

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Committee Members Present:

Peter Lindstrom, Chair; Wendy Wulff, Vice Chair; Kris Fredson; Phillip Sterner; Susan Vento

Committee Members Absent:

Raymond Zeran

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lindstrom called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 25, 2020.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Phillip Sterner, seconded by Wendy Wulff to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Phillip Sterner, seconded by Wendy Wulff to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2020, regular meeting of the Environment Committee. Motion carried.

BUSINESS

- 2020-81: Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant Solids Renewal & Improvements
It was moved by Susan Vento, seconded by Phillip Sterner that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to award and execute contract 19P187A for construction of Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Solids Renewal & Improvements, project numbers 805947 and 808920, with Shank Constructors, Inc. in the amount of \$19,303,100.00. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

- Rural Centers Policy and Implementation:
Jeannine Clancy, Assistant General Manager, Technical Services and Kyle Colvin, Manager, Engineering Programs presented a summary of the Council's Rural Center Policy and Implementation history. The informational presentation included a history of the development of the Council's Rural Center Polices beginning with regional wastewater conditions when the Metropolitan Sewer Board was created in 1969, to the present-day status. Included was how Rural Center Polices helped guide the conditions that need to be met for communities to request regional wastewater services through the Council. Four specific examples were presented that supported implementation of the Rural Center Polices. They were Carver, Elko-New Market, East Bethel, and New Germany.

Comments & Questions:

Chair Lindstrom asked how many total wastewater treatment plants are currently in the region? Staff stated there are a total of 23 in the region. The Council operates 9.

Committee Member Fredson requested clarification on the history of the acquisition. Staff stated we have acquired 35 of the original wastewater treatment plants that existed in 1969 leaving 14 today that either existed in 1969 or have been built since that time. The reason these 14 remain today is due to the local desire to maintain control. Metropolitan Waste Control Commission did not pursue the acquisition at that time.

Committee Member Sterner asked what the differences are between efficiencies and economies of scale of being on their own system. Staff explained that for Rural Centers to get regional wastewater services, either acquisition of the existing wastewater treatment plant or an extension of interceptor service is necessary. The costs associated with these improvements are assigned back to the community in the form of Rural Growth Center SAC fees. These additional costs can make it more economically feasible for the local community to take on the cost of expanding their own facilities. In other situations, it can be an incentive for communities to work together and solve the problem themselves. Example Mayer and New Germany have worked together.

Chair Lindstrom stated he wasn't aware of with SAC fees there is an additional surcharge. When a new connection or expanding business, the interceptor service needed to be expanded. Staff clarified the additional charges were due to a request to advance infrastructure prior to when the Council was planning to do so.

Committee Member Vento asked how long the extra surcharge is in effect. Staff stated 20 years reflective of the fact that GO Capital Investment bonds mature in 20-years. These bonds are one source of funding for ES's Capital Projects.

Committee Member Sterner asked if Hampton and Vermilion have their own plants. Staff confirmed that is the case. The Council did a study a number of years ago to evaluate the cost, for bringing Hampton service via the Empire Wastewater Treatment Plant. The City never officially requested the service and was never pursued further.

2. General Manager Report
No update at this time.

If Committee members have items they would like brought before this committee, please let leisa.thompson@metc.state.mn.us know.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary