

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 8, 2017

Committee Members Present:

Sandra Rummel-Chair, Marie McCarthy, Edward Reynoso, Harry Melander, Wendy Wulff-Vice Chair

Committee Members Excused:

Cara Letofsky, Lona Schreiber

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. on Tuesday, August 8, 2017.

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 Harry Melander, seconded by Edward Reynoso to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2017 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS

1. **2017-168:** 2017 Municipal Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Grant Program

It was moved by Lona Schreiber, seconded by Marie McCarthy, that the Environment Committee approves the I&I grant program guidelines as shown in Attachment A, and authorizes the Regional Administrator to award grants and execute grant agreements pursuant to the guidelines.

Motion carried.

2. **2017-169:** Manufactured Home Park Preservation Pilot Grant

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Edward Reynoso, that the Metropolitan Council award the Manufactured Home Park Preservation (MHP) Pilot Grant for Maple Hill Estates in the City of Corcoran and authorize the Regional Administrator or designee to execute the grant agreement with Maple Hill Estates in coordination with Minnesota Housing and Finance Agency in the amount of \$234,832. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION

1. 2017 Interagency Climate Adaptation Team (ICAT):

David Thornton, Assistant Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Paul Moss, Climate Adaptation Coordinator of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Karen Jensen, Environmental Analyst for MCES presented a summary of the Interagency Climate Adaptation Team.

The ICAT team has been focusing on adaptation. Adaptation is understanding how the climate is changing. It is addressing current and future climate impacts, risk management and infrastructure protection, and local responses. Mitigation is achieving greenhouse gas emissions reductions, energy and economic systems, and global responses. There is an interconnection between adaptation and mitigation, such as water conservation.

The Minnesota State Climatology group evaluated data on climate change and looked at to what extent weather/climate hazards will be impacted. A summary of the report is available for download at

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/p-gen4-07d.pdf> . The full

report contains information on climate trends and impacts affecting Minnesota as well as a summary of agency activities, statewide climate adaptation indicators and recommendations for interagency action and can be downloaded at <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/p-gen4-07c.pdf>.

The Interagency Climate Adaptation Team is an agency-based approach that started in 2009. There was no mandate from the Governor's office or Legislature and has members from the following agencies: Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Environmental Quality Board, Department of Health, Metropolitan Council, Department of Military Affairs, Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Department of Public Safety, Department of Transportation, Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources, as well as others.

As well as the report in 2017, ICAT also produced reports in 2010 and 2013. The teams meet quarterly and have given presentations to the Legislature and the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board. They are looking to identify other opportunities for collaboration and share information about climate adaptation to the broader community.

Recommendations for action:

- Build greater resilience to extreme precipitations.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen the climate resilience and health of vulnerable populations of Minnesotans across state agency programs and through cooperation with local governments.
- Increase focus on preserving natural and restored terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and habitat to increase resilience of wildlife and native plants.
- Strengthen agricultural water management efforts to increase resilience to climate change impacts.
- Increase focus on managing climate impacts in cities, towns, and other population centers.
- Strengthen our climate information infrastructure to support climate adaptation practices.

Next steps:

- State agency working groups for the 6 ICAT recommendations.
- Increased stakeholder outreach to help build stronger external partnerships for advancing adaptation.
- Increased stakeholder with a goal of focus on implementing priority climate adaptation activities in Minnesota that aligns with the 6 ICAT recommendations. This may include meetings based on sectors and/or topics.

Thrive Lens Analysis:

This effort focuses on our five Thrive2040 outcomes of stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability, and sustainability as well as our principles of integration, collaboration, and accountability. The Metropolitan Council has responded to climate impacts by:

- The formation of the Thrive MSP 2040 Implementation Work Group on Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability (CCEST).
- Participating in the Government Emergency Telecommunications Services (GETS).
- Technology recovery strategies through a business continuity plan.
- Comprehensive planning and climate adaptation.
- Climate Vulnerability Assessment.

- Solar Advisor position funded by Solar Foundation and McKnight Foundation.
- Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) Reduction Program.
- Infrastructure rehabilitation.
- Flood response and mitigation.
- Grant programs.
- Route- and facility-specific business continuity plans.

The Metropolitan Council has active workgroup members on the following three teams. Staff are encouraged to participate.

- Build greater resilience to extreme precipitations.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen the climate resilience and health of vulnerable populations of Minnesotans across state agency programs and through cooperation with local governments
- Increase focus on managing climate impacts in cities, towns, and other population centers.

Comments & Questions:

Are we helping communities build resiliency in to their comprehensive plans? Staff stated the Council is assisting. Workshops have been established to educate on how to build resilience in to planning.

Committee member commented on the level of involvement from the Department of Military Affairs. It is fascinating the agencies at every level and how they work together. When an extreme emergency occurs, emergency management and the military are some of the first responders so they are very active in the process.

2. Summer Intern Presentation:

Larry Rogacki, Assistant General Manager, Support Services introduced the 2017 MCES summer interns. He stated this was the 12th year ES has sponsored summer interns and 25% of the 80 interns have been hired as full-time employees within MCES. An outstanding group of students has been hard at work on projects throughout the summer. They are dedicated to their environmental field and designed posters to showcase the range of projects and careers the interns are involved in and the business value MCES receives from their work. Interns had an opportunity to share their work with Chair Tchourumoff and members of the Environment Committee prior to the start of this meeting. The Environment Committee Recording Secretary, Susan Taylor, is available to provide specific details on the projects (susan.taylor@metc.state.mn.us or call 651-602-1131).

Comments & Questions:

Chair Rummel complemented the interns on a job well done. She stated they are articulate with the content of their projects and have left behind something that will help us continue to do our work. A job well done.

Committee Member Melander stated that it is humbling to interact with students as a former educator. He further indicated the time he spent with those who worked on projects makes him feel good that they are helping the Council carry on its mission at a level that is astonishing and how bright they are. He concluded by stating their work will stay with us for a long time.

3. General Manager Report:

SAC Task Force Update:

- In Spring, the SAC Task force asked MCES to evaluate using Gross Square Feet instead of net/usable square feet
- This change will dramatically simplify the determination process since we will only need to look at the footprint and use
- We commissioned TKDA to review 5,000 records over the last 3 years
- Preliminary results show this approach will work quite well and the change will be revenue neutral
- We are currently tweaking some of the detailed criteria to be sure we are balancing fairness with simplicity
- We will be reviewing the final recommendation with the Task Force on August 16
- We will reach out to our customers in August through October to gather their feedback on the change. Customers include cities, businesses, chambers of commerce, etc.
- We will summarize our findings and bring a final recommendation to the EC and the Council for approval in November and December
- Changes, if approved, will be implemented January 1, 2018

Awards

Leisa recently returned from the summer NACWA conference where six of our eight plants received Peak Performance Platinum Awards for 2016. Included in these awards are:

- Hastings – 26 years (only 3 other plants across the nation have more years of compliance)
- St. Croix Valley – 25 years
- Blue Lake – 11 years
- Eagles Point – 11 years
- Empire – 9 years
- Metropolitan Plant – 5 years

In addition, Seneca and East Bethel received Silver awards for less than five violations during the calendar year.

State Government Innovation Awards were recently announced. The Metropolitan Council received a Solar Collaborative award. The impact that the solar collaborative has had on the communities is great. We have a lot to be proud of.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary