

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

#### Committee Members Present:

Peter Lindstrom, Chair; Kris Fredson; Phillip Sterner; Wendy Wulff, Vice Chair; Raymond Zeran

#### Committee Members Absent:

Susan Vento

#### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lindstrom called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:01 p.m. on Tuesday, August 10, 2021 with the following roll call:

Aye: 4 Lindstrom, Fredson, Wulff, Zeran  
Absent: 2 Sterner, Vento

Chair's statement was read at the beginning of the meeting as follows:

**NOTICE:** The Metropolitan Council Chair has determined it is not practical or prudent to conduct in-person meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, committee members will participate in this meeting via telephone or other electronic means and the meeting will be conducted under Minnesota Statutes section 13D.021 at the date and time stated above. We encourage you to monitor the meeting remotely. If you have comments, we encourage members of the public to email us at [public.info@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:public.info@metc.state.mn.us). We will respond to your comments in a timely manner.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Without objection the agenda was approved.

It was moved by Wulff seconded by Fredson to approve the minutes of the July 27, 2021, regular meeting of the Environment Committee.

Aye: 4 Lindstrom, Fredson, Wulff, Zeran  
Nay: 0  
Abstain: 0  
Absent: 2 Sterner, Vento

Motion carried.

#### CONSENT BUSINESS

None at this time

#### NON-CONSENT BUSINESS

None at this time

#### INFORMATION

##### 1. Summer Intern Presentations

Suidi Hashi, Associate Community Outreach Coordinator introduced the 2021 summer intern program stating the Metropolitan Council's Internship Program offers a wide variety of opportunities to qualifying interns. Our

program is designed to educate and mentor interns by providing professional on-the-job training and development. In Environmental Services, Interns are provided a robust summer calendar of project and facility tours, informational interviews, mentorship, and networking opportunities. This is in addition to all the programming that is provided by the Council. Part of Environmental Services' summer intern program includes having interns create a poster or presentation showcasing the work they were involved in and is showcased to Environmental Services staff as well as to the Environment Committee.

Due to the virtual environment, the nine interns and one Urban Scholar shared brief presentations of their experience while with Environmental Services.

- Amber Orr, Microbrewery Self-Reporting, Industrial Waste & Pollution Control
  - Questions
    - Committee Member Sterner asked if Amber worked with a sample of the breweries or all. Amber stated there were 64 in the 7-county metro area.
    - Committee Member Fredson asked if responses were seen from the breweries as part of the work. Amber stated correspondence have not been sent to the facilities, but the hope is that after the newly created video, documents, and letter are sent to the permittees, that the microbrewery customers will be equipped with the resources to reduce industrial waste volumes and reporting inaccuracies during the self-monitoring reporting process
    - Chair Lindstrom asked for clarity on other sources of deductions. Amber stated when the microbrewery customers submit their annual self-monitoring report, the incoming water volumes from city, must balance out with the volumes not discharged to the sanitary sewer, and volume of water discharged to the sanitary sewer. To help with balancing volumes, the facilities are able to claim deductions for either water lost to evaporation or loss to spent grain based on calculations or measured estimates.
  
- Donovan Taylor, ES Racial Equity Initiative, Workforce & Equity
  - Questions
    - Committee Member Wulff asked if the committee is able to see the survey questions that were sent to staff. Donovan stated that they could be forwarded to the Committee.
    - Committee Member Wulff inquired if there was anything different than what you expected to see. Donovan stated he didn't expect how hard we would have to push to be able to ensure that employees will or are actively engaging or participating on their own. He anticipated as an agency there wouldn't need to be such a thing as unmotivated or undriven to create change in a place where employees work and collaborate with one another. More specifically making sure that as a team we aren't pushing people into the direction, rather creating a space where people express how they feel about this process as well as provided input.
    - Chair Lindstrom stated the committee would love to help in any way they can.
    - Committee Member Fredson asked how Donovan heard about this internship. Donovan stated he grew up in south Minneapolis and heard about it by word of mouth. He appreciated the opportunity to participate in this work.
  
- Hayley Ringhand, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, & Three-Dimensional, Performance Excellence & Analytics
  - Questions

- Chair Lindstrom asked if there was much of a learning curve experienced. Hayley stated she has always been around tech savvy people and picked up on concepts. It wasn't much of a learning curve.
- Jack Acomb, Underground Structure Data Creation, Geographic Information System
  - Questions
    - Committee Member Fredson inquired how many structures the MC has across the region that can be mapped or were you mapping a sample of the structures across the metro? The database is a work in progress. There are approximately 1000+ structures. The goal this summer was to establish the infrastructure to begin the mapping. The major and unique structures were targeted this summer.
    - Committee Member Fredson it is fascinating the amount of Metropolitan Council infrastructure that is below ground and unseen.
    - Chair Lindstrom stated it is important to have the information available.
- Kiana Martinez, Standardizing Emergency Action Plan, Environmental Health & Safety
  - Questions
    - Committee Member Fredson asked if all work was internal with the Metropolitan Council vs. interaction with the department of emergency management? Kiana stated the work was internal. What were the most common changes across the board? Kiana stated the most common was documents were formatted differently. Visually were also not consistent.
- Laetia Malungu, Firewall Update, Process Computer Group
  - Questions
    - Chair Lindstrom recalled a potable water plant in Florida that had a hacker gained access and began changing information. Grateful for the work you have done.
    - Committee Member Fredson stated protecting critical infrastructure is important work. We cannot let guard down even for a brief period of time or consequences could occur. Laetia stated it is critical to safeguard the system.
- Madison Bowes, Technical Writing Standard Operating Procedures, Operations Support Services
  - Questions
    - Chair Lindstrom stated you seem to be the right person to be doing this internship paired with your major. Madison stated the program at the University of Minnesota prepared her well.
- Maxwell Savage, 3D Analysis & Augmented Reality Training, Performance Excellence & Analytics
  - Questions
    - Chair Lindstrom one thing that came to mind for me was the AR technology in the Covid age when we want to minimize the number of people in enclosed spaces.
    - Committee Member Wulff asked if Maxwell thought about adding a video to the presentation. Maxwell stated he could consider for future presentations. There are a number of scans available on our intranet.
    - Chair Lindstrom asked about ground penetrating radar (GPR). Maxwell mentioned the possibility of using GPR to more effectively map existing

infrastructure and precisely locate below-grade structures to maximize accuracy in excavation projects for maintenance, repair, installation, or updates. GPR modules could be carried by drone or operators.

- Mehdi Harley, Fort Snelling River Sample Point Study, Water Quality Monitoring
  - Questions
    - Chair Lindstrom asked if the weather cooperate while on the river? Mehdi stated there was no rain at all.
    - Committee Member Wulff asked how many days of monitoring were planned for the project. Mehdi stated the team was hoping to do four days to potentially obtain a variety of flow conditions. For the time being they have only been able to get two days because of the drought.
- Will Scofield, Rogers Solids Optimization, Process Engineering
  - Questions
    - Chair Lindstrom stated it was good experiments were able to run to assure things were running as needed. Will stated it was helpful to encounter unforeseeable problems (i.e. adversity) in internship-level engineering work because planning for and responding to unforeseen difficulties is useful in every field of engineering.

## 2. General Manager Report

A lot of great things have already been acknowledged about the great work the interns have done and it is appreciated. It's interesting to see the different perspectives they bring to the work. Thank you to staff for the support and the time and talent that they shared with these interns, because it does take some planning and it takes the ongoing support to make sure that time doesn't slip away. We hope these interns are not only thinking about coming back to work for us, but they might be telling their classmates of an opportunity for possible employment called environmental services. Thank you to council members.

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

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

## **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Environment Committee Meeting of August 10, 2021.

Susan Taylor  
Recording Secretary