

Maine Water News

A Publication of the Maine Water Utilities Association

November 2010, Number 154

The Value of Membership

Kathy Moriarty, President

As I write this column, I have just returned from our association's annual planning meeting. In addition to setting goals for the coming year, the exercise also focuses on ways to provide value to our members . . . which got me to thinking on the drive home . . .

How can I define concrete "value" that my utility has received from our MWUA membership? Over the next few days, I jotted these notes.

- **Professional development:** Involvement on association committees (currently three employees, but a number of others have participated over the years). It's an opportunity for personal and professional growth. It's a chance to gain experience and confidence in public speaking and leadership. And it's a chance to network with others in the profession.
- **Training opportunities:** (offered in a variety of ways) - scheduled educational sessions around the state, the annual conference in February, bi-monthly meetings. More than three-quarters of BWD employees have taken advantage to sharpen their existing skills and perhaps learn some new ones.
- **Management growth:** Management school (in cooperation with JETCC) – a BWD assistant department head is enrolled for 2010-2011, expanding his knowledge base and adding valuable skills to our utility as we transition to the next generation of leaders.
- **Legislative and regulatory input:** (through the organization and individually) – we recently participated in the in-stream flow rule meeting, and submitted comments and suggestions on Dig-Safe procedures and on Chapter 660 billing and disconnection revisions.
- **New professional opportunities:** Scholarship funding (administered by the Public Awareness Committee) – a BWD employee who began as a summer intern received the scholarship while at

UMaine, and was this year hired as a full-time water treatment operator.

- **Customer outreach:** (annual newspaper insert on "What Does Your Water Utility Do For You?") – District staff contributed articles and pictures along with other association members. The insert ran in all of the state's daily newspapers, and garnered a second place in the New England Press and Newspaper Association "special section" category.
- **Social Networking:** Website availability (with a variety of resources) – we utilized a posting FOR FREE in our search for a new District Engineer this fall and networked with other members using the forum on the MWUA new website.
- **Future employee development:** (UMaine engineering job fair) – our recently graduated assistant engineer and I joined other water and wastewater professionals to highlight our industries. The résumés we gathered will be posted for MWUA members to browse, and Bangor hopes to find its next summer interns in that group.



"The Hampden Water District has rebuilt the antiquated 1960's Pump Station into a state of the art pump station and treatment facility. Some changes in our system, since being put into operation in May 2010, are the addition of soda ash to combat our lead leaching issue in older homes along with the addition of carbon dioxide to reduce our pH levels.

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Material of interest to the water supply profession will be considered for publication. Copy deadline is the 15th day of month preceding publication.

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- **Recognition:** (for employees and Board members) – for a job well done at the August clambake, and through awards at the winter conference. Our employees have been honored to receive a number of accolades over the years.

As you're driving home tonight, I challenge you to make your own (two-part) inventory - listing those membership opportunities you are currently taking advantage of, and those you will seek out as part of your plans for 2011.

I'm betting everyone in any membership category would benefit personally and professionally by participating, but participation is the key. To get the full value of your membership, you have to get involved!

The October Meeting

The Red Barn in South Berwick was the venue for the October meeting. This rebuilt country club was quite impressive – an excellent place to hold a function.

South Berwick Trustee Warren Spencer welcomed us to town and then Superintendent John Leach presented an informative overview of the district. Local DWP Field Inspector and SRF Project Manager Eben Joslyn provided the Maine Drinking Water Program's regulatory update.

The business meeting included the report of the Nominating Committee. Committee Chair John Storer presented the membership with the nominations of Stephen Cox of Aqua Maine, Alan Hitchcock of the Caribou Utilities District and Kathy Moriarty of the Bangor Water District for Directors. There were no nominations from the floor.

Executive Director Jeff McNelly presented the 2011 budget of \$390,800, which had been approved by the Directors at their September Board meeting.

The technical program had a groundwater focus and it was very interesting.

Robert Marvinney, State Geologist and Director of the Maine Geological Survey, updated the membership on the activities of the Water Resources Planning Committee. The committee, which actually came into being as the result of efforts spearheaded by MWUA, the Maine Potato Board, the Maine Wild Blueberry Commission and the Maine Farm Bureau, is focusing on watersheds at risk analysis and detailed work in select watersheds. The committee also recently collaborated with Citizen Trade Policy Commission regarding international trade agreements as they relate to regulation of groundwater withdrawals.

The goal of the watershed work is a more definitive assessment of the impact of groundwater withdrawal for public water supply usage. The initial investigation is being conducted of the Harvey Brook and Merrill Brook watersheds in Freeport. A detailed three dimensional ground water model will be developed to assess water use and sustainability. The results are expected in early 2011.

The next watershed to be studied is Branch Brook in the Wells, Kennebunk area.

Marvinney discussed the recommendations of the examination conducted with the Citizen Trade Policy Commission.

There were seven recommendations; two of most interest to

the water supply profession being “the best defense against challenges under international trade agreements is regulations that are clear, reasonable, have a sound basis, and are applied equitably” and “it appears that changing the rule of groundwater ownership involves some risk of significant damages being awarded against the state and little benefit in terms of protecting state regulation from treaty challenges”.

Maine Drinking Water Program Compliance Officer Scott Whitney worked through a detailed presentation titled “Radionuclides in Drinking Water”. It covered the sources of radionuclides, regulations, standards, testing requirements, compliance, systems affected, health risk factors, health benefits and a host of other issues. It was most interesting and informative.

Lunch was very good, the weather was nice for the trip home and a few attendees took advantage of the opportunity to play golf.



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Drinking Water Week Supplement Wins New England Award

We recently received notice that the 2010 National Drinking Water Week newspaper supplement titled **What Does Your Water Utility Do For You?** placed second in the regularly schedule special section

category in the New England Newspaper Association annual convention.

The supplement competed with newspapers that have 60,000+ daily circulation, which includes the Boston Globe and Hartford and Providence newspapers.

Congratulations are in order for the Public Awareness Committee and all who contributed the articles. Appreciation is expressed to the advertisers, for without their support this would not have happened.



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Budget for 2011 Drinking Water Week Insert Advertisement

The Public Awareness Committee produced two statewide newspaper inserts. The first was in 2009, the second in 2010. These inserts coincided with the timing of Drinking Water Week to help get the word out to the public at large that tap water and fire protection are important issues. Drinking Water Week is May 1 through May 7, 2011.

The newspaper inserts are funded through the purchase of advertising space by member utilities and associate members. The cost of this ad space is listed below so you can plan your 2011 marketing budget more effectively. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to support the Association, trumpet your company's commitment to safe drinking water and reach out to about 800,000 people.

1/16 page (4")	\$380 Black and White	\$480 Color
1/8 page (8")	\$760 Black and White	\$860 Color
1/4 page (16.25")	\$1,544 Black and White	\$1,744 Color
1/2 page (32.50")	\$3,087 Black and White	\$3,387 Color
Full page (57.50)	\$5,463 Black and White	\$5,863 Color



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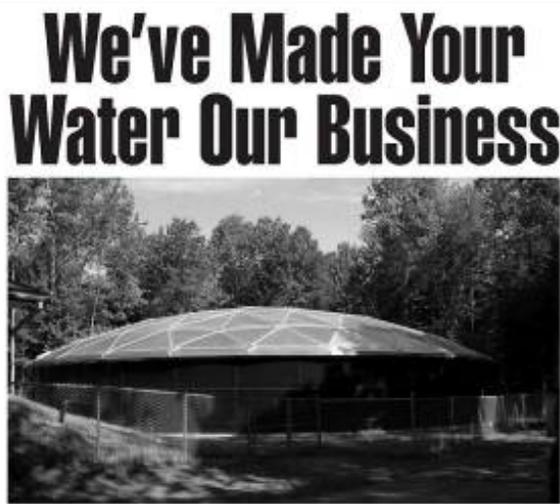
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Nominees Sought for Annual Recognition Awards

The association is seeking nominees for its annual awards of recognition, which are typically presented at the February meeting. The awards include the Excellence in Operations Award, the Jeff Nixon Distinguished Service Award, the Jim Doherty Excellence in Volunteerism Award, the President's Award and the Sid Anthony Award of Merit.

Rules and criteria governing the awards and application forms can be found on the association's website at www.mwua.org or can be obtained by contacting the MWUA office.



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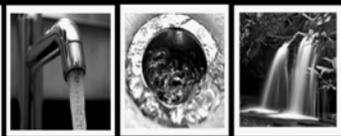
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The December Meeting

Financial management will be the order of the day for the December meeting, to be held in Belfast on the 2nd, which is the first Thursday of the month. During these challenging financial times, a number of scenarios

can present themselves to system managers. It is prudent to have at least a basic understanding of potential response plans that can be implemented in order to ensure the financial integrity of the operation.

Lucretia Smith and Stephani Morancie of the Maine PUC and Nikki Pellenz of TD Bank will team up to discuss when rates are needed, financial contingency planning and the various rate making processes available to systems.

Practical approaches will be the cornerstone of the day; attendees will have the opportunity to participate in the discussions and go home with a play book of potential solutions to financial problems.

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Product demos will be offered Wednesday afternoon, and the Program Committee is looking for volunteers. If your company has a product that they would like to demo at this afternoon session, please contact the MWUA office at (207) 623-9511. Selection of the product demos will be at the discretion of the Program Committee.

Watch for the 2011 brochure in your mailbox, and make sure you save the dates of **February 8th and 9th**.

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February Meeting and Trade Show

The Program Committee is putting the finishing touches on the upcoming February Meeting and Trade Show. Like last year's show, we have New England Water Works Association as a co-sponsor as well as Maine WasteWater Control Association.

Topics to be presented include "Choosing the Right Equipment for Your Plant", "A Day in the Life of an Operator", "Total Coliform Rule and Revised Total Coliform Rule" and "Ensuring Public Safety During Distribution System High Demand".

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Election Brings Many Implications to 125th Maine Legislature

The 2010 mid-term election changed Maine's legislative landscape 180 degrees, as voters elected Republican LePage Governor and also gave Republicans a majority in both the House and Senate. It is likely that all the Constitutional officers will change and at least most of the department commissioners will be new.

Both the Senate and House Chairs of the joint standing committees will be appointed by the majority party.

What does that mean for the water supply profession, from a legislative or regulatory standpoint? Some things are fairly certain; others probably less so.

There will be no bond referendum for the Drinking Water SRF match, which is needed for the 2011 construction season. With only \$700,000 remaining from the bond approved this past June, approximately \$2 million in match money is needed. There are discussions of securing the match with a revenue bond or even including it in the agency's budget. However, with a known deficit of approximately \$1 billion in the next biennial budget, that will not be an easy thing to do.

Governor elect LePage has made it clear that he

is no fan of regulatory creep. He has stated that he will review many of the regulations on the books and that no one should be surprised to see some of those rolled back.

On the Senate side, the Republicans have elected Kevin Raye as their President and Jonathon Courtney as Majority Leader. The association has worked with both Senators in the past, specifically the SRF match issue, and they understand the importance of the program.

Regardless of who sits in the seats, the water supply message changes little. Our obligation is to convey that message in a convincing and compelling fashion.

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HOST: Belfast Water District, Keith Pooler, Superintendent

LOCATION: University of Maine Hutchinson Center, 80 Belmont Ave. (Route 3), Belfast, ME 1-800-753-9044

DIRECTIONS: The Hutchinson Center is on Route 3, approximately 0.8 miles west of the intersection of Routes 1 & 3.

PROGRAM

- 8:00 AM - 8:30 AM **Registration, Continental Breakfast**
- 8:30 AM - 8:45 AM **Introduction/Welcome to Belfast**
Joe Slocum, City Manager
- 8:45 AM - 9:00 AM **Overview of Belfast Water District**
Keith Pooler, Superintendent, Belfast Water Department
- 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM **Regulatory Update**
Maine Drinking Water Program
- 9:15 AM - 9:45 AM **Business Meeting**
Annual Committee Reports
- 9:45 AM - 10:00 AM **Break**

TECHNICAL PROGRAM

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT DURING TRYING TIMES

- 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM **Determining When a Rate Change Is Needed**, *Lucretia Smith, Maine PUC*
- 11:00AM - 11:30 AM **Financial Contingency Planning**, *Stephani Morancie, Maine PUC; Nicki Pellenz, TD Bank*
3 - 5 financial scenarios will be presented (town will not pay for fire protection, school cannot pay, lose large user, etc.) with audience participation, followed by a slide show with solutions for each scenario
- 11:30 AM - 12:00 PM **The Rate Case Process**, *Stephani Morancie, Maine PUC*
A quick overview, including Section 6104 process, Section 6104-A (streamlined ratemaking), Section 307 (changes in schedules) and emergency rate cases
- 12:00PM **Lunch**

Kathy Moriarty
President

Mike Broadbent, Stephani Morancie & Nicki Pellenz
Program Coordinators

2.0 Training Contact Hours will be granted for this session.
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Registration for MWUA December 2, 2010 Membership Meeting

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