

The Catawba-Wateree River Basin Advisory Commission (CWRBAC)

Meeting Notes - July 25, 2014

Commission Members Present: Senator David Curtis, P. Gary Faulkenberry, Barry Gullet, Rick Lee, Jeff Lineberger, Tim Mead

1. Call Meeting to Order

- The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mead.

2. Approval of Minutes

- The minutes from the March meeting were approved pending a few text revisions submitted to Melanie Williams by Jeff Lineberger.

3. Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group Master Plan - Barry Gullet

- Mr. Gullet provided background on how the Master Plan was developed. The focus of the plan was on managing water supply of the Catawba-Wateree system. The intent was to work from the framework set up during the Duke Relicensing Agreement process.
- Kevin Mosteller from HDR was introduced and gave the presentation.
- Barry explained that they are working with the Management Group members to get the municipalities in the river basin to approve and adopt the plan. The City of Charlotte is in the process of approving and adopting the plan now.
- Kevin Mosteller began the Master Plan [presentation which can be found here](#) or on the [Commission's website](#).
 - The group is working to get approval from local elected officials to approve the recommendations listed in the document.
 - Mr. Mosteller played a video with some of the information from the Executive Summary and focused on the need for developing a Master Plan
- Questions from Commissioners after the presentation:
 - What is the point at which we reach a no-water level? Who establishes safe yield?
 - Mr. Gullet showed graphic from the previous presentation (slide 12) explaining that levels need to be about 10 feet above water intake pipes. We need to be able to reliably depend on being able to withdrawal a certain amount before reaching that point. This will require keeping lake levels higher, not lower. Mr. Gullet then switched to slide 15 to reiterate the different factors that need to be considered to ensure all withdrawals are accounted for. He explained that the Plan focuses on how to ensure we have sufficient water longer; past 2050.
 - Are there any negative consequences of lowering the intake?
 - No negative consequences but facilities will need to rebuild intakes for routine maintenance, so that can be done then. It was explained that it didn't need to be done tomorrow but over the next 40 to 50 years. The highest intake is the concern.
 - Why were the intakes built so high in the first place?
 - No one knew about these projections when the intakes were being built. Many facilities placed their intakes at levels based off of where Duke placed theirs thinking that Duke wouldn't let it go below that point.

- Those in the lower basin are worried about changes in release flows because they are flood prone areas. Was this taken into consideration?
 - More research will need to be done as issues that are predicted actually happen. This document is just a heads up on how to prepare and to begin the discussion on what to do when some of these issues start to happen.
- A Commission member stated that we are trying to prevent history from repeating itself. Charlotte ran out of water back 100 years ago. Irwin Creek was the supply source. They hauled water from Gastonia. Not wanting the region to run into this risk again, we need to prepare for the next major drought. This plan is about finding what our limits are and how do we move that date out further.

4. Open Discussion - Comments and concerns about the Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group Master Plan - Sam Perkins

- Mr. Perkins opened commending the development of a Water Supply Master Plan and recognized that this is a much needed process to prepare for the future.
- Mr. Perkins then began his presentation reviewing concerns that the Catawba RiverKeeper group has with the Master Plan and reviewed recommendations the group has for the Plan. This [presentation can be found here](#) or on the [Commission's website](#).
- Questions from Commissioners after the presentation:
 - Are users of the model able to change scenarios and if so was the model run with a cap on percent of growth?
 - No, scenarios were run for evaluating levels at a lower growth rate and a scenario for a higher growth rate.
 - What were the growth rates that were used?
 - Looked at all available supply plans and what growth rate those plans used. The annual growth rate that was used for this model was 1.37% aggregated.
 - York County has always missed their anticipated growth projections. The County would like to see consideration given to discouraging growth to prolong the safe yield. Is this currently or will it be a consideration in the future?
 - The tool has the ability to run low growth scenarios and has done so with those results listed in the Master Plan document. The tool can be rerun to adjust for actual population growth as time passes.
 - It was noted that Industry fell under the Public Water Supply category.
 - A Commission member wanted to verify that there was an additional 6 inches of reserved capacity in the reservoirs.
 - Yes; for lakes James, Norman, and Wylie
 - Does the Master Plan account for sediment buildup behind the dams?
 - Yes, further study is being done and it is included it in the model. The purpose of the study is to justify what is being used in the model.
 - What are the options for dredging?
 - Dredging cost is up to individual land owners.
 - Duke is looking at extending the boat launching ramps and renovating some of the other public recreational areas.

- The plan will give the individual land owners better guidance on this topic.
- Are there any reservoirs that have the capability to build more storage or to extend the lake?
 - No
- What is the net water use difference between water used for irrigation on an agricultural property versus water use on that same size of developed property?
 - No available information.
- Jeff Lineberger noted that they would like to develop programs to encourage customers to use less energy to reduce water use from power producing facilities. They would help the power consumer use the product better and evolve their user base to become more water efficient.
- What actions/recommendations from the Plan are the Management Group contemplating moving forward with over the next 5 years? There are items out of the Commissions' or Management Groups' control, and one that is in our control is lowering intakes. A 6 inch pool increase has a 50/50 chance of happening. When showing the Master Plan to the public, it should explain what they can do if the worst case scenario happens.
 - Short-term some things are already being implemented. The Plan calls for water use efficiency gains. Members know about this and are doing things now to implement. Building code changes are helping. The Plan doesn't explain how all actions/recommendations need to be implemented but gives the member's tools to reduce water usage.
 - Duke will need to peruse the recommendations that are laid out.
 - The Management Group will be working to answering:
 - How to implement all LIP recommendations;
 - What is the feasibility and scheduling over the next 5 years;
 - And, when will it get done and how?
- Flooding: high inflow protocol should be considered for public safety. The model needs to show the likelihood of flooding.
 - The current model can tell you the frequency of flooding and it can provide some information about flooding. But, it shouldn't be used for all flood scenarios.
 - A scenario that needs to be evaluated is effects on property if Mountain Island, Norman and Lake Wylie were to be raised 6 inches
- If current interbasin transfers were to be removed from all scenarios, how would this change proposed management strategies?
 - Curtailing IBTs is not a real scenario. It means that half the northern part of Charlotte would no longer have water. Current commitments allow for those IBTs.
 - But looking at all water leaving the basin, enables people to have all the information they need for making future decisions.
 - Concord and Kannapolis are not currently buying any water and go straight to the Yadkin basin before looking towards the Catawba basin.
 - There was strong sentiment that it would be a good idea to split out the IBTs so that one could see the actual percent of water that could be used.

5. Adjourn

- Chairman Mead asked Commission members to fill in their current contact information sheets as requested by Commission facilitators.
- Chairman Mead adjourned the meeting at 11:48am.