

# Triangle Water Supply Partnership Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2020

9:30 to 11:30

Location: Microsoft Teams



## Agenda items

9:30 — 9:35

### Welcome and Opening comments

Chair Don Greeley (City of Durham) opened the meeting at 9:32am.

#### **Attendance:**

Jeff Adkins, HDR  
Ben Mills, Morrisville  
Bill Holman, The Conservation Fund  
Brenan Buckley, Brown and Caldwell  
Chris Belk, Freese and Nichols  
Chris Kennedy, Pittsboro  
Chris Summerlin, Chatham County  
Chris Windley, CJS Conveyance  
Chris Sandt, Orange County  
Coleman Olinger, OWASA  
Dana Matics, USACE  
David Hardin, Town of Apex  
Todd Davis, Hazen and Sawyer  
William Dowbiggin, CDM Smith  
Emily Barrett, TJCOG  
Maya Cough-Schulze, TJCOG  
Don Greeley, City of Durham  
Kevin Irby, CDM Smith  
Jamie Revels, Town of Cary  
Kim Rineer, Johnston County  
Marie Strandwitz, Town of Hillsborough  
Matt Echols, Town of Apex  
Syd Miller, City of Durham  
Larry Mitchell, Dewberry  
Erin Riggs, UNC Environmental Finance Center  
Chris Phelps, City of Raleigh  
Rachel Ingham, Town of Holly Springs  
Tom Roberts, UNC Environmental Finance Center  
Ruth Rouse, OWASA  
Sarah Braman, Town of Cary  
Shane Cummings, Harnett County  
Tom Tant, Hazen and Sawyer  
Jeffrey Thompson, Black and Veatch  
Vicki Westbrook, City of Durham  
Whit Wheeler, City of Raleigh  
Jeffrey Wing, Dewberry  
Reed Barton, CDM Smith

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	<p>Bart Kreps, Raftelis Financial Consultants</p> <p>Maya Cough-Schulze introduced Emily Barrett, new Natural Resources &amp; Resilience Program Manager who will lead TWP efforts from TJCOG's side moving forward.</p>
<b>9:35 — 9:55</b>	<p><b>Administrative Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review and adoption of minutes from October meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moved: Syd</li> <li>○ Seconded: Chris Kennedy</li> <li>○ All in favor</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Syd Miller gave an overview of Technical Committee work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hazen has been working with each local government to incorporate their models for the regional interconnections model</li> <li>○ For January 8<sup>th</sup> TC meeting, consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ what year of water use and what methodology to use for demand projections</li> <li>▪ Inviting any operations staff to attend for the discussion of interconnection testing for model calibration</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ TC has determined to push forward regional water supply plan and will start working on RFQ later in 2021</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>9:55 — 10:20</b>	<p><b>WIP Project Status Update, Jeff Adkins, HDR (See <a href="#">presentation</a> for full details)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently entering first of three phases of a project to initiate a new intake on the west side of Jordan Lake <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Phase I (2020-2023): Preliminary engineering and permitting</li> <li>○ Have completed communication and regulatory scoping workshop</li> <li>○ Schedule for RFQ/RFPs, currently being drafted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jan: Advertise Intake/Transmission Infrastructure RFQ</li> <li>▪ Feb: WIP Governance RFP</li> <li>▪ Mid-late March: Environmental Permitting RFQ</li> <li>▪ Late April: Regional WTF RFQ</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Expectations for Consultant Selection Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Partnership website is coming</li> <li>○ Durham is Contract Agent, using their RFQ template</li> <li>○ One partner, one vote</li> <li>○ Potential for short-list interviews</li> <li>○ Looking for SOQs to address project considerations and risks</li> <li>○ Selection criteria - see 12/4 <a href="#">presentation</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Expectation for Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expect a collaborative process</li> <li>○ Potential for separate solicitation for final design and construction services</li> <li>○ Include ENVISION environmental sustainability framework</li> <li>○ Intake and WTP location aerial photos and video from planned drone flight will be available during RFQ stage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>10:20 — 11:00</b>	<p><b>Jordan and Falls Lake Maintenance and Rehabilitation Schedule Update, Dana Matics, USACE (see <a href="#">presentation</a> for full details)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typical Dam O&amp;M involves monthly dam safety inspections/piezometer readings by project staff, annual dam safety inspections by district, and inspection/assessments that include conduit and chamber inspections every 5 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have received funding for repairs at Falls and Jordan beyond typical O&amp;M costs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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- Major work completed recently: New service gates and emergency gates have begun to be installed at Falls and Jordan, continuing through 2022/3. (Gates have been in the lake for 35+ years!)
- Much easier to inspect conduit at Falls than Jordan because of backflow (must pump water around into the Cape Fear to inspect). Plan to do some minor repair at Jordan at routing February inspection.
- 9'x20' gates raise and lower to regulate the amount of water sent downstream that lower all the way to the lake bottom. Replacing them is very labor intensive.

**Q&A:**

Syd Miller: City of Durham and other TWP Partners are allocation holders for water supply storage for Jordan Lake. USACE sends a bill to DWR which they pass on to Partners for their percent of water supply storage allocation. Last year DWR was surprised by the increase in cost which was presumably for O&M for these projects and was passed on to us. Can we expect higher O&M costs for the next few years?

Dana: Our resource management staff would be able to answer better. My understanding is yes, while work continues, that bill would continue to be high. I can put you in touch with resource management staff for more information.

Syd: Important for Partners to have the information needed to plan for paying for these costs.

Sarah Braman: Would the contact be Tony Young? If not, we definitely need your help finding out who to talk to.

Dana: No, it wouldn't be Tony—it would be the resource management folks.

Sarah: Cary has used drone footage to capture projects and memorialize their progress. This would be an amazing project to capture that way (though I know there would have to be strict regulations about aviation on federal land.) Is that something you are considering?

Dana: I love the idea but we do have really strict regulations. It might be hard.

Sarah: Time lapse footage or taking a picture from the same place every day might be fascinating.

Dana: That we can do! On Jordan Lake's Facebook page, we have a sped-up video of the new gate being replaced.

**11:00 — 11:30**

**COVID and Equity Discussion and Around the Table**

Ruth Rouse opened the round table with a question about COVID-19 response. OWASA's Executive Director has convened a task force on protocols and she is curious about how others are dealing with vaccinations, social distancing, COVID testing notifications, rate increases, and employee pay and benefits.

An extensive exchange ensued regarding COVID response. Some communities have HR Departments handling all protocols. Some use paper calendars that allow them to track who has been in the buildings to allow for contact tracing.

Testing: At least one had a positive case at a water treatment plant and had to have all staff tested. A discussion of an asymptomatic employee being tested reached the conclusion that PCR tests are the best option / rapid tests are not sensitive enough. There was discussion of testing sites provided through Wake County. Antibody tests are available at CVS.

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One member wanted to know if this group could coordinate backup operators should any one member have a COVID outbreak among operators. The members suggested that the NC Water WARN provides a framework for this.

Social distancing: Departments are re-emphasizing discouraging people from traveling for holidays. Consensus that whether staff should quarantine is based on the circumstances/likelihood of exposure rather than an automatic 14 days. After New Year's, some will encourage anyone who has traveled to telecommute for two weeks after holidays.

Some have seen an uptick in cases in maintenance groups and are creating more separation of crews in order to not lose the ability to respond to main breaks. Need for multiple methods of physical separation.

Vaccination: Essential personnel who cannot work from home will receive highest priority for vaccination. There is not likely to be as much of the vaccine here in December as we hoped. Challenges are posed by having an older workforce (chronic cases typically are over 65.) When a vaccine is ready there is a feeling that employers cannot require it.

### **Equity discussion**

One member shared that there are inherent equity issues that play out when implementing the CIP and seeking easements. Some are actively discussing equity policy and having guided listening sessions for employees to discuss their experiences, frustrations, etc. Others shared that they were uncertain how to begin with this issue. A Triangle J COG staffer recommended that the Government Alliance on Race and Equity has resources that may be useful. Another shared that the US Water Alliance's equity task force roadmaps may be a good place to start with this effort. Discussion concluded that a future meeting should include a presentation to have some more education rather than a free-form discussion.

TJCOG staff volunteered to summarize the USWA Equity task force roadmaps at the next Full Partnership meeting. At a future meeting, Don can potentially volunteer Durham colleagues to outline what Durham is doing regarding water equity.

### **Around the Table Updates**

Apex is requiring masks at all times, including in their offices at their desks.

Cary is maintaining well during COVID with some schedule tweaks. They are kicking off an update to the Strategic Utility Plan. They are also planning their disinfection switchover in March and April.

Chatham County is requiring masks when employees are together. They are still recovering from their cyber-attack 5 months ago.

Durham has just finished four years of construction at the water plants. The wastewater plant construction is continuing. The compliance service facility was completed in July.

No update from Harnett County.

Holly Springs has welcomed new staff member Rachel Ingram.

Johnson County is seeing a great deal of residential and commercial growth. They have four water projects at the treatment plant. There has been impacts to staff in customer service roles when there

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have been outbreaks. Kim asks how others have maintained customer service in light of staff and customer safety precautions.

Morrisville has updated their mask policy. No major outbreaks.

Orange County does not have a lot to report. They must wear masks at all times, even in the office with the door closed. They have had no outbreaks. Wake/Orange rehab projects are moving forward. Chris Sandt is curious if anyone has gone out for bids? Has there been any relief on contractor availability? Eno River is at 70 cfs.

OWASA says that they have 2 customer service staff inside at any given time. They have a paybox outside and the building is not open to customers. Mary has been promoted and they are advertising for a Director of Engineering. Demand is down due to COVID and they have changed their CIP a bit in response.

Pittsboro has been exploring a Pittsboro and Sanford utility alliance. They are expending a lot of effort including a Duke University study from Dr. Stapleton. Their new engineer Kent Jackson is starting on Monday. They are focusing on having a scalable and efficient organization now especially as they anticipate 60,000 people moving to Pittsboro due to the Chatham Park development.

Raleigh is going to begin water terminations again in January, while pushing advertisements for payment plans. Wake Cares has terminated applications unfortunately (were administering \$5 million in CARES act funding.) Raleigh is taking payments at City Hall and online. A 1960s cast iron water main broke at an anticipated \$1 million cost. The break and repair closed over 1,000 ft of highway on Glenwood Avenue next to Crabtree Valley Mall.

**11:30 — 11:40**

**Meeting Wrap Up**

- Next steps, action items
- The meeting was adjourned at **11:45am**.

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