodies to review (the “companion document”). Commissioner McCabe added that USACE attorneys requested that for signature and processing purposes, ICPRB create a separate document which would be framed simply as Modification #3 to the original LFAA. ICPRB’s General Counsel, Mr. Rick Masters, is working on this implementation vehicle and he stated he would have this ready in draft form by mid-July.

Commissioner McCabe asked the governing parties present (MD, VA, DC) if they wanted to wait to do their formal review when the draft Modification #3 was ready in July or if they were OK with just reviewing the companion document for substance now. Commissioners Currey, Saari and Morris all stated that their states’ review process was already underway. Amy Guise commented that after the Baltimore District approves the final draft LFAA, the proposed changes will be sent through the USACE North Atlantic chain of command, the USACE HQ in DC and finally the Army General Counsel. Because of this extended review process, she expressed the importance of ensuring that all governing bodies agree with the final draft language before the document moves forward so that it doesn’t have to start all over again due to a late-stage disagreement or non-consensus.

## **E. Financial Statement**

Dr. Schultz stated that according to her understanding of the Financial report, CO-OP is on budget and on track.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Selection of Nominating Committee for FY25 CO-OP Section Officers**

Chairman Sussman asked the Commissioner for three volunteers to serve on the CO-OP FY25 nominating committee which will determine who will be the Chair and Vice Chair of CO-OP in FY25. Commissioner Madden volunteered at this time; Commissioners McCabe and Saari had previously indicated availability.

**Commissioner Morris then made a formal motion to appoint the nominating committee consisting of Commissioners Madden, McCabe and Saari with the understanding that others could join. Commissioner Potter seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to conduct, **Commissioner Tsai moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Currey seconded the motion. All were in favor.** The meeting adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

- Minutes drafted by Laurel D. Glenn, Director of Administration
- Edited by Cherie Schultz, Director, CO-OP Operations
- Approved by Michael Nardolilli, Executive Director