

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 14, 2016 4:00 p.m. Council Chambers

IN ATTENDANCE

Sandra Rummel-Chair, Marie McCarthy; Harry Melander, Lona Schreiber, Wendy Wulff-Vice Chair

NOT IN ATTENDANCE

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 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 14, 2016.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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

It was moved by Wendy Wulff seconded by Lona Schreiber to approve the minutes of the Tuesday, May 10, 2016 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS

1. 2016-112 – JT: City of Rogers – Hassan Township Merger 2030 Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Tier II Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File No. 20620-3

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber that the Metropolitan Council (Council) adopt the proposed Review Record and take the following actions:

1. Approve the City of Rogers's Tier II Comprehensive Sewer Plan.
2. Advise the City to submit a copy of the City Council Resolution adopting the Tier II Comprehensive Sewer Plan.

Motion Carried.

2. 2016-120: MCES Electric Motor Repair Services Contract

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to execute contract 16P026 for MCES electrical motor repair services to L&S Electric for an amount not to exceed \$500,000 and a term not to exceed three years. **Motion Carried.**

3. 2016-121: 2016 Stormwater Grants

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to award and execute the stormwater management grants described in Attachment A of the business item in the total amount of \$1 million.

If detailed project budgets vary from preliminary amounts resulting in unallocated funds, staff may re-allocate those funds among recommended proposals or high-ranking un-funded proposals. If unallocated funds exceed \$50,000, staff will bring proposed reallocations back for Council action.

Motion Carried.

4. 2016-122: Final Ratification of Declaration of Emergency for Repair of Interceptor 7113

It was moved by Lona Schreiber, seconded by Wendy Wulff that the Metropolitan Council ratifies the attached Justification for and Declaration of Emergency for Repair of Interceptor 7113 in the final amount of \$7,340,572. **Motion Carried.**

5. 2016-123: Sewer Availability Charge (SAC) Manual Amendment

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Marie McCarthy that the Metropolitan Council authorizes the amendment of the SAC manual to include existing residential properties to the metropolitan SAC Deferral Program. **Motion Carried.**

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. MCES Branding Initiative:

Karen Neis, Director of Administration, Ed Lube, Communications, Criston Ostrom and Rob Rankin from Clarity Coverdale Fury presented information on a project underway to gather information from stakeholders and better educate the public on the work of MCES.

In 2013, MCES began an intensive strategic visioning process that involved over 60 internal participants and 10 external stakeholders. That process resulted in a strategic mission, vision and values with a desire to be recognized as a utility of the future. Its mission is to provide wastewater services and integrated planning to ensure sustainable water quality and water support for the region. Its vision is to be a valued leader and partner in water sustainability through values of excellence, commitment, inclusiveness, integrity, and respect.

To achieve this vision, in 2015, Clarity Coverdale Fury (CCF), a full service advertising agency in Minneapolis was consulted to help gather research. Forth-nine (49) stakeholders from a variety of partner organizations as well as internal staff were surveyed to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of MCES that exist as well as to gauge awareness of what they believe MCES does.

Their findings reflected that MCES has a strong foundation and is seen as a leader among those who are familiar with our agency. For the most part, people believe in who we are and what we are doing in the industry. However, research also discovered a misperception that MCES only handles wastewater treatment services, while in reality; MCES encompasses many more aspects, such as water resources, water supply planning, and renewable energy. Many respondents reported that the name “Environmental Services” does not accurately describe the work of the division. The research discovered one area of opportunity reiterated by many of the participants – that MCES is not doing a good enough job of telling its story about the work it does, its successes, and how those successes benefit residents of the region. Stakeholders reported that they see MCES as a valuable partner and leader, delivering a long-term vision for water in Minnesota that ensures the future of water supply. The research also found that stakeholders thought there was an opportunity for MCES to link its work to a higher cause – the idea of looking at water as a whole, rather than segmented pieces – and that MCES is not a recognizable division within the larger Metropolitan Council organization.

The research produced several possible recommendations, including for MCES to become a more visible leader, continue to collaborate, promote the idea of One Water, grow awareness, and focus on partnerships and innovation. MCES should proactively tell its story rather than staying “behind the scenes.” This will translate into better transparency and accountability for taxpayers.

Included in the recommendation to better tell the story about the work of MCES are opportunities to educate the public through community events, newsletters, online, social media, and partner meetings. This can be done by elevating the success of MCES, explaining the work it does, as well as exploring a new name for the division to better reflect its work and mission. CCF worked with staff to identify several possible names that could help convey better what the division does. Based

on the results, the original group of stakeholders who participated in the stakeholder education and research was given another opportunity to take part in a survey to gauge their opinions on three possible names: WaterWise, WaterWays, and WaterConnect. The survey closed on June 9, 2016. Results are being compiled and will be shared once complete.

Comments/Questions

The results of the survey on the possible names should be available later this summer. Follow up will be presented to this committee and any possible recommendation will be forwarded to the full Council for discussion and approval.

A Committee Member stated she was impressed with the work of Washington DC's water division did to better tell its story about the work it does. We are at the beginning stages of this process. It is hard work and pays off if we follow through.

A suggestion was made if additional research could be done to evaluate what others across the nation have done when considering a name change. CCF stated research was conducted during the initial process and was included in the presentation provided to staff. Those findings will be shared with committee members.

Do we have funds or budget allocated for this project? Staff stated no funds are designated at this point. A wholesale change is not being considered. Any potential change in name would be phased in over time to keep costs down.

2. General Manager's Report:

- The NACWA Summer Conference is scheduled for July 11-13. Six of our eight facilities have earned perfect compliance and will be recognized at the conference.
 - Hastings – 25 years
 - St. Croix Valley – 24 years
 - Seneca – 15 years
 - Blue Lake – 10 years
 - Eagles Point – 10 years
 - Empire – 8 years
- We received word that the Court of Appeals who heard phosphorus umbrella permit ruled in MPCA's favor. There are 60 days to appeal to the MN Supreme Court. If no appeal, we will be continue with the current phosphorus umbrella permit. It allows us to congregate all plants that discharge to the Mississippi River. A total phosphorus amount can be discharged collectively allowing us to time improvements to the facilities to reduce phosphorus discharge from a specific plant.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary