



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Human Resources/Labor Relations
Committee*

January 20, 2010

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Present

Anthony H. Griffin, Chair
Kathleen Boucher
Keith Stone

Senior Staff Present

George S. Hawkins, General Manager
Avis M. Russell, General Counsel
Barbara A. Grier, Assistant General
Manager

Union Presidents Present

Jonathan Shanks, AFGE 872
Shawn Henson, AFGE 2553
Michelle Hunter, NAGE
James Ivey, AFSCME 2091
Barbara Milton, AFGE 631

Mr. Griffin called the meeting to order at 10:58 a.m.

General Manager's Report

George S. Hawkins, General Manager, gave an overview of the proposed 2011 budget. He stated that the Authority has depleted funds on hand to limit the amount of increases seen by rate payers during past budget cycles. The Authority needs a significant rate increase in order to preserve the current levels of service and to complete several capital project improvements. Originally staff proposed a budget that included a 13% rate increase. This budget has been reviewed and now has a rate increase in the 13%-18% range. Mr. Hawkins indicated that he intends to present the Finance and Budget Committee with a third budget option next week.

Additionally, Mr. Hawkins reported that he met with the Unions on January 19, 2010 for his first Quarterly Labor-Management meeting. He indicated that the meeting was very positive and that his Chief of Staff, Christopher Carew, has been charged with being involved with labor relations matters.

Board Concerns about Personnel Costs

Anthony H. Griffin, Chair stated that the Board was concerned with increasing personnel costs and had charged him with raising the issue with the Unions. He noted that the jurisdictions involved with governing DCWASA were in a budget crunch and had taken measures to reduce personnel costs either by eliminating cost of living increases, implementing furloughs or reducing the workforce.

He made it clear that the Board was only interested in beginning a conversation with the Unions on ways to reduce personnel costs. He affirmed that the Board fully intends to abide by the collective bargaining agreement, if the Unions are not interested in having such discussions. Katherine Boucher, Committee member stated that Montgomery County, Prince George's County, as well as WSSC have not budgeted cost of living adjustments for their respective employees.

Finally, Mr. Griffin noted that the Unions' position regarding the current economic circumstances and the FY 2011 budget would have a bearing on the upcoming negotiations.

Union Presidents

James Ivey, President of AFSCME 2091 expressed concern regarding the Board's discussion of controlling personnel costs governed by the collective bargaining agreement without providing a "heads up" to the Unions. He felt that it was inappropriate for the Board to discuss union personnel costs in open session and stated that he believed the Board should have convened an Executive Session, if they needed to discuss the matter.

Mr. Griffin responded that the Board is limited as to what is an appropriate topic for discussion in Executive Session. He also stated that the Board had to discuss the matter before bringing it to the Unions and as such, the discussion in the open session was the only option.

Mr. Ivey concluded his comments by saying that his members would not accept a freeze on wage increases and that AFSCME expects the Authority to honor the collective bargaining agreement.

Finally, Mr. Ivey noted that the Unions had a very productive meeting with the General Manager and expected that issues would get resolved within the next month.

Mr. Hawkins clarified that he indicated that issues would either be resolved in the next month or that the Unions would be provided with a timetable with regard to when the issues would be resolved, noting that several of the issues may require more than a month for resolution. Mr. Ivey agreed with Mr. Hawkins' comment.

Barbara Milton, President, AFGE 631 indicated that her Union expects the Authority to honor the contract that is in place and implement the previously negotiated 4% increase for FY 2011. She indicated that she did not have any other issues to discuss with the Committee because she wanted to give the new General Manager an opportunity to resolve them.

Michelle Hunter, President, NAGE R3-06; Shawn Henson, President, AFGE 2553; and Jonathan Shanks, President of AFGE 872, stated that their respective Unions are in agreement with the positions taken by AFSCME 2091 and AFGE 631.

Mr. Griffin inquired about the status of the security review of Bryant Street. Mr. Hawkins indicated that the Office of Homeland Security had agreed to review the security of Blue Plains, Bryant Street and possibly O Street and that these reviews would begin next month. He indicated that the Union's had requested that the review begin with the Bryant Street location and that he would pass the request on to Homeland Security.

There being no further business, Mr. Griffin adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.