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 a virtual quorum over Webex 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

Mr. Kronenberg provided an update on staffing and budget for the Office of Drinking Water (ODW). He stated that currently there are 24 vacancies.

He noted that ODW is 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 WAC meeting.

Mr. Kronenberg discussed ODW's vacancy and turnover rates. He stated that ODW's annual turnover rate is about 10%. He stated that ODW is moving forward on hiring 16 new positions that were funded last year. He also said that positions of note that have been hired in the central

office are a 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 ODW would be left with about $1.6 million for operations from this amount, when ODW has been using about $11 million from the Fiscal Year 2026 BIL General Supplemental fund for operations. He noted that federal PWSS funding has additional funding for operations, but it is not enough to cover the decrease in total operating funds. He also said that the President's budget has no funding for PWSS, but ODW expects to receive some PWSS funding. He stated that about half of ODW's workforce is paid through federal grant funding leading to significant concern about strain on resources.

Jesse Royall 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 about $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. He stated that the totals stated today are for ODW operations including staff and staff support and that funding to waterworks is separate. Mr. Kronenberg reiterated this is based on an estimate of federal funding that will be received.

Anthony Hess stated there is a delay and that 2026 grant will fund Fiscal Year 2027. He stated ODW is expecting DWSRF will continue current funding through July 30, 2027, which is when ODW 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 a work group that VDH participates in and that ODW will be heavily involved in discussing how to use the funding.

Mr. Kronenberg stated that additional state funding in the budget proposal for ODW operations totals $1.9 million, starting July 1, 2027. He mentioned that ODW has identified potential ways to close the funding gap. 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 amendments would result in $142,000 in additional funding, which is less than two full-time employees. He stated that currently only nine community waterworks 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). He reviewed the deadline for the 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 Edelman 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 the 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 the Uniform Statewide Building Code 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 to do this. She also suggested reviewing case studies or hosting a round table discussion.

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

Chris Pomeroy stated that he would ask the Virginia Municipal Drinking Water Association and suggested that ODW could present at its August 4th meeting.

Mr. Davis 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 ODWs program for small water systems (serving less than 10,000 people) 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. Twelve of those systems sampled above the 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 the 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.

Mr. Davis 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. Ms. Caruthers 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 ODW's Richmond and Southeast Virginia field offices to gather information on how to improve the exercises. After the Richmond exercise, feedback stated that the focus should stay on cybersecurity longer. This was implemented during the Southeast Virginia Field Office exercise and feedback was positive.

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

Jarrett Talley stated a meeting was held with the Danville and Abingdon field offices directors and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to plan future exercises. The understanding is the planned exercise had low registration due to the distance from most waterworks. The team plans to split the training 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 PFAS primacy package is on hold until the court case is settled. An extension request has been submitted for implementation of the PFAS 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 start VDH's internal process and have primacy approved by EPA by the 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 the Department 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.

Michelle Caruthers requested an update on what was included in the 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. Part 2 of the

regulations also changed wording for clarification, but changes were minimal to remain compliant with the federal regulations.

Compliance and Enforcement Update

Grant Kronenberg introduced Linda Botts, a new policy analyst with the Division of Compliance, Enforcement and Policy. She started in late April and will be assisting with developing new internal policies and improving existing guidance documents.

Mr. 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 the real-time violations, and at this point three of the systems are back in compliance, under an order, or no longer qualify as a waterworks. Five systems have substantially reduced their number of violations. One system recently received a consent order.

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 WAC meeting. He noted that the main driver in this recent quarter is that the end of the year included the end of 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 the 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 the next WAC meeting. He noted that at the last meeting they had discussed over-reporting of events by waterworks and that has decreased as ODW sent out more messaging with better explanations 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 two-day span. Mr. Kronenberg stated that ODW has not issued any violations for failure to report.

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 operations and maintenance funding for when

a receiving utility is taking on a 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 pay for labor costs for installation of new meters.

Mr. Talley also noted that ODW has the Small Projects Engineering Services (SPES) grants. Small Project Engineering Services (SPES) are grants to small (population less than 10,000) community and nonprofit nontransient noncommunity waterworks. ODW has $200,000 per year, split between two procured engineering firms. ODW handles the SPES on a task order basis, and caps each task order around $20,000. Ultimately, that breaks down to about 10 individual projects per year funded through SPES.

Anthony Hess noted that ODW also has Planning and Design grants which max out at $45,000 per project. Typical projects include preliminary engineering reports, plans and specifications, and hydraulic models. Each eligible PWSID can apply up to three times per year to be funded up to twice. ODW typically awards 8 planning grants per year.

Mr. Kronenberg stated that ODW does not have anything in the enforcement manual addressing how to handle situations with a new owner, but that the policy on equitable access to drinking water is on Town Hall. He noted that, to comply with compliance enforcement, if violations are ongoing they will still need to be addressed by the 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 address the issues. 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 the 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.