

Triangle Water Supply Partnership Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2021

9:30 to 11:30



<p>9:30 — 9:35</p>	<p>Welcome, Introductions, and Opening Comments</p> <p>Larry Bridges opened the meeting at 9:31am.</p> <p>Attendance:</p> <p>Sydney Miller, City of Durham Emily Barret, TJCOG Maya Cough-Schulze, TJCOG Ben Mills, Town of Morrisville Ashley Ward, Duke Internet of Water Engagement/Outreach Associate Christopher Sandt, Orange County Christopher Summerlin Coleman Olinger, OWASA David Hardin, Town of Apex Kevin Irby, CDM Smith Jamie Revels, Town of Cary Larry Bridges, Chatham County Lauren Patterson, Duke University Internet of Water Marie Strandwitz, Town of Hillsborough Matt Echols, Town of Apex Ruth Rouse, OWASA Sarah Braman, Town of Cary Vicki Westbrook, City of Durham Kim Rineer, Johnston County Bill Holman, The Conservation Fund Chris Phelps, City of Raleigh Pat Mallett, Orange County Ray Cox, Highfill Engineering</p>
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<p>9:40 — 9:50</p>	<p>Administrative Considerations, Emily Barrett, TJCOG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership Dues, will be sent June/July for FY22 • Discuss the idea of seeking a 501(c)(3) status • Coming back together in a post-quarantine world: TJCOG has their large conference room reserved for the first Friday of even-numbered months but can only hold 10 people with social distancing. • Vicki: Durham's new Compliance Services Building can accommodate up to 75 people in a regular setting, so we could probably host a socially distanced meeting effectively there. • Emily: Should we pursue this for June meeting, or is that too soon?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larry: When we transition to meeting in-person, we plan to include a call-in or virtual option, right? • Emily: We are mobilizing at the COG to have better cameras and recording equipment to facilitate that. Vicki, is the Compliance Services room set up for that? • Vicki: I will check. In terms of June, we are not sure when the city will open city facilities. For the following meeting, we could figure out the technology. • Emily: It sounds like August or October before we will seriously convene in-person
9:50 — 10:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NC Water Supply Dashboard, Ashley Ward and Lauren Patterson, Duke University (see presentation for full details) • This project came out of the NC State Climate office and CISA's Project Nighthawk. • Goals of dashboard: Help users find their water utility, water supply information, demand and drought forecasting. • Syd Miller: Durham is using the dashboard to figure out whether Durham should expect to transfer water from Cary or OWASA • Sarah Braman: These conversations already happen between utility water resource managers, but this tool is a common, efficient resource for us to refer to • Utility data in the dashboard can be found via map, search bar; show water supply watersheds, streamflow statistics, etc. • Many visualizations the user can play around with regarding drought, precipitation, streamflow, etc. over various time horizons, or compared normal conditions, as well as forecasted data. All linked to original data sources (USGS, etc.) • Staff are working on adding OWASA, Cary, other data. Have Durham already. • Questions: • Emily: The state climate office just kicked off their Cardinal (?) database; are you all linking to that regarding weather? • Lauren: Data comes from NC State Climate Office, Econet and Coop • Emily: Econet will be switching to Cardinal (https://products.climate.ncsu.edu/cardinal/) • Ashley: We would like to know: Is there data you would like to see in the dashboard that you don't see here? • Syd: If everyone in TWP were to provide data for this, would it be on a weekly basis? Durham already tracks demand data – easy to copy and paste. • Sarah: My understanding is that in drought conditions, DEQ has requested weekly submittals of demand. Perhaps this could replace the prior submission process • What I appreciate most about this is zooming into the subbasin level, looking upstream – this is something you can't do from NOAA's website • Ashley Ward: We will be getting all the data into the dashboard by (June?) and then turning this over to DEQ. • Lauren Patterson: Utilities on groundwater can also be added into the dashboard. In theory data do not have to be updated weekly if not possible. • Syd: Lauren, can you show one of the spreadsheets we are using to collect utility data? • Lauren showed the spreadsheet template - demand and supply conditions are the major utility data TWP partners would share • Sarah: A year to two ago, TWP partners tried to compare their triggers and stage requirements. • Ashley: Anyone can feel free to reach out with questions after exploring the dashboard: https://nc-water-supply.internetofwater.app/

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah: It is great that you have incorporated all we have asked for. If this is primarily for water resource managers, great. We would be hesitant to send citizens here, as even I've gotten confused. Maybe some more directions would be helpful. • Ashley: In future iterations, we have talked with the NC State Climate Office about how we could create these kinds of supporting materials. This is primarily a tool developed for decision makers. • Once we are able to meet in person, we would love to do some usability and functionality tests so it can be as helpful as possible – for example, like Sarah mentioned, making the “info” button more visible. • Emily: Good idea – maybe we can host a meeting on Duke’s campus where we host an “after” meeting to test.
10:25 – 10:30	5 Minute Break
10:30 – 10:45	<p>Jordan Lake One Water Overview and Update, Bill Holman, The Conservation Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JLOW Advisory Committee are pulling together work groups’ recommendations into a report of recommendations • One Water work has not been done at this large river basin scale – creates opportunities and challenges • We will present a high-level briefing to elected officials on April 21st to get their input • We hope to have a larger JLOW meeting sometime after that • Goal: Solid report of recommendations for DWR later this summer. After that, will get into the details of rules and policy. • Likely there will be a group of people who want to follow the JLOW path, and others who will follow Rules • JLOW is considering forming a 501c3; we would like for you to consider us in your budgets for the following fiscal year. • The GA has introduced bills for flood resilience planning and implementation in House and Senate. It is not clear who will do the planning but groups like this, JLOW, UNRBA, etc. would make sense. It would be great to have more financial resources from the state. Please reach out if you would like a copy of any more detailed information. • Emily: We will be sharing a draft final document of recommendations with the six stakeholder groups very soon, so stay tuned for that! • Emily: JLOW wants to continue to work together and to continue to work with DEQ as closely on the nutrient regulations as possible. There was sensitivity to wanting to equate nutrient efforts with JLOW, though, because JLOW is much broader than nutrients in focus. Recommendations are split in two parts, innovating/integrating JLOW principles into nutrient compliance and working in 2022 to better articulate that. • Sarah: Just wanted to be able to review before draft goes to DEQ. • Emily: Yes, we can get you the draft before April 21st. • Ruth: I’m not part of the stakeholder groups, but was asked by Carrboro elected officials about the JLOW process, so can you make sure I’m on the list to receive those documents before that April 21st meeting? • Emily: Yes. If anyone else needs this, please reach out.
10:45 — 10:55	<p>EMC Update, Emily Barrett, TJCOG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 10th/11th meetings: • Water Allocation Committee included informational items related to regionalization (see links to presentations in Water Allocation Committee agenda). • Water Quality Committee (see presentations linked in agenda):

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- New Development Stormwater Model Program for the Neuse/Tar-Pamlico
- Proposed Temporary Rules related to regulation of wetlands – federal changes to CWA language made wetlands connected to navigable waters by non-jurisdictional streams no longer have a permitting mechanism, which put many projects on hold. Temporary rules passed to move forward toward creating a permitting mechanism.
- Info item on Climate Change Impacts on Water Quality – presentations specific from DWR and DEMLR which recommend nature-based strategies and emphasize the importance of resilience. This seemed significant that state level engineers acknowledge that current IDF curves do not represent current precipitation or account for climate change. DEMLR also proposed studies to assess how probable maximum precipitation might create worst-case scenarios, and how long-term infrastructure can be designed, planned, and located accordingly.
- Full EMC (see presentations linked in [agenda](#)):
 - Introduced Dionne Delli-Gatti as new Secretary of DEQ per Michael Regan’s confirmation to EPA
 - Approved Neuse/Tar-Pamlico Stormwater Program for New Development
 - Approved proceeding to public notice with Water Use Registration and Allocation Rules, which has implies potential future restrictions in drought conditions
 - Approved proceeding to public notice with Surface Water Triennial Review Amendments to certain rules – implications are that EPA is not proposing surface water standards for PFAS but drinking water should not exceed PFOA/PFAS combination.

10:55 – 11:25

Around the Table**OWASA:**

Ruth Rouse: We are about to kick off our strategic planning process with our BOD, including community and staff input. Please feel free to email me good strategic plan examples!

Staffing updates: Vishnu Gangadharan was promoted into Mary Darr’s position of Director of Engineering and Planning, which leaves our CIP manager position vacant. Due to the many projects at our water treatment plant and our new water treatment plant manager not being able to start until June 15, Ken Laughlin was temporarily brought out of retirement part time to help cover.

Capital improvement projects: We are upgrading our finished pumping station.

A group of staff are looking at EPA lead and copper rule and strategizing about how to meet those requirements. Ruth asked whether TWP members are interested in putting together a small workgroup to coordinate with each other on how to meet these requirements. (FYI, Allison Spinelli, Katie Harwell, and Mary Darr are leading this effort from OWASA.)

- Several TWP members express interest
- Emily: Would one of those staff lead an overview for the group? Is that necessary?
- Vicki: I agreed to serve as the issue manager for next issue of NC Currents, which is focused on lead and copper. The articles are being finalized this week. We have an overview article from Erika Walker with 120Water, an article from the state lead and copper team lead about selecting sample sites, collecting samples, and sampling at schools and daycares. Other articles are on communications, planning for fiscal needs, and lead service line inventory. This issue will be published in summer; consider it a resource!
- Syd: Should we devote some time to this at the June partnership meeting?
 - Consensus: Yes!
- Vicki: Other good examples have also been published in AWWA journals.

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Durham:

Syd Miller: We have concluded construction at our water treatment plant and are in the midst of construction at our water reclamation facilities. The WIP is moving along – we have advertised our third preliminary project.

Vicki Westbrook: We are participating in the Mayor's challenge for water conservation this May.

In May, the water management field team will start going into residences to do the in-person water use assessments if customer chooses, as well as to collect water quality samples. The team is vaccinated and has protocols they will enforce with customers.

Cary:

Jamie Revels: We have put together virtual tours of our plants as an opportunity for virtual public outreach. We are in the final stages in our CCR and are wrapping up our disinfection process by the end of the month.

We are getting a consultant on board to decide how to respond to the lead and copper rule. This is led by Robert Hurt and Cary would be happy to participate in discussion with other utilities.

In terms of watershed protection efforts, we have been working on purchasing our first candidate site (in coordination with Triangle Land Conservancy) under our watershed protection strategy.

Sarah: We have a few field tests coming up with Todd: Penny Road is getting a new meter to test that interconnection in late April, around the same time we test the Optimist Farm Road interconnection with Holly Springs. We will test Surles Court later in May- these are the field testing efforts; everything else is SCADA.

Chatham County:

Larry Bridges: County offices are slowly starting to open to the public, with sanitation stations, dividers, and other methods of social distancing. With Freese and Nichols, we are completing the first draft of our Risk and Resiliency Assessment in next 3-4 weeks.

Orange County:

Chris Sandt: We are all still working remotely and our offices are closed to public. The Eno is flowing at 75 cfs at Hillsborough. We are working on our Lake Orange dam rehabilitation project, hopefully by August; we have had significant delays due to a 3-4 month review from state Dam Safety. We have discussed how NC DPS has a project to add rain and reservoir level gages to reservoirs statewide – they will probably start installing these in mid-late April, but have not heard a date for Lake Orange specifically.

Apex:

Matt Echols: We have received bids for a 24" water line extension, which is big for us – we hope it will make one of larger tanks perform well. We are still operating with our interim town manager; the selection process is ongoing.

We are moving towards a stormwater utility fee. We have been delineating every residential property in town for impervious area and will have a very involved rate structure (we pivoted a 180 from a flat fee.)

Johnston County:

Kim Rineer: We are all going back to work beginning of next week but will not be opening office to the public May 3rd. County Health Department has made vaccines available to all staff. We had a successful interconnection test up between Wendell and Johnston County yesterday- thanks to a lot of work from Raleigh and others! We are trying to pull off our first revenue bond and have never had to get eight bids in one month.

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	<p>A question for all - is anyone else having trouble getting PVC pipe and have experienced that PVC prices are up by 50%?</p> <p>Morrisville: Ben Mills: The Town has allowed 100% staffing, so it is just up to department heads- engineering is currently at 50% staffing. Our target date is July 6th to 'return to normal'</p> <p>Hillsborough: Marie Strandwitz: We are moving ahead with finishing our reservoir project; there has been a holdup of one year for DEQ to approve the deed restriction on a 100-foot buffer; hopefully, this will not be the holdup from inundating the reservoir.</p> <p>STAG funding – Congressman Price just asked for some projects and we submitted for OWASA booster pump station to be able to receive water from OWASA in times of emergency. We are getting bids and agree with Kim that the price of PVC pipe is ridiculous – twice what we estimated.</p> <p>Staffing updates: Our inspector and interim superintendent is staying on as we consider how to move forward. If any neighboring utilities would be interested in an agreement to borrow an inspector who is underutilized for ~2 months, we could reimburse them, and they could cross-train. Reach out to Marie on this!</p> <p>We probably are not opening our offices until September.</p> <p>No one from Pittsboro, Holly Springs, or Harnett County were on the line. Raleigh did not give an update.</p>
<p>11:25 — 11:35</p>	<p>Action Items/Future Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily: We discussed at the Admin committee that it would be good to cultivate relationships with some of downstream stakeholders – Don offered to do some outreach. This is a topic we will consider for future meetings, to hear from them and their interests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you have thoughts of particular downstream stakeholders, reach out to Don. • We will likely do a TWP website review during the next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will probably let you review the website at a future meeting • Sarah: Very early heads up: December 2021 the Confluence Conference will meet in-person in Asheville, with an economist Michael Walden headlining and with topics on equity and affordability <p>The meeting closed at 11:26am.</p>

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