

**Written Public Comments**  
April 30, 2014 Public Hearing  
Lake View Reservoir Reconstruction Project

**From:** Jim Powell, Lake View Reservoir CAP member  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 30, 2014  
**To:** Water Board  
**Subject:** Testimony for Lake View Reservoir Public Hearing [Agenda Item 1]

#### CAP PROCESS

After a large number of people attended the first public meeting, only four attended the next. Several of the people who attended that first meeting said they would like to join the CAP but did not feel they could handle the egos of some of the people who were likely to join also. This illustrates the need for competent facilitation for such a public process. While the project engineer, Dennis Cawley clearly could run meetings, he did not have any expertise in actual facilitation. I know the Water Utility employs two public relations people who, if they have the skills to do so, could have improved the CAP process through better facilitation. This would have helped people at the initial meeting feel that they could participate in a more civil process.

Another person attended later CAP meeting, so there were five total.

One of these people was a County Parks employee who works in Lake View Hill Park. Mr. Cawley was made aware of this person's conflict of interest, but did not address it. Another person serves on the Water Utility Technical Advisory Committee; I assume Mr. Cawley knew this person was on the TAC.

With two of the five CAP members serving clearly-defined special interests, the "citizen" part of the citizen advisory panel process is called into question.

Mr. Cawley initially was responsive to questions, but after the first meeting chose to not answer a number of questions. At the first meeting, when asked if the fire marshal could address the CAP about the need for such huge reservoir capacity on Lake View Hill, Mr.

Cawley said "yes." At a later meeting, when questioned as to when that would occur, Mr. Cawley said that the fire marshal had told him personally the reasons why the capacity was needed and he relayed them. Since the questions were more complex than a simple/yes no and largely unanswered (such as, "Has the City been in danger all these years with only 55,000 gallons sitting on top of Lake View Hill?"), Mr. Cawley was asked again to invite the fire marshal. He never did.

#### RESERVOIR DESIGN

The hired consultants were professional and responsive to questions during the process, and appeared to be diligent in pursuing suggestions, concerns and questions throughout.

While the consultants responded to innovative design ideas from the CAP, in the end, they went with a pretty straight forward silo design with some exterior embellishments. It seemed pretty obvious to me that this was going to be the case. So while the consultant's efforts are appreciated, it looks to me as if this was rote exercise designed by Mr. Cawley to make the CAP feel like it in a fully participatory process, when in reality the CAP pretty much just gets to weigh in on color.

#### RATEPAYER COSTS

CAP members were given conflicting answers as to how much the reservoir should or could cost. When discussing possible public are for the design, Mr. Cawley said the PSC would never go for a utility paying for it. Later, when it became apparent the two-reservoir reservoir was actually very unusual, and therefore would cost considerably more, Mr. Cawley said the PSC would most likely authorize it. In the

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end, it was unclear as to how the PSC determined justifiable costs and thus unclear as to what the CAP, let alone the Utility, should be considering.

The two final design options for a steel or concrete reservoir also will have a major price difference, and Mr. Cawley said he was not going to make recommendation.

With the Water Utility proposing double digit rate increases, it seems like the Utility stance is, “we need to replace infrastructure, we’ll pay whatever it takes.” I hope the Water Utility Board instead is mindful of how early process decisions—such as placing 7000,000 gallons of water for the entire eastside in a well to serve smaller portion of the city—may not prove to be cost-effective but rather cost prohibitive. But without any alternatives to study, we’ll never know.

Jon Becker  
4/30/2014

### **MWU CAP process: some suggested enhancements**

- 1) Ask citizens when they can meet (e.g., Doodle the meetings), rather than telling them when meetings will be held and expecting them to show up.
- 2) Treat all citizen participants equally, including what information is shared, and when.
- 3) Distribute materials for review by citizens well before each meeting, preferably including one weekend in the review period.
- 4) Provide minutes for review within 72 hours, and make changes requested by citizens before posting to webpage.
- 5) Provide written response to questions or issues raised by citizen participants.
- 6) Notify all citizen participants when new information is posted to the project webpage.

### **What is expected of MWU Board?**

If net savings are possible from use of materials that eliminate or reduce water tower life-cycle costs, e.g., for exterior painting, then:

- 1) Request that the PSC authorize reallocation of these funds toward eco-cultural amenities requested by Northsiders for an Eco-Cultural Water Tower (NEWT);

Or, if refused by PSC, because of statutory requirements:

- 2) Request that the City of Madison use any savings to allocate equivalent FY14 or FY15 funds for eco-cultural amenities requested by NEWT.