

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA WATER SUPPLY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, July 27, 2016

Committee Members Present:

Sandy Rummel, Chair, Jeffrey Berg, Randy Ellingboe, Glen Gerads, Dean Lotter, Susan Morris, Steve Schneider, Jamie Schurbon, Barry Stock, Julie Ekman,

Committee Members Absent:

Patty Acomb, Georg Fischer, Todd Gerhardt, Mark Daleiden, Lisa Volbrecht, Michael Robinson

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Rummel called the regular meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC) to order at 1:08 p.m. on Wednesday, July 27, 2016.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Susan Morris, seconded by Dean Lotter to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Steve Schneider, seconded by Barry Stock to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2016 regular meeting of the MAWSAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION

1. Reducing Water Use on Twin Cities Lawns through Assessment, Research, and Demonstration– Brian Davis, Environmental Services and Sam Bauer, University of Minnesota

In the Twin Cities metropolitan area approximately 20% of all treated drinking water is used outdoors, with a majority being used on lawns and landscapes. The Metropolitan Council and University of Minnesota Extension are working to quantify the performance of existing Twin Cities landscape irrigation systems, compare these existing irrigation systems with water-efficient systems, and demonstrate to the public and to municipalities the benefits of switching to smart irrigation technologies including soil moisture and evapotranspiration sensors, and water efficient sprinkler heads.

Brian Davis, Metropolitan Council and Sam Bauer, University of Minnesota provided information regarding reducing water use on twin cities lawns through assessment, research, and demonstration.

Twin cities municipal water use average is 365 million gallons per day. Maximum volume is 586 million gallons per day with a minimum of 265 million gallons per day.

What has now changed is expectations, behaviors, and technology in the past 20 years. We have more irrigation systems, but also there's a change with easier to use new technologies.

There are opportunities to improve with lawn irrigation use since it is here to stay.

Comments and Discussion

Glen Gerads – with respect to peak usage. Have you looked at how much the base has gone down vs. actual usage? Staff stated in some communities it is a small part, other communities, it is a major factor.

Steve Schneider – it appears the focus is mostly on commercial water consumption. Seems ratio may be effected.

Julie Ekman – question for Sam Bauer – how do we get more people to use different grasses? Sam responded that fine fescues are much better than Kentucky bluegrass to use in lawns.

Steve Schneider – how does drip irrigation look in a residential turf? Mr. Bauer stated that it's buried beneath the lawns. It does need to be designed according to soil type. It's better to install the drip irrigation prior to establishing a lawn.

Randy Ellingboe – 65% respondents have indicated that they have an irrigation system. Was there any community info as part of the survey or was it metro area? Sam and his team are still in the process of reviewing the surveys.

2. Waukesha, WI Great Lakes Water Diversion, Minnesota's Role– Julie Ekman, MN Department of Natural Resources

The Great Lakes Agreement and the Great Lakes Compact generally prohibit diversion of water outside of the Great Lakes Basin. An exception is provided for public water suppliers that meet certain criteria described in these documents. The City of Waukesha, Wisconsin applied for an exemption. The members of the Regional Body (eight Great Lakes states and Ontario and Quebec) reviewed the application and the Compact Council (eight Great Lakes states) decided to approve the application with conditions. This talk will describe the review process and decision-making process.

Julie Ekman, Conservation Assistance and Regulation Section Manager, DNR Division of Ecological and Water Resources, gave a presentation on the Waukesha, Wisconsin Lake Michigan Water Diversion. She was requested by Ali Elhassan to provide this presentation because she is also Governor Dayton's representative for the Great Lakes Regional Body and the Great Lakes Compact Council provided information about the Great Lakes Regional Body & Compact Council Review Process along with Minnesota's Role.

Julie Ekman provided a background of who the Great Lakes Regional Body and Great Lakes Compact Council are and described the process of how the application was reviewed, and also the Minnesota process.

Comments and Discussion:

Sandy Rummel – great summary

Glen Gerads – are they purchasing water from Milwaukee? They are purchasing from Oak Creek.

Glen Gerads – if they agreed to be customer of Milwaukee, would they still have required the process? Yes

Randy Ellingboe – given this was the first of this sort to review compact states, Julie and DNR did a great job bringing in input from other states and he appreciated being a part of it. It was truly an efficient way of gathering information from the state agencies.

Steve Schneider – it would be 4.5 years to review the application? Julie stated that includes construction.

3. City of Shoreview Water Conservation Initiative–Mark Maloney, City of Shoreview

Shoreview is evaluating innovative approaches to water conservation. The City has partnered with technology company WaterSmart Software to provide residents with an easy-to-use online and mobile Customer Portal. Residents will now be able to access individualized water consumption reports, receive timely utility communications, and water-saving recommendations specific to their household. The goal is to give water customers insight on their water consumption and more timely (and personalized) water conservation messaging.

Mark Maloney, Public Works Director, City of Shoreview provided information on water conservation initiatives occurring in Shoreview. He provided a presentation regarding water conservation initiatives in Shoreview by utilizing WaterSmart software. Compared to 20 years ago, water use in Shoreview has been trending downward. This includes adding approximately 1000 additional water accounts and increasing the service area.

Comments and Discussion:

Jamie Schurbon – it was mentioned that water meters had been replaced. Was that a necessary step to use the technology? No, however, customer contact is enhanced with it. We are also reading meters monthly rather than quarterly.

Steve Schneider – when you went from quarterly to monthly billing, what increase did you see in paper costs? Shoreview is still billing quarterly, even though reading monthly.

Sandy Rummel – what is the population of Shoreview? 25,500

Glen Gerads – would you consider fixed-network? It was a deliberate decision to go with radio read. Could have been influenced by technology at the time of consideration.

BUSINESS

1. Update regarding TAC Meeting July 20, 2016 – Dean Lotter, MAWSAC

Mark Maloney has agreed to be the chair of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee. Dean Lotter is the liaison.

Have a good group of knowledgeable individuals as part of the committee. A number of questions were proposed on charter development.

TAC members asked how MAWSAC feels about the TAC? Dean mentioned he ensured the TAC that MAWSAC is enthusiastic.

The group is strategic and forward thinking. They have a desire to make sure the time they spend in serving on this committee results in tangible, useable outcomes that make a difference. They also want to make sure they meet MAWSAC's expectations.

There is interest in having a joint meeting between TAC and MAWSAC. Discussions occurred regarding timing of meetings and agreed the meetings should be on opposite months of MAWSAC meetings.

Comments and Discussion:

No comments or discussion.

2. TAC Charter Review and Approval – Lanya Ross, Environmental Services

The draft TAC charter has been revised based on input from both MAWSAC and TAC. Changes will be reviewed, and MAWSAC approval will be requested.

Changes made to the TAC charter during the July 20 meeting were shared with the MAWSAC.

There was discussion to assure the clarity of roles between both MAWSAC and TAC. Changes were made to make that more clear.

Comments and Discussion:

Barry Stock motioned to approve. It was seconded by Dean Lotter. **Motion carried.**

Finalized document will be sent to MAWSAC and TAC.

3. 2017 Legislative Report – Lanya Ross, Environmental Services

By Feb. 15, 2017, MAWSAC shall report to the Council, the Legislative Water Commission, and legislators with information required by MN Statutes 473.1565. The report and recommendations must include information provided by the TAC. The scope and schedule for this work will be proposed and discussed.

Members were encouraged to review “A Utility of the Future” handout as a possible template to use for the report. Based on Committee feedback, Lanya will begin to draft the report.

Comments and Discussion:

Sandy Rummel – what is it that they require for the 2017 document? The language specifies that essentially the report will address everything in the statute. Fortunately, all of that information is addressed in the Master Water Supply Plan and can be pulled from that.

Sandy Rummel – so MAWSAC needs to review the Master Water Supply Plan, pulling out the key work of the immediate future or what we’ve done? We should focus on our vision and come up with some tangible outcomes that we are hoping to achieve and what do we see as the priorities or key barriers or resources that may be needed to achieve those. Also identifying any gaps would be an important piece of it.

Glen Gerads – in looking at the handout, are you suggesting that MAWSAC come up with a strategic plan to present back to the legislature? Possibly, as there is some value to that. Concern that going that direction could take some time and should be started soon in order to have the report done in time.

No decisions are required at this time.

Barry Stock – we have a chance to provide a report. Would like to be sure we provide a report that also shares “this is what we want or need and how much it will cost.” I want to see outcomes

Glen Gerads – advantage for doing something like this is to be able to clarify what we do. May provide direction.

Barry Stock – we need a workshop to discuss and plan. Would be beneficial to do in conjunction with TAC.

Jamie Schurbon – need to do some preparation work prior to official meetings given the timeframe we are working under.

Lanya – is email a good communication avenue?

Glen Gerads – if we are meeting every other month may need a subcommittee to work outside of MAWSAC.

Sandy Rummel – So in summary we want to do something that’s substantial and produces a real agenda, really defines what we are about, and we don’t want a reiteration of the Water Supply Plan.

Anyone interested in serving on the subcommittee? Lanya will send out an inquiry to gain interest.

Julie Ekman – for the subcommittee – does it need to be MAWSAC members or could it be someone suggested by MAWSAC members?

Glen Gerads – needs to be members of MAWSAC.

Susan Morris – please include statute.

Randy Ellingboe – Can TAC members be included? They will be participating in the process. Could we get a reminder of the type of documents that may come out of this effort?

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary