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Waterworks Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Electronic Meeting via WebEx

Thursday, June 18, 2026, 9:30 a.m.

Members Present: David Van Gelder (Chair), Water Operator; Geneva Hudgins, VA AWWA; Mitch Rieley, VA SERCAP; Tom Fauber, VA ABPA; W. Weedon Cloe, III, DEQ; Shane Wyatt, DCLS; Skip Harper, Virginia Plumbing and Mechanical Inspectors Association; Mark Estes, VRWA; Isabelle Stitt-Fredericks, VA Health Catalyst; Mark Titcomb, VWWA; Christopher Pomeroy, Virginia Municipal Drinking Water Association; Jesse L. Royall, Jr., Community Waterworks Owners; Michelle Caruthers, VWEA; Ivy Ozmon, HRPDC; Caleb Taylor, VML.

Members Absent: Ignatius Mutoti, VSPE; Andrea Wortzel, Mission H2O.

Stakeholders and Public: Online attendees included: Callie Guy, Christian & Barton, LLP; Sephanie Collins; G Shaw.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Staff: Bailey Davis, Grant Kronenberg, Aaron Moses, Jane Nunn, Katie Sallee, Jarrett Talley, Anthony Hess, Dan Horne, James Reynolds, Jeremy Hull, and Linda Botts.

Welcome and Establish Quorum

The Waterworks Advisory Committee (WAC) met with an in-person quorum on Thursday June 18, 2026, 9:30 a.m. WAC Chair David Van Gelder presided over the meeting.

Mr. Van Gelder called the meeting to order at approximately 9:31 a.m. The WAC members and VDH staff introduced themselves.

Grant Kronenberg introduced a new member of the WAC, Mitch Rieley with SERCAP. Mr. Rieley introduced himself.

Review and Adoption of Meeting Minutes of March 2026 Meeting

Grant Kronenberg briefly reviewed the meeting minutes from the WAC's March 2026 meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes as drafted, and the WAC unanimously approved the March 2026 meeting minutes. Ignatius Mutoti and Andrea Wortzel were absent from the meeting and therefore did not vote.

ODW Staffing and Budget

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Mr. Kronenberg provided an update on staffing and budget for the Office of Drinking Water (ODW). He stated that currently there are 28 vacancies.

He noted that we are currently advertising both Emergency Services positions as both are currently vacant. He stated that ODW leadership is hoping to fill one in the near term. He also noted that ODW has hired 14 new staff since the last meeting.

Mr. Kronenberg discussed ODW's vacancy rate and turnover. He stated that ODW's turnover rate is about 10%, below the agency's average turnover rate of 12.5%. He stated that ODW is moving forward on hiring 16 new positions that were funded last year. He also said that positions to note are the senior procurement officer, sampling verification program manager, policy analyst, and source water coordinator.

Mr. Kronenberg updated the WAC on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding and an upcoming funding cliff. He noted that House Appropriations advanced a bill that would fund DWSRF with 5.3 million for 2027.

He noted that 1.6 million of DWSRF funding goes to operations, which is down from 11 million. He noted that PWSS has additional funding for operations but is not enough to cover the decrease in total operating funds. He also said that so far there is no funding in President's budget, but that leadership expects some money to be included at some point. He stated that half of ODW's workforce is paid through federal grant funding leading to significant concern about strain on resources.

Jesse Royal asked what the exact expected drop in funding is, and the total operations budget. Mr. Kronenberg answered that 10 million is the expected decrease and that the operations budget is 17 million. Mr. Royal asked if by July 1, 2027, ODW will only have 7 million to operate on if nothing changes? Mr. Kronenberg stated that ODW has received additional state funding for construction projects and etc. He stated that the totals stated today are for ODW operations including staff and staff support and that funding to waterworks is separate.

Anthony Hess stated there is a delay and that 2026 grant will fund 2027 fiscal year. He stated they are expecting DWSRF will continue current funding through July 30, 2027, which is when we will experience the funding cliff. Mr. Kronenberg stated that we have some methods to extend funding for a short time.

Mr. Kronenberg also addressed state funding. He stated that budget negotiations are ongoing, which includes 50 million for infrastructure projects which is directed toward certain projects. 20 million will be for city of Richmond. This requirement includes work group that VDH participates in and that ODW will be heavily involved in discussion on how to use the monies.

Additional state funding for ODW operations totals 1.9 million, starting July 1, 2027. Grant mentioned that ODW has identified potential ways to close gap. This is general funding that ODW could use. One possibility is that ODW could transfer some positions that are federally funded positions to state general funds instead.

Lastly, he noted that amendments to waterworks operations fees are currently pending in secretary's office. He stated that the increase is \$100,000 funding which equals 2 full-time employees. He stated that currently only nine community water works benefit from the fee cap.

Lead and Copper Rule

Bailey Davis provided an update on the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) and the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI). Reviewed deadline of Nov 1st for baseline inventory, service line replacement plan, and school notifications.

Mr. Davis stated that before the deadline of November 1, 2027, waterworks should be identifying unknown service lines, gathering service line material information, and identifying connectors as lead, unknown, non-lead, and locations with no connectors.

He defined connections again under the LCRI as a short segment of piping not exceeding three feet that can be bent and is typically used for connections from the water main in the street to the service line. It is not considered part of the service line, so it does not make the service line lead or galvanized requiring replacement (GRR).

He also presented the Lead Service Line (LSL) replacement plan and noted that a template is available on the ODW website. He discussed requirements for testing drinking water for lead in schools and childcare facilities. He reviewed requirements and notification guidelines.

Michelle Caruthers noted that at a certain point every service line was reviewed and a spreadsheet created. She asked if waterworks would need to go back out and look at connectors. She noted that some waterworks would have to pay contractors to go look at service connectors. Mr. Davis said he will send this question to Bob to clarify.

Mr. Davis posed the question, what information is needed/missing and what training is needed and when?

Skip Harper suggested communications with local building departments when replacing lines from structure to the water meter. He suggested reaching out with city building officials to find out if permits are needed for replacement projects. He noted that some projects may entail replacing lead lines all the way to a house and stated USBC requires permits when changing water service which also may apply here. He wondered if city officials may waive permits if there's enough of them needing to be replaced.

Michelle Caruthers stated that all waterworks will need detailed training and examples of how it will impact what they do today and what they will need to do after November 1st. She requested detailed training be presented and suggested that Water Jam may be a good time. She also suggested reviewing case studies or hosting a round table discussion.

Mr. Davis encouraged people to go to website for new information.

Chris Pomeroy stated that he would ask the Municipal association and suggested that ODW could present at the August 4th VAMWA meeting.

He also discussed revisions to the requirements for the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) Rule. Beginning in 2027, waterworks serving 10,000 people or more must deliver two CCRs per year. Waterworks serving 50,000 or more people must post its current year's report on the internet and any waterworks posting their CCR on the internet must maintain its availability for at least three years. A new requirement is in translation and accessibility, and he emphasized that waterworks would need to plan for this requirement.

Mr. Davis posed the same questions for the WAC regarding LCRR – what information is needed and what training is needed.

Mr. Davis stated again that there is a lot of information on the website for review as well.

PFAS Update

Mr. Davis provided a PFAS update.

He gave an overview of the timeline of changes to the PFAS rule, starting with the initial challenge from the AWWA and AMWA in October of 2024 because prior to publication, there was no public comment period provided.

On September 11, 2025, EPA filed a motion to partially vacate the PFAS rule. This follows EPA's plan to vacate the maximum contaminant level (MCL) and the maximum contaminant level goal (MCLG) for PFHxS, PFNA, HFPO-DA (Gen-X) and the Hazard Index, so EPA would only regulate PFOS and PFOA.

Mr. Davis said that in May, EPA published its intention to rescind the regulations, however they are in place until then. ODW is following the current requirement until there is a final rule adopted.

In the meantime, there are interim control measures, and at least two actions from a list of six have been requested for exemption. Those requests go to the EPA initially. He noted that ODW will not have primacy by the time this extension is required. When primacy is converted to Virginia, they will be able to determine whether they individually allow for exemptions of this nature. He also stated that Virginia waterworks regulations adopted the exemptions when they were written.

He noted that the deadline will be on April 26, 2027. He reviewed requirements for waterworks and the implementation timeline following that deadline. He also reviewed requirements for waterworks following the results of initial monitoring.

Michelle Caruthers asked if it is the intent of Virginia, if primacy is granted, to grant exemptions as EPA recommends. Mr. Davis said that is the case, and that there may be some state level requirements.

Mr. Davis reviewed ODW's program for small water systems (serving less than 10,000 persons) to collect samples and do initial monitoring at no cost. There are 1,186 eligible waterworks for this program and so far 829 are enrolled. Currently 185 samples have been analyzed. 12 of those systems sampled above MCL and 38 sampled above trigger level. Mr. Davis displayed a map of samples that have been analyzed so far and noted that we are seeing more exceedances immediately to the West of I-95.

Michelle Caruthers asked about insight on why more exceedances are west of 95. Mr. Davis said there is still study being done, but so far the understanding is that geology associated with the area, for example karst geography and split rock aquifers, makes a different impact than the eastern shore, which pulls from deep water aquifers. He stated that industry and manufacturing in the area also makes an impact, for example, larger populations mean more opportunities for a PFAS infiltration.

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Mr. Davis also noted that ODW sends information to EPA on quarterly basis. EPA takes that information and annually reviews and prioritizes based on population and other factors. Mr. Caruthers also asked about non-point source evaluation. Mr. Davis stated that is being analyzed by DEQ and directed her there for more information on non-point sources.

Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Update

Mr. Kronenberg gave an update on ODW's cybersecurity tabletop exercise. The tabletop exercise was a point of interest in a survey distributed to waterworks.

ODW held two regional exercises. After the meetings, staff did outreach within Richmond and SEVFO field offices to gather information on how to improve the exercises. After the Richmond exercise, feedback stated that the focus should stay on cybersecurity. This was implemented during the SEVFO exercise and feedback was positive.

A third exercise was scheduled in southwest Virginia but was canceled due to low registration.

Jarrett Talley stated that a team had met with the Danville and Abingdon field offices directors and VDEM to plan future exercises. The understanding is that this exercise had low registration due to the distance from most waterworks. The team plans to split the trainings into two locations to make them more regionally accessible. One will be in Abingdon and one in Danville. They are thinking that the exercises will be planned for late September for Abingdon and early October for Danville.

Regulations Update

Jane Nunn gave an update on the Waterworks Regulations.

Ms. Nunn stated that ODW is in the process of submitting several packages to the Commissioner's office or the EPA for review, and that there have not been any changes since the last update. The primacy package is on hold until the court case is settled. An extension requested has been submitted for implementation of rule until May of 2028.

She also stated that LCRR/LCRI amendments have not yet been sent to the EPA for formal review but will be submitted by Monday. She noted that she hopes to be starting VDH's internal process and have primacy approved by EPA by October deadline.

Lastly, she noted that the CCR3 Primacy package was submitted to EPA in April and an extension request (per EPA's recommendation) was submitted in May.

She also outlined the work on Waterworks Regulations. She noted that the Office of the Commissioner (OCOM) has approved the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action, and it's been sent to Dept. of Planning and Budget for review, and after review, will be posted to Town Hall for public comment.

She also noted that the CCR3 Final Exempt regulatory package is currently at the Governor's Office for review. The LCRR/LCRI Final Exempt regulatory package will be submitted to OCOM following EPA's informal review; likely in early August 2026. And lastly, the PFAS Final Exempt regulatory package is on hold pending outcome of EPA's federal court case.

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Michelle Caruthers requested an update on what was included in NOIRA package.

Ms. Nunn stated that the NOIRA package had remote monitoring and temporary operator license waiver changes. It also included regulatory reduction per executive order 19, which included changes to a lot of design regulations. It also includes some stylistic changes to comply with VDH's style guide. Section 2 also changed wording for clarification, but changes were minimal to comply with the federal regulations.

Compliance and Enforcement Update

Mr. Kronenberg introduced Linda Botts, a new policy analyst on the team. She started in late April and will be assisting with developing new internal policies and improving existing guidance documents.

Grant Kronenberg then gave an update on the issuance of reporting violations. He noted that 12 systems are currently considered to be serious violators by the EPA due to their ETT score. He noted that the ETT score lags, and at this point three of the systems are back in compliance, and a few are no longer connected. Also, five systems have reduced the number of violations, and one consent order has been sent.

Mr. Kronenberg stated that 25 warning letters were issued in February as part of the most recent quarterly batch, which is increased from the prior quarter. ODW entered into three consent orders with waterworks owners since the last meeting. He noted that the main driver in this recent quarter is that the end of the year included annual monitoring periods for Nitrate/Nitrite as well as triennial and six-year monitoring requirements that required violations.

Open Discussion

Michelle Caruthers began the discussion by requesting more information on operator classification. She noted that there were two regulations from July of 2024 regarding remote monitoring and proposed operator classifications, which were meant to solve the difficulty of hiring Class 1 operators. She asked how many waivers VDH is giving and how long is it taking waterworks to get operators hired.

Mr. Kronenberg stated that ODW has received two to three potential licensed operator waiver candidates, but that they applied outside of the timeframe to qualify per the statute. Therefore ODW has not granted any licensed operator waivers so far. He also noted that ODW has received one remote monitoring plan which is currently under consideration. He stated that he had expected to see more when statute went into place.

David Van Gelder asked for more information on the progress of 2-hour reporting initiative.

Mr. Kronenberg answered that he will bring an update on data from two hour reports to next meeting. He noted that at the last meeting they had discussed over-reporting of events due to safety, and stated that it has decreased as ODW sent out more messaging with better definitions of what needs to be reported. He stated that the director of ODW, Dwayne Roadcap, fields two hour reports and notifies field offices, and that last week had several reports over a 2 day span, and no violations have been issued for failure to report.

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Mr. Van Gelder asked if the initiative has made a positive impact, and Mr. Kronenberg confirmed that it has.

Chris Pomeroy asked if ODW has any formal or informal guidance on supporting small waterworks in volunteering to acquire a system for purposes of improving services locally.

Jarrett Talley answered that ODW has an equitable access to drinking water fund of \$200,000 per project. The fund is meant to be a stopgap for O&M funding for when a receiving utility is taking on waterworks. He noted that the fund can be spent on operations cost, operating time, compliance sampling, utility bills, emergency line breaks, and deferred maintenance. He stated that it CAN OR CANT Pay for installation of new meters.

Anthony Hess also noted that ODW has a fund for small engineering project which can grant \$100,000 for each engineering firm per year to help small utilities. Planning and design grants are \$40,000 and each PWSID can apply three times per year to be funded twice.

Mr. Kronenberg stated that ODW does not have anything in the enforcement manual addressing how to handle situations with new owner, but that the policy on equitable access to drinking water is on townhall. He noted that, to comply with compliance enforcement, if violations are ongoing they will still need to be addressed by new owner. He noted that ODW would understand that the new owner has taken over system in need of work, and would approach their continued work on it with understanding that it will take some time to repair. He also noted that the new owner is not responsible for old violations unless it is endemic to the waterworks itself, such as reliability issues and dilapidated infrastructure. He stated that they could meet to discuss and create a corrective action plan, and possibly provide that equitable access funding.

Ivy Ozman requested information on natural occurring fluoride levels that exceed MCL. She noted that she had received copies of letters for private systems regarding fluoride exceedances, and asked if there are any collaborative projects with ODW to address those exceedances.

Mr. Kronenberg stated that staff will discuss internally developing some guidance. He noted that there are several waterworks in SEVFO who are under consent orders because they have intractable fluoride. He noted that treatment options are generally too expensive and sometimes there is not another available source. He confirmed the only requirement is to continue giving public notice.

Public Comment

None.

Other Business

Mr. Kronenberg stated that the next WAC meeting still needs to be scheduled and that Katie Sallee will reach out to members with a poll. He also noted that the meeting will be held in-person at a Henrico County library location.

Mr. Van Gelder adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:34.