

## Loudoun County Government Reform Commission

### **Memo**

To: File

From: Bob Gordon and Tanya Matthews, Commissioners

Date: Mar. 28, 2012

On March 28, 2012, a meeting transpired at the Loudoun Commercial Title on Wirt Street in Leesburg. The purpose was to discuss the operations of Loudoun Water. This is one of the structural items that the Government Reform Commission is analyzing for potential reform.

The attendees at this meeting included the following people:

Dale Hammes (Loudoun Water)  
Bob Gordon (Commissioner)  
Tanya Matthews (Commissioner)  
Kate Gordon (Kate works with Bob)

### Items of Discussion:

1. The e-mail addresses of the Board members of Loudoun Water (LW) and staff members are on the LW website.
2. There are public input sessions before rates are set.
3. Water bills are high for those who irrigate, especially in Belmont Green and Lenah Farm.
4. There are/have been law suits with people who live in Raspberry Falls. They are claiming poor water quality, illness and injury, and property damage, claiming water caused properties to have little or no value. 52% of Raspberry Falls residents were plaintiffs. Since the Board of Supervisors has named a task force to deal with these issues, the Government Reform Commission will not take these legal issues on.
5. One well at Raspberry Falls went GUDI (ground water under the direct influence of surface water).
6. The EPA said the water quality is fine.
7. LW operates 30 small systems and six developer systems.
8. Rates are subsidized in Waterford, Aldie and St. Louis.
9. Wastewater is more expensive than water supply.
10. LW will only manage 15 homes per system.
11. LW wants a flow of one gallon per minute (GPM). The state regulation is .5 GPM.
12. Two options for Raspberry Falls are a pipeline or membrane filter technology. One mile of pipeline would be needed if a pipeline solution is finalized, but pipelines need to be loops.

13. The Virginia Department of Health regulates LW. In 2006, there were e-coli hits on wells. E-coli comes from warm blooded mammals' fecal matter. VDH has declared that all is well with water quality.
14. LW could be more transparent with their financial statements and rate creation.
15. LW is always trying to understand how to prevent future situations such as Raspberry Falls. They are also always trying to understand ways to keep rates down too.
16. HOA documents need to be crystal clear when they explain that there are communal water supply systems. At Raspberry Falls, each resident signed an acknowledgement of this. This is an issue of individual accountability and personal responsibility.
17. Rate studies needs to be transparent.
18. Governance may be an issue. No sitting member of the Board of Supervisors can be on the LW Board.
19. The Board Chairman receives \$6,000 per year and Board members receive \$4,500 per year.
20. LW has 208 staff members, of whom 80 are in the office.
21. LW answers to the requirements in the Water Authority Act; they do not answer to the Board of Supervisors and they are not political. Their revenues come from rates, not from allocations from the general fund.
22. LW has a great display in their lobby and school children visit often.
23. The quality of LW's service is very high.

These minutes reflect the understanding of the author. If there are edits to these minutes, please submit them to Tanya Matthews at [tanya.matthews@loudoun.gov](mailto:tanya.matthews@loudoun.gov) within 48 hours, or they shall stand as an accurate representation of the proceedings of the meeting.