

Minutes

Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting Date: July 11, 2023

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

- Chair, Scott Anderson
- John Dustman
- Robert Ellis
- Dale Folen

- Elizabeth Kaufenberg
- Kim Larsen
- Matt Saam
- Jim Stark

- Jim Westerman
- Ray Wuolo
- = present

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Anderson called the regular meeting of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee to order at 12:09 p.m.

Agenda Approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. Approved by consensus.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Wuolo, seconded by Folen to approve the minutes of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee of April 11, 2023. Motion carried.

Information Items and Committee Work

1. Committee Administration (Greg Johnson 651-602-1016)

Johnson introduced new staff member Jen Kader to the committee who then shared her background and new role with the Met Council related to the work of the TAC. Johnson summarized the status of the MAWSAC and TAC appointment processes to fill vacancies on both committees. Ross summarized how input from TAC is shared and connected with the broader work of the Metropolitan Council. Johnson summarized the May 9th MAWSAC meeting and key questions raised for further consideration. These included how the water supply needs of the region are being modeled and what role MAWSAC should take in generating support at the subregional level, specifically in rural areas.

2. Proposed Approach to 2050 Water Demand Projections (Greg Johnson 651-602-1016)

Johnson's presentation summarized the purpose of the water demand projections and how they are utilized in the region. He detailed typical water demand methods that have been used in the past and the advantages and disadvantages of each. He explained the proposed method for the update to the Metro Area Water Supply Plan, which incorporates scenarios and a variable range as follows: (projected water use) = (projected population by land use planning scenario) x (per capita water use) with a variable range (+/-).

The committee asked for clarification on the land use planning scenarios and projected population. Dan Marckel explained the approach of the scenarios and Johnson provided

clarification of the variable range for drought and wet years.

The TAC provided feedback on the proposed approach and there was no consensus. Discussion centered around whether the proposed approach provided increased ease and clarity over the existing approach. Anderson asked for clarification on the goal for using this approach vs. the more straightforward calculation used in the past. He noted that he's unsure of the utility of having three numbers that incorporate different land use variables in the equation vs. having a single number and knowing that there is a range of uncertainty higher and lower from that number. Ross provided historical context regarding MAWSAC's discussions on how to incorporate uncertainty from the 2015 Master Water Supply Plan update process and noted that feedback at that time indicated that a range can be helpful.

Wuolo asked how the calculation will be used and Ross provided several examples. Wuolo noted that there could be a lot of confusion on what the numbers mean and how they should be used if not presented and explained thoroughly and correctly.

Anderson noted that water supply planning is part science and part art due to the inherent uncertainties. He is debating the benefit of using straight numbers and then applying the art of planning versus trying to incorporate the art right into the proposed calculation by using the land use scenarios and variable range. Sventek suggested running both methods of projecting water demand for TAC member's communities and comparing results as a next step. Folen asked for clarification on whether the proposed approach is based on open space and Dan Marckel noted that the model also incorporates redevelopment.

Johnson asked if the previous five or 10 years of water production data should be used. The consensus was that 10 years captured some of the variability but the context of the years being used remains important.

Johnson presented the preliminary development scenarios for the White Bear Lake area and some other upcoming water demand analysis and summarized the next steps.

3. ES Policy Research Project (Jen Kostrzewski 651-602-1078)

Kostrzewski recapped the goals and approach of the ES policy research project and noted that the WRPP is both the MC policy plan and the region's policy plan. She then provided an overview of the *Water Reuse* paper including the primary drivers and focus for both stormwater reuse and wastewater reuse. Recommendation areas include:

- guidance/regulatory structure development,
- internal application at MC facilities, and
- partnerships, grants, and other resources promoting regional application.

Key discussion points included:

- Maintenance and staff training issues and perceptions
- Financially feasible – only appears feasible under very specific circumstances. Some developers are motivated to incorporate reuse to attain LEED or similar certifications and grants would augment this.
- It will take a large entity like Met Council to make the regulatory and legislative changes needed to facilitate reuse.
- Matching the location of the wastewater treatment facilities with the reuse needs.
- Whether there is a need in the region to reuse water at all or, since irrigation is the major driver of demand, if energy would be better used in decreasing demand.
- Chloride is a big issue, especially in early spring, so must be considered for stormwater reuse.
- Lack of long-term operations and maintenance guidance



- Use or lack of use for the systems in place when there is an option to use potable water instead.
- The rigor needed to operate the system safely and effectively has been much more than anticipated.
- The need for stronger, more definitive recommendations

Sventek noted that these experiences need to be shared with the state task force and that direction, context, framework, and guidance for communities as they look to grow into this area would be needed.

Kostrzewski provided an overview of the *Water Availability, Access, and Use* paper including the primary drivers, focus and crucial concerns. She noted this paper takes a holistic approach. Recommendation areas included:

- Integrated planning to support sustainable waters.
- Research, data collection and assessments to gain a greater understanding of water availability, uses, and users.
- Technology, behavior, and training to identify and improve regional water management, supply, and treatment.
- Water conservation and reuse are tools to help reduce and augment our water demand.
- Funding, partnerships, and support to build regional water equity, stewardship, and sustainability.

Key discussion points included:

- Exploring areas to be refined or limited to help focus the paper more clearly, including tightening up the definition of ‘sustainability’. Westerman offered to submit ideas on areas that could be limited.
- Past harms vs. future harms
- The differences between aquifer recharge (AR) vs. aquifer storage and recovery (ASR). Geology is critical in (Netherlands example) and it is very expensive. Folen noted that developing injection maps is a very bad idea.
- Clarification on whether water availability meant drinking water availability or global water availability. There is a bias in the paper towards groundwater and it should be more balanced between surface water and groundwater. The table should include the cost between surface water or groundwater.
- In discussion of Point of Use treatment, clarify that private citizens will need education on maintenance needs and schedules (i.e., when carbon filter is expired).
- Executive summary should identify the state and regional goals.
- PFAS is highlighted many times in the paper but this may need to be broadened to leave room for other things that may be more of a focus in the future.
- Strong support for information about irrigation and redirecting.
- Distrust of drinking water. It is an issue with some immigrant and local communities that have had issues in the past.
- Encouraging communities to consider elevated levels of manganese in their water supply. Clarify that the paper is not recommending leaving these levels untreated or letting them get higher.
- Discuss whether asset management is in the Met Council’s wheelhouse. Paske will provide more information on this.



- Clarification of the needs statements as many could be seen as wants.
- Clarify the intent and refine “enough water for all uses for all users”.
- What the city practices are around irrigation wells – are any banning the practice and how common it is.

Kostrzewski noted that comments are being accepted on the research papers until March 2024 and requested TAC members share them with colleagues and note any meetings or events that are occurring that would be good matches for a presentation the papers.

4. Chapters one and two of the updated Metro Area Water Supply Plan (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803)

Ross noted that the Metro Area Water Supply Plan is the place to include specificity for water supply. She summarized the changes made to chapter one based on input since 12/20/2022. Chapter two content was also summarized and Ross noted that this chapter would include measures needed to understand progress towards the goals. Some examples of measures for investment, actions, and outcomes were presented for feedback.

Key discussion points included:

- Performance measures might be better placed in a different chapter. Chapter 2 could focus on summarizing the current contexts and laying out the progress of the industry over time.
- Water use over the decades would be useful information.
- Information about policies communities must manage their irrigation would be useful.
- Chapter 2 provides the regional picture.
- Land use is a huge component, but controlled outside area that water utility can influence. Contaminants issues all start with land use and could be better addressed there.
- Capacity can be planned, but that doesn’t consider compatibility with the long-term health of the resource.

5. Subregional Engagement (Jen Kader 651-602-1114)

Kader noted that subregional engagement is about to kick off with the goal of building a shared understanding at a subregional level for water supply as well as the sequencing and resources needed to sustain this effort over time. This approach is an adaptation of the existing subregions that extend to the edges of the metro area. McCarthy explained how the subregions were created, but the boundaries are flexible depending on circumstances. It’s unclear how communities without municipal water supplies will want to engage but the conversation needs to be started.

6. Announcements (Scott Anderson 952-563-4867)

Staff rely heavily on TAC feedback and participation with the committee provides the ability to influence things.

Next Steps

1. Start to prepare draft MWSP for public engagement in 2024
2. Consider RDG milestones and WRPP policies drafted with committee input
3. Share input on projects
4. Next TAC meeting: October 10, 2023

Adjournment



Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee meeting of July 11, 2023.

Approved this 10th day of October 2023.

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