

**CBUD Wastewater Treatment Plant Labor-Management Committee (LMC)  
Annual Report to the Utilities Service Board**

The LMC last reported to the Utilities Service Board on November 9, 2010. This report highlights important LMC activities and accomplishments from November 2010 through January 2012. Since the last report, the LMC has met regularly, once each month.

**Passing of Ted Flynn**

The past year was marked by the passing of Ted Flynn, the long-time superintendent of the Blucher Poole Plant, and a 43-year employee of the City of Bloomington. Flynn was an influential figure in the department, and developed some of the processes still in use at Blucher Poole today, such as the plant's composting system. A small plaque now hangs in his honor in the plant's lobby.

Staffs at both treatment plants have done an outstanding job working together in Flynn's absence. Their efforts demonstrate their skills and experience, as well as the pride they have in operating the City's facilities.

**LMC-Sponsored Training/Safety Events**

Since the last report in November 2010, the LMC has sponsored 10 training/safety events.

In January 2011, Brian Wilson presented on slips, trips, and falls. The following month, Doug Steury delivered a session on laboratory issues. In April, Jones Chemical came to town to present on chlorine and sodium bisulfite. In May, Brian Wilson presented on mower safety; in June, he delivered a session on confined space. The Bloomington Fire Department met with employees in July for fire extinguisher training. Brian Wilson returned in August for a training session on Material Safety Data Sheets. In September, Barb Smith conducted an event on solids handling, wasting, and digester standards. To close out 2011, Brian Wilson returned to present on electrical safety in October.

In December 2011, the Training/Safety Subcommittee met and drafted a tentative event schedule for the first half of 2012. The 2012 sessions began with Brian Wilson's January presentation on slips, trips, and falls, and winter driving safety, and will continue in February with a presentation by Brenntag on chemical usage.

Employee attendance at the safety training sessions has ranged from 8 in January 2012 to 17 in April 2011, with most sessions having 14-15 employees in attendance.

## **Annual Retreat**

The LMC held its annual retreat on June 22, 2011 at Twin Lakes Lodge. In traditional fashion, CBUD Director Patrick Murphy opened the meeting and thanked the LMC for its dedication and work over the previous year, particularly in light of budget constraints. Murphy emphasized his support for the LMC's focus on training, and for finding new ways to enhance employee safety and job skills at the plant level.

Balliet introduced Dave Nosko from the Community Justice and Mediation Center (CJAM), who led the LMC in a training session on dealing with problems of interpersonal conflict and communications issues in the plants. The session included a participatory exercise and a discussion of verbal and non-verbal barriers that can affect communication and problem-solving processes. As an example, the session helped employees recognize that differences in personal opinions and value systems can drive a person's response to a conflict or other issue.

As part of their monthly business meeting, LMC members reviewed and signed updated Committee by-laws. The new by-laws are posted at each plant.

## **LMC 10-Year Anniversary**

2011 marked the LMC's 10-year anniversary, making the Committee one of, if not the longest-running LMCs in the State of Indiana. The City distributed a press release commemorating the event, and Mayor Kruzan signed a congratulatory Encomium, which now hangs in the lobby of each plant. The Committee itself sponsored a celebration in Winslow Park in September, complete with a barbeque dinner and a local bluegrass band.

## **IWEA Conference**

In mid-November 2011, the LMC sent nine plant operators to the Indiana Water Environment Association (IWEA) annual conference in Indianapolis.

## **Organizational Training**

After the annual retreat in June 2011, the LMC decided to invite Dave Nosko to a monthly meeting for follow-up training. At the meeting, the Committee asked Nosko to conduct interviews of all plant employees and LMC members in an attempt to identify organizational challenges in each plant. By bringing such issues and challenges to light, the Committee can take steps to improve upon existing systems and develop new strategies for dealing with conflicts and other issues. Nosko began his interviews in December 2011 and expects to finish within the next few months.

### **Employee-Initiated Belt Press Training**

In November 2010, employees at Blucher Poole initiated an employee-taught belt press training session for all operators.

### **IRWA Math Training Sessions**

In October, seven WWTP employees went to a "plant math" training session put on by the Indiana Rural Water Association at Twin Lakes. The employees reported it was a well attended and worthwhile event.

### **Quarterly Meetings with Engineering**

Since the last report, the LMC has held two meetings with Mike Hicks and Mike Bengston from Engineering. Discussion has centered on operational and maintenance issues, such as filter upgrades at Dillman, repair of the Hoffman blower at Blucher Poole, investigation of an effluent line leak at Blucher, and replacement of Blucher telescoping valves.

### **New LMC Member**

In February 2012, Jason Cox replaced Sharon Taylor on the Committee as a labor representative from Blucher Poole. The LMC thanks Sharon for her service, and welcomes Jason for another term on the LMC.

### **Intern**

SPEA Service Corps Intern Chuck Mason has continued his work with the LMC, and will be serving in that capacity until May of this year.



Steve Drake,  
LMC Executive Council



Tony Walden  
LMC Executive Council