

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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June 16, 2009

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Kevin Farrell, GA EPD
David Ashley, JJG

SUBJECT: Council Meeting 2 Summary
Middle Ocmulgee Water Planning Council

Georgia Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Plan Regional Water Planning

Council Meeting 2 Summary

Meeting Date: June 11, 2009
Location: Macon Water Authority - Frank C. Amerson Water Treatment Plant
Attendees: See list

1) Welcome and Council Member Introduction

Elmo Richardson, Council Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Tony Rojas, Council Member and Executive Director of Macon Water Authority, welcomed everyone to the facility and expressed the Authority's pleasure at being able to host the meeting. Council members, EPD staff, planning consultants, partnering agencies, and other attendees introduced themselves.

2) Agenda and Council Meeting 1 Minutes

Elmo Richardson presented the agenda for the meeting to the Council for approval. A motion and second were made to adopt the agenda without modifications. No discussion was forthcoming and the agenda was approved as presented.

David Ashley presented the meeting summary for Council Meeting 1. A clarification was made to the statement by Adriane Wood, from DCA, that the agency will be changing the dates for Comprehensive Plan recertification by local governments. The correct statement should be that

DCA will **not** be changing dates for Comprehensive Plan recertification, but will change dates as they expire based on outcome of Council plans.

Question – Regarding the Regionally Important Resources (RIR), will that information be available for this plan?

Response – The RIR identifies any cultural, historic, and natural resources that are of regional importance. This report has been drafted by the Middle Georgia Regional Development Center, and a draft is available on their website, www.MGRDC.org, along with a map of the identified resources.

A request was made to add a list of council members who did not attend to the meeting minutes.

3) MOA, Operating Procedures and Rules for Meetings

Kevin Farrell presented the proposed changes that were captured and submitted to EPD for review. EPD then evaluated and accepted or recommended modifications. For the Middle Ocmulgee Council, changes were basically accepted with some minor rewording. Council can have further discussion on proposed changes, or can accept and sign.

Elmo Richardson requested a motion to approve changes and incorporate in MOA. A motion and 2nd were made. Discussion followed:

Question - On two-thirds requirement for voting, does this only apply to chair and vice-chair election or to all decisions?

Response – Two-thirds is a consensus, but a simple majority would rule in a conflict.

All Council Members agreed that the goal is to achieve a consensus in all decisions.

The MOA was PASSED unanimously, and the MOA document was passed around for signatures. Nineteen signatures were obtained during the meeting.

4) Planning Process Overview

Farrell presented the Planning Process Overview presentation. No questions were asked.

5) Population and Employment Projections

Ashley presented the Population and Employment Projections presentation. The population projections are not EPD's, but from the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB), which contracted with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) at the University of Georgia, and will be the new official State forecasts. They are to be finalized by mid-August.

Question – Why is there a sag in year 2040 in all the population graphs?

Response – That is a question to ask Dr. Brown when he joins in a conference call later in the morning. All comments on population and employment forecasts are due to EPD by June 30, 2009. All local governments on the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) and Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) lists were sent the population data.

Question– Were the Regional Development Centers (RDCs) included in receiving the population data?

Response – Yes.

Question – Can we ask specific questions of Dr. Brown? (e.g. Butts County has had two 400-home subdivisions and the school board reports 500+ enrollment increase so far.)

Response – Please submit specific questions to info@georgiawaterplanning.org

Comment – Availability of water (e.g. excess availability at MWA Town Creek Reservoir) will promote growth in some areas that will be much different from historical patterns of growth. That needs to be considered as part of this planning process.

Comment – The excess capacity is really future capacity and it should include the availability in the plan.

Question – What is the difference in workforce and population in the future? Are those folks unemployed?

Question – How was the population modified to account for the workforce differential?

Question – Concern is the current economic situation. If economy was better, could add 5,000 people very shortly, which would be 2030 for Butts County. Don't think these population projections are correct.

Response – All questions have been written down, and will be posed to those participating in the conference call.

Conference Call with Drs. Warren Brown and Jeffrey Dorfman from CVIOG and David Tanner of OPB:

A short break was held, following which, Warren Brown and Jeff Dorfman from CVIOG, as well as David Tanner of OPB joined the meeting by telephone conference call.

David Tanner stated that the State of Georgia previously did all projections in-house until last year when they decided that more regular updates are needed and contracted with CVIOG.

Warren Brown joined UGA in January 2009, from Cornell University. He gave a more detailed overview of the process. This process used trends from both the 1990s (between 1990 and 2000 census) and since 2000, and was based on models developed by the University of Texas-San Antonio.

Jeff Dorfman explained that the workforce projections were developed using confidential data from the Department of Labor in 50 different industry classifications. They started with a statistical model that included recessions and expansions; this model was then expanded to include regional, state-wide and industry trends. The model was adjusted to keep growth from getting too high and to account for the current economic situation for 2008 to 2010. Finally, adjustments were made to retail employment upward in the far future to match population projections.

Brown and Dorfman were asked to explain the alternative projection scenarios. Scenario 1.0 indicated that the rate of net migration from the 1990s would continue through 2040, which was the limit of University of Texas-San Antonio study. The 2000 to 2007 Scenario was adjusted based on trends for the first seven years of 2000s. Scenario 0.0 included no net migration, and was more for analytical purposes. The Scenario 0.5 used half the migration rate from 1990 to 2000. The workforce-adjusted scenario ties total population growth to jobs growth. The dip is a function of the transition of the two time periods that needs to be addressed. There is no such precision as implied from this dip.

This evaluation is completely based on past trends and does not consider a water shortage or other major limitations to growth. That needs to be added from Councils/EPD/planning consultants.

Process for input of local knowledge: Please complete forms provided and return to planning consultant and directly to CVIOG as well as regional planners for your community.

Question – Were RDCs involved?

Response – Yes, the RDCs were involved as reviewers.

Question – Have there been any communications issues or have all responded?

Response – Resources vary by region and available monies, but all RDCs have had some level of involvement.

Question – What is the differential between current and projected per capita employment ratios? Unemployed?

Response – Major factor is aging of population and retired. By 2030, many baby-boomers will retire and the population percentage over age 65 is quite large.

Question – How were regional projections developed? Were they done, and then added together for state total, or was state total first then divided?

Response – Population was originally done at state and county levels, then added together to get regional numbers. On employment, done on regional basis, because of confidentiality issues (i.e. one large employer in a county), then adjusted regional population based on jobs ratio and divided out to counties.

Question – How will population growth in neighboring states impact Georgia?

Response – Not only do sister states have an impact, but northern states have been basically exporting people for a long time and are running out of folks to send. Therefore, our rate of migration is not expected to continue indefinitely. That has not explicitly been considered in these projections, but needs to be included in the future.

Question – Butts County currently has 1,200 permits outstanding, representing a lot of people. Several subdivisions have been entirely foreclosed, but have been bought recently by investors who anticipate turning them around. Also, some people have moved in with relatives from neighboring counties. There have been complaints of 12 to 15 people in one home. There is concern that the population forecasts for Butts County are significantly low.

Response – Outer counties with affordable housing have seen a significant drop in home values. People can now buy homes closer-in which may significantly extend how long it takes to fill the 1,200 permits.

Question – What is your timeline to finalize projections as related to water plan?

Response – CVIOG has asked for 30 days after delivery of all feedback materials to revise (mid July to mid August). They should have final projections by the end of August.

There will be workshops in the fall for input where more time will be spent on each issue. It has not been determined how they will be publicized yet.

6) Agriculture Water Demand Forecasts

David Ashley gave the Agricultural Water Demands presentation, following which; three

questions were posed to the group, as follows:

1. *Questions: How does agricultural demand affect this region?*

- Mainly in the southern portion of this council area.
- Strawberries
- Irrigation of pecans and peaches is a must
- Silage crops for dairy cows
- Potato crops are growing very large in the last 2-3 years, crop is taken up by June 1 each year, resulting in double water usage for other crops
- Sod & seed
- Corn & soybeans
- Hay
- Irrigation is becoming essential for almost any type of agriculture. Lenders require in many cases.
- Urban agriculture (end users) is also a large part of demand, not just growers. Kevin Farrell responded that the irrigation component at residential sites would be included in the municipal demands portion of the process.
- Agriculture is the industry in the southern portion of the council and is THE economic engine in those counties.
- Poultry production is also a major use.

2. *Does agricultural demand significantly affect a region upstream or downstream of this region?*

- Most of the groundwater use is from the Cretaceous aquifer in the middle of the area, and in the south it is the Floridan aquifer, so don't see much impact.

3. *Do you foresee future agricultural demand for water that has not existed before in this region?*

- The agriculture industry has grown significantly in the number of permits, but has grown much more efficient. New drip irrigation technologies will drive more agricultural usage, e.g., new styles of drip irrigation systems that remain in place below ground for 3-4 years of crop rotation, then are ripped out and replaced.
- Will see more irrigation in agriculture, because lenders will not give money for a failed crop.
- May see some reductions due to rising costs, or will see more efficiency.
- Economic viability of forestry will impact crop agriculture and may move one way or another, especially with CRP program.
- Reuse of wastewater may have impacts, depending on economy of transporting wastewater.
- Where does EPD stand on former push for land application? Kevin Farrell responded that federal regulation (NPDES, – and anti-degradation) still pushes toward that, but that is shifting away as the impacts downstream have become apparent.
- Mention of purple pipe systems and requirements for installation in new developments in coastal Georgia
- Trend now toward local agriculture, vegetables grown in the community. This may require more water than was previously being used.

7) Modeling 101

Eric Nease presented the modeling introduction information. Models are developed to simulate real-world systems

Question – Will the models be validated?

Response – Yes

8) Resource Assessments

David Ashley went over the resource assessment presentation.

Question – Are we concerned with water quality or only quantity?

Response – Both.

Question – Are individual counties responsible for cleaning up their streams? We've heard of a requirement for local counties to clean up PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyl) by 2012.

Response – EPD is responsible for water quality, no requirement for local counties. No knowledge of PCB requirement.

Question – Robbins Air Force Base (AFB) discharges to the Ocmulgee River. In the past, there was some discussion on the construction of this discharge and there were metals present in the discharge. Is the Department of Defense (DoD) exempt from NPDES permitting requirements?

Response – No, Robbins AFB has an NPDES discharge permit with limits.

Follow up question – Metal concentrations in stream may go up and down as flows change.

Response – That is all considered in the permitting process. They also have to do toxicity testing on an annual basis.

9) Creating a Regional Vision

Charlotte Weber presented a continuation of the visioning process. Members were asked to begin thinking about a vision for the Council and bring some thoughts and ideas to the next meeting. The questions to help members craft their vision and goals will be sent to Council members in the week following this meeting.

10) Public Involvement Plan

David Ashley presented the EPD's desires for a Public Involvement Plan to be developed by each Council.

Question – How will we know what the other council's are doing below and above us? What about sharing resources? How they thought of yet of how they or we are thinking?

Response – In addition to our meetings, there will be a joint meeting with the chairs and vice chairs in October. As we move along in the process, additional joint meetings with other councils have also been planned.

11) Local Elected Officials Comments

There were no comments by local elected officials.

12) Public Comment

Terry Scarborough – Mr. Scarborough raised the issue of exclusionary practices from Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD) for design professionals (related to the preparation of site hydrology and erosion control plans), don't want that included in the stormwater component of this council.

Response – Not an issue for this Council at this time; would be premature to raise it. MNGWPD was created under a different legislation, and the Water Planning Councils have no regulatory authority. Chairman Richardson expressed the viewpoint that the Council would not want to affect the decision about choices of qualified site design professionals; that should be a local government decision.

13) Meeting Wrap-up

Calendars for September 2009 were distributed to the Council to aid in scheduling the next meeting. EPD goal is to have the next meeting between September 8 and 18.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Meeting Attendees

Council Members in attendance

Russ Adams	Larry McSwain
Tony Bass	Hal Newberry
John Bembry	Harvey Norris
Blair Cleveland	Eva Persons
Ben Copeland Jr.	Barry Peters
Keith Dalton	Robert Ray
Jerry Davis	Elmo Richardson
Robert Dickey	Tony Rojas
Richard Haddock	Terry Scarborough
Jim Ham	Van Whaler
Bobby Hamby	William Whitten
Charlie Harris	Thomas Whicker

Council Members not in attendance

Jason Briley
William Lazenby
Paul Leath
Jay Matthews

Staff in attendance

Kevin Ferrell – EPD
Ted Hendrickx – EPD
David Ashley – JIG
Eric Nease – JIG
Charlotte Weber – JIG

Partnering Agencies and General Public

*Adriane Wood (Department of Community Affairs (DCA))

*Karol Kelly (UGA Cooperative Extension – Bibb County)

*Don McGough (Georgia Farm Bureau)

*Keegan Malone (GSWCC - Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission)

Skip Langley (Regional Representative for Senator Johnny Isakson)

Bill Stenbridge (Regional Representative for Senator Saxby Chambliss)

Les Ager

Mark Wyzalek – Macon Water Authority

*Indicates attendee represented an agency