

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

January 14, 2014

Committee Members Present:

Sandra Rummel-Chair, Wendy Wulff-Vice Chair, Marie McCarthy, Lona Schreiber, Gary Van Eyll

Committee Members Absent:

Harry Melander, Edward Reynoso

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Rummel called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:07p.m.

Chair Rummel introduced and welcomed Marie McCarthy, District 10, to the committee.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Wulff, seconded by Schreiber, to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Van Eyll, seconded by Wulff to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2013 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS

2014-18 Acceptance of 2013 Sewer Availability Charge (SAC) Work Group's Final Report

It was moved by Wulff, seconded by Van Eyll that the Environment Committee accepts the report of the SAC Work Group, discharges the group and thanks them for their work and input. **Motion carried.**

2014-19 Authorization to Change the Determination Limit in the Sewer Availability Charge (SAC) Deferral Program

During discussion, it was suggested that the action be amended to include an effective date of the change. It was moved by Van Eyll, seconded by Wulff to amend the motion as follows: That the Metropolitan Council authorizes an increase in the eligibility for the SAC deferral program, effective immediately, to include determinations up to and including 25 SAC units, as recommended by the 2013 SAC Work Group. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION

1. Wastewater System Plan Update

Bryce Pickart, Assistant General Manager of Technical Services, provided an overview of the planning process, reviewed the wastewater policy, and discussed the system plan.

We're in the midst of the Thrive planning process. Reviewed proposed timing of the planning process. We have a lot of work to integrate our water sustainability policies

The focus areas for the wastewater policy are: water sustainability, serving growth, system operation, and system finance. In the statutory schedule, system statements are due in the fall of 2015. Local

communities have three years to submit their comprehensive plan updates. From the standpoint of the regional documents, Thrive is the overall guiding document and then there are the individual policy plans (Transportation, Parks, Water Resources). Within the Water Resources Policy Plan (WRPP), there traditionally have been chapters on water supply, surface water management, and wastewater. The current plan has a policy chapter and a system plan chapter. The overarching concept of water sustainability has been introduced, and we are trying to tie everything together around the topic of water sustainability. We also have statutory responsibility to prepare a regional master water supply plan, and the update to that is on a schedule for completion by the end of 2015. The master water supply plan will provide input along the way to the policy plan. The local comprehensive plans are fundamentally land use plans, and they have all the chapters dealing with the three water elements as well as parks, transportation and housing.

Reviewed near-term and long-term water sustainability strategies, wastewater re-use options, and wastewater re-use work plan.

Wastewater reuse options were discussed. Limited options exist for groundwater recharge, but it has applicability. There are numerous possibilities for non-potable water uses, e.g. industrial cooling water, seasonal irrigation.

Van Eyll commented that this is an exciting time to be part of Environmental Services. Look at what will be done in the future compared to now. Wulff said it's important to realize how far we've already come. Schreiber: one of the goals of our 2040 document is that we become a convener and a facilitator as well. The council might not have the direct legislative or regulatory authority but with like-minded people with the same goal this idea of re-use is worthy of discussion. Perhaps another task force with local units of government to discuss re-use should be formed. Patricia Nauman, MetroCities, informed the committee that there will be a forum on emerging trends and issues relating to water on January 30 at the New Brighton Community Center.

2. General Manager's Report

Leisa Thompson informed the committee that all plants were compliant in 2013.

She also provided a progress report on the water supply planning report that will be submitted to the legislature this week.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

Susan Harder
Recording Secretary