

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

**THIRD QUARTER FY2023
June 21, 2023**

**VIRTUAL MEETING
ROCKVILLE, MD**

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Catherine McCabe called the Third Quarter FY2023 CO-OP Section Meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on June 21, 2023. The following Commissioners, staff, and guests attended the meeting in whole or in part.

Commissioners

United States

Robert Sussman (Commissioner)
Darryl Madden (Commissioner)

District of Columbia

Jeff Seltzer (Vice Chair, Commissioner)
Willem Brakel (Commissioner)
James Tsai (Alt. Commissioner)
Tiffany Potter (Commissioner)

Maryland

Catherine McCabe (Chair, Commissioner)
Lee Currey (Alt. Commissioner)

Virginia

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

Staff

Michael Nardolilli (Executive Director)
Cherie Schultz (Dir., CO-OP Operations)
Renee Bourassa (Communications Director)
Laurel Glenn (Office Manager)
Claire Buchanan (Emerita Director, Program Operations)

Guests

Chris Kimple (Rep. Commissioner Moul)
Anne Spiesman, Fairfax Water
Joe Chandler, USACE

1. EXPLANATION FOR VIRTUAL MEETING

Renee Bourassa began the meeting by giving an overview of the WebEx virtual meeting platform. Mr. Michael Nardolilli, the Executive Director for ICPRB, then welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an explanation for the virtual meeting by reading the following statement: This meeting is the first meeting being conducted under the revised Section V (g) of the Commission Bylaws. At the Commission's Meeting on March 7, 2023, the Commission changed Section V (g) to allow (but not require) the Commission or any of its Sections to conduct public meetings via "virtual conferencing" pursuant to Section XIII of the Bylaws.

2. WELCOME, ROLL CALL, AND INTRODUCTIONS

Since the meeting was virtual, Mr. Nardolilli called the names of the attendees by jurisdiction, the staff, and guests. Those in attendance acknowledged their presence when called or were identified from the log of attendees of the virtual meeting as noted above. Commissioner Catherine McCabe, Chair of the CO-OP Section, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

3. ADOPTION OR MODIFICATION OF DRAFT AGENDA

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

4. MINUTES FROM MARCH 7, 2023

Commissioner McCabe asked if there were any comments or corrections to the March minutes, which appear under Tab 3 of the Commission Book. **A motion to adopt the March 7, 2023, minutes as circulated was made by Commissioner Currey and seconded by Commissioner Madden. All were in favor.**

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Follow-up on March 2023 Action Items: Dr. Schultz identified one action item from the March meeting which was to obtain a cost estimate for a separate accounting system for the CO-OP section to separately track CO-OP projects since it was previously discussed that the current ICPRB accounting system may not efficiently support this capability. Dr. Schultz had a meeting this past quarter with the ICPRB Senior Accountant and Office Manager to discuss the issue in depth. As a result of this meeting, it was decided that a sufficient job is currently being done to separate CO-OP expenditures and revenue from ICPRB accounting and audit. Accordingly, Dr. Schultz stated that the CO-OP Team would continue on this trajectory for the next year and would make improvements, as appropriate and needed.

B. Section's Quarterly Report

Dr. Schultz summarized the CO-OP Section's third quarter activities, which are described in detail in the Section's Quarterly Report, available in Tab 3 of the Commission meeting book.

Dr. Schultz first gave a summary of meetings that took place and ongoing CO-OP staff activities. She then gave a brief presentation on the recent low river flows and CO-OP's role during drought. She highlighted that CO-OP began daily drought monitoring on June 12, triggered by

the Potomac River flow falling below 2000 cubic feet per second, as measured by the USGS gage at Point of Rocks, Maryland. Daily monitoring was then suspended on June 16 because flows had risen slightly in response to precipitation in the northwestern corner of the basin. She stated that recent river flows have been similar to those experienced at the same time of year during the drought of 1999.

Commissioner McCabe then asked Dr. Schultz about current reservoir storage levels and whether it was sufficient to meet upcoming demands. In response, Dr. Schultz explained that, based on current storage and simulation results from CO-OP's planning model, demands will be met even during conditions similar to the most severe drought experienced in the past. Commissioner McCabe then inquired if this meant that there is no need for the addition of Travilah Quarry Facility to the regional system. Dr. Schultz explained that supplemental storage is needed to address two water supply vulnerabilities: 1) a release into the river of oil or another contaminant which would require the shutdown of intakes, and 2) a future drought which is more severe than any that has occurred in the past because of climate change, combined with increases in regional water demands forecasted to occur by the end of CO-OP's planning horizon (2045-2055).

Commissioner Currey followed up on Commissioner McCabe's questions by asking: "If you look at where we are today and assume that we are on a similar trajectory as we were with the drought of 1966, are you saying the reservoirs today have several months of storage in them? Is there enough water in them now to not violate the flow-by rules?" Dr. Schultz responded that because of how we use the reservoirs today, in conjunction with the Potomac River, we could certainly weather both the kind of droughts we had in 1930 (which extended into December) as well as the drought of 1966 (which ended in September) with no problem, assuming our models are correct. She noted that demand for water has not increased since 1990 and for that reason, we are currently in good shape.

Dr. Schultz also stated that climate change could create a severe drought in the future like we've never experienced previously, and that factor, combined with a rise in demand for water in the future, requires additional regional storage for water supply resiliency.

Commissioner Sussman inquired about why there hasn't been an increase in water demand since 1990 and what are the future scenarios where demand may increase. Dr. Schultz said that CO-OP's model of annual demand forecasts that demand will increase within the next 20 years. She said that water use has been kept in check over the past 30 years largely because of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 and the EPA's WaterSense program, which have resulted in the adoption of water saving fixtures and appliances.

Commissioner Tsai inquired as to the CO-OP legal obligation to release water from reserve facilities when the need arises. Dr. Schultz responded that both the Little Seneca Reservoir and Jennings Randolph (managed by USACE) are reservoirs where the suppliers cost share the water resources; there are no legal restrictions since agreements are in place giving the water suppliers access to these resources in exchange for the suppliers' funding of a portion of the capital costs and the ongoing operations and maintenance costs of these facilities.

C. Effort to secure Federal funding for supplemental storage

Mr. Nardolilli said that ICPRB has been working with a group of interested parties in pressing the need for a study of supplemental storage options to make our water supply more resilient.

The group includes the water suppliers as well as MWCOG and the Banner Group (a lobbying firm hired by MWCOG). He reminded the Commissioners that in 2022, the USACE received authorization from Congress to do a study on a secondary water supply for the region, and now ICPRB and its partners are seeking funding for the study which is estimated to be about 3 million dollars and will take three years. Mr. Nardolilli emphasized that it was important to note that several studies have already been completed by ICPRB, MWCOG and USACE which have laid the groundwork for the larger study and that may even enable the USACE to complete it faster and for less money.

Mr. Nardolilli reported on his meeting on May 17 at the Washington Aqueduct with Colonel John Lloyd, Engineers Commander of the North Atlantic Division of the USACE, Colonel Estee Pinchasin, Commander and District Engineer of the Baltimore District of the USACE, and ICPRB Federal Alternate Commissioner Amy Guise where USACE's key stakeholder role was discussed as it relates to this study. He added that ICPRB's need for funding has reached the highest levels of the USACE as well as the Office of the Secretary of the Army

Mr. Nardolilli also provided details on his efforts to fund the secondary water supply study: (1) Congressionally Directed Spending requests to the Senate Appropriations Committee (Senator Van Hollen \$1m; Senator Cardin \$1m; Senator Warner \$500,000; Senator Kaine \$500,000); and Community Project Funding requests to the House Appropriations Committee (Congresswoman Norton \$1m; and Congressman Connolly \$500,000). Congresswoman Wexton also filed a Programmatic Funding Request. Mr. Nardolilli expressed optimism and said that ICPRB is looking forward to future opportunities to interface with the Congressional Delegation to secure a Federal Commitment.

Mr. Nardolilli highlighted that in the past few weeks, ICPRB has been using the daily drought monitoring to communicate to the public through the press about our efforts to find solutions. ICPRB will continue to use various channels to get the word out.

Mr. Nardolilli said that ICPRB's contractor, Delta Point Solutions, is completing a study which explored two main topics:

- 1) The economic costs of losing access to the Potomac
- 2) The national security implications of losing access to the Potomac

This report is ready for vetting with local water suppliers and ICPRB has a meeting with them on June 27th to review the report together.

D. LFAA

D(a) Workgroup Next Steps. Commissioner McCabe reviewed the progress of the working group over the past several months. (Background: The LFAA Working Group was charged with providing recommendations on 10 issues that were identified in the 2018 Cruden Report. Currently, the Working Group has reached consensus on 9 of the 10 issues.)

The final contentious issue involves recognizing Virginia's role in the environmental flow-by and determining whether any future revisions of the environmental flow-by should be informed by a two-step process for reviewing ecological and human aspects of the equation.

Commissioner McCabe said there were two productive meetings on April 18th (at the Annual LFAA Meeting in Richmond) and on June 2nd. Commissioner McCabe concluded by stating that despite agreement in principle, the group is still receiving language proposed and counter proposed that are at odds with each other. The working group will make one more attempt to resolve this issue and will report back to the Commissioners at the September meeting.

D(b) Moderator and Standby Moderator.

Commissioner McCabe announced that Mark Masters would become the new LFAA Moderator. Dr. Schultz then summarized Mr. Masters' qualifications for this role. Commissioner McCabe said that Peter Gravitz may be appointed the Stand-By Moderator at a later date.

E. Financial Statement

Dr. Schultz stated that CO-OP is on budget and on track.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Selection of Nominating Committee for FY2024 CO-OP Section Officers

Commissioner McCabe asked for volunteers to serve on the nominating committee. Commissioners Potter, Holland and Madden volunteered. **Commissioner Sussman made a motion to formally appoint the nominating committee. Commissioner Currey seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

7. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to transact, Commissioner McCabe adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:32 a.m.

***[Please note that there was no motion to adjourn this meeting.]*

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