

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA WATER SUPPLY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 25, 2017

Committee Members Present:

Sandy Rummel, Chair, Patty Acomb, Jeffrey Berg, Randy Ellingboe, Georg Fischer, Glen Gerads, Todd Gerhardt, Phil Klein, Dean Lotter, Susan Morris, Michael Robinson, Steve Schneider, Jamie Schurbon, Barry Stock

Committee Members Absent:

Mark Daleiden, Jeanne Daniels, Catherine Neuschler, Lisa Volbrecht

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Rummel called the regular meeting of the Council's MAWSAC Committee to order at 1:01 p.m. on Wednesday, January 25, 2017.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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

It was moved by Todd Gerhardt, seconded by Susan Morris to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2016 regular meeting of the MAWSAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

TAC UPDATE

Staff member David Brown provided an update from the January 3, 2017 TAC Committee meeting on behalf of TAC Chair Mark Maloney who was unable to attend this meeting. Review included discussion regarding the MAWSAC report and future TAC meetings. Discussion topics from this meeting have been integrated in to content for today's meeting.

Questions/Comments:

None at this time.

INFORMATION

1. Approval of Legislative Report – Lanya Ross, Metropolitan Council

Review the process to develop the report and proposed content, including input from the TAC, and request MAWSAC approval to publish and share the report.

The report is a statutory requirement due February 15. MN Statutes 473.1565 indicates that by February 15, 2017, and at least every five years thereafter, the policy advisory committee shall report to the council, the Legislative Water Commission, and the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representatives and senate committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources with the information required under this section. The policy advisory committee's report and recommendations must also include information provided by the technical advisory committee.

Staff clarified this report is a MAWSAC report and not a Met Council report. The audience is the Met Council and key legislators with influence over the region's water supply planning policies and laws. Based on MAWSAC's and the TAC's input, this report is a high-level document that reflects the recently updated Master Water Supply Plan as well as provides information about future work that MAWSAC prioritizes for support.

This report was developed over the summer and fall of 2016, and was finalized January 2017 for approval at this meeting. The report will be published and shared by February 15, 2017.

The report format and key content was discussed at multiple MAWSAC and TAC meetings. In addition, a subcommittee of TAC and MAWSAC members met to discuss in more detail. Thank you to Barry Stock, Glen Gerads, Dean Lotter, Jamie Wallerstedt, and Jennifer Levitt for volunteering your time! In addition, the November 2016 MAWSAC/TAC workshop provided information about committee member priorities. The report draws heavily from the Master Water Supply Plan, and a SurveyMonkey survey was also shared with MAWSAC and TAC members to solicit your input on priority areas. Areas of focus that were identified included collaboration, conservation, investments/funding, technical studies, and reuse.

Based on input, the report includes high level information about the region's water supplies, key challenges, goals and benefits of conservation, MAWSAC/TAC background, case studies (what we want to support), and a five-year timeline.

Information in addition to MAWSAC and TAC input shaped the 5 year activities, including the Legislative Budget Schedule, the December 2018 due date for Local Water Supply Plans, and the 2020 Census (first step in the update of the regional development framework). The report was reviewed by our Communications Department, who looked at it through the lens of our primary audiences – Council members and legislators. It was also reviewed by the TAC and by the subcommittee you appointed to focus on this work. After input from TAC and the subcommittee, content was finalized.

Staff propose to print the document with a tri-fold format, each 'page'/fold 8 ½ x 11 inches in size. The goal is to give this document the look and feel that will get attention and that will coordinate with the style of the Master Water Supply Plan. After approval, the report will then be shared with members of the Metropolitan Council and the Legislative Water Commission, and the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representatives and senate committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resource. Presentations to Metropolitan Council and the Legislative Water Commission will also be made and will be available for use, to promote key regional and subregional water supply initiatives. Council water supply planning staff will also promote the report through ongoing project teams and work groups.

It was moved by Dean Lotter, seconded by Glen Gerads, to approve the report which will be published (print and electronic) and shared with Metropolitan Council, the Legislative Water Commission, and the chairs and ranking minority members of committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources. **Motion carried.**

Questions/Comments:

The report has had a great deal of input and revisions. A quality document has been created with a record of where we've been and where we are going. Because the audience expectations are largely unknown, the format allowed for a fair amount of detail and captures context and timeline.

Thank you to the subcommittee for your work. It is a very informative document. A suggestion was made to add a contact list if there is someone interested in joining a committee or work group.

Thank you to the folks behind the scenes who worked on marketing and communication to break the information down in to smaller digestible pieces. Thank you for the work done.

2. Working Collaboratively to Support Regional Water Supply Planning during the Upcoming Legislative Session – Ali Elhassan, Metropolitan Council

An update was provided about the 2017 legislative session including possible impacts to water supply planning in the metro area.

No bills to be updated from the legislature as of this meeting.

Staff provided an update on the Clean Water Fund, the main source of funding for projects being done in water supply. Looking for guidance from this committee help us set policy and provide guidance for Council activities. Without funding, we will not be able to do the work we do.

Staff presented examples of how the Council uses the funds and talked about two successful programs in place. The first is the University of Minnesota Technical Assistance Program. The Council provides funding to the University to hire interns who visit industries and cities to audit facilities on where water can be conserved in their system. This year budgeting is for \$90,000, which allows 5 interns for each industry and also allows for development of outreach materials. Program has been very successful and has been in place for 3-4 years. Savings resulted from 15 implemented projects has been 130 million gallons of water per year. Cost was \$150,000 to implement with a return on investment in energy and water cost savings has been \$1.1 billion. More applications have been received this year. There is potential for the program to grow in the future.

The second program is the water efficiency grant program that has been in place started last year. The program provides funding to cities to create rebate programs or improve city facilities. It is a successful program and have received positive feedback from communities. Eleven communities have expressed interest in additional funding to continue offering rebates. Some cities ran out of funding quickly due to success of their implemented projects.

The Council would like to continue with these plans to help reach our goals. The Clean Water Fund is the only source of funding for these projects. We have submitted a request for \$3 million for the biennium. It was reduced due to less projected revenue from taxes. The Clean Water Fund approved \$2.5 million for the Council and will be presented to the Legislature for possible approval.

Questions/Comments:

Committee members would like to be armed with the information in order to pass it along and communicate directly. Staff stated a one-page high level summary can be put together. The Council receives 1% of the funds. A copy of the legislative report will be provided to the Committee along with the summary. Would like to see how much is available in the fund on a biennial basis and how much we are getting. Chair Rummel stated she believes there is a budget item in the Clean Water Council recommendations for a group working with the University to create and compile return on investment data.

State agencies are also looking at return on investment and what funds are being spent on. From a State agency point of view is the process for state agencies to collaborate and discuss proposals to develop an executive branch budget.

Committee Member Ellingboe stated the Governor has come out with recommendations on spending for the Clean Water Fund from the State perspective. Clean Water Council has developed a set of recommendations that should be moving forward to the legislature for consideration. The Governor's budget should be available for review. The Clean Water Fund had a summary of their recommendations is intended to be heard by the legislature. **Committee members interested in joining staff for various hearings or to present the legislative report to various committees at the legislature, please contact Ali Elhassan, ali.elhassan@metc.state.mn.us .**

Will the Legislative Water Commission will continue? Barb Huberty, Director of Legislative Water Commission, who was an audience member at this time, stepped forward to provide an update. She stated in 2015 and 2016, a proposal by the House State Government Finance Committee to repeal the Legislative Water Commission. The companion bill in the Senate did not have that provision. During the Conference Committee, the repeal was eliminated. She is unsure at this time if there will be another repeal at this time.

From an agency perspective of the State agencies, the amount of federal funds may be less versus greater moving forward. Committee Member Ellingboe stated we do not know how things will shake out at the federal level and how EPA funding will go. There was infrastructure investment discussion for water and wastewater project and others for reducing the size of the EPA. Regarding the Clean Water Fund, funds provided to agencies can only supplement existing or former funds. State agencies cannot shift funds

provided by other means and backfill with Clean Water funds. Further, state agencies, regional government and other non-governmental demands for the type of funding requires interagency coordination to determine needs and innovative directions for the future.

Committee Member Berg stated the Governor's recommendation has been out one day as of today. Reminder that funds allocated don't always stay at the agency. He stated 50-60% of the funds passes through the Department of Agriculture to the University of Minnesota, counties, etc. The local government round table recommended a specific amount of funds go directly to support water plans.

Staff stated another source of funding received two years ago was \$200,000 per year for coordination and support of MAWSAC and TAC. It is not permanent funding source. The Legislature directed the creation of MAWSAC and TAC, but did not provide funding for planning activities. It is for projects, grant programs, etc. Hoping to receive funding in 2017. Will help with staff time with both committees. Funding has been requested, but have not received a status update.

A list of funding requests will be provided to this Committee in order to support in planning efforts.

3. Joint MAWSAC/TAC Workshop Discussion – Dave Brown, Metropolitan Council

A short synopsis was provided on the joint workshop to set the stage for group discussion on what is next for the two committees. Staff is looking for input on focus areas for 2017 and beyond.

A summary of the joint MAWSAC and TAC meeting was provided to those present. A total of 30 members, 9 staff members and 2 observers were in attendance on November 14, 2016. The joint team met for four hours to build a common understanding of the regional vision, as described in the Master Water Supply Plan, and begin to develop a coordinated work plan for water supply planning activities. Staff thanked everyone that attended and participated in the discussion.

After introductions, a session was held for everyone to focus on their individual purposes for joining and serving on the Committees and to determine what they felt were 3 pressing issues for water supply to address. After sharing ideas, Committee members used dots to highlight key topics of interest. Prevalent areas that emerged included:

- Promote/Support conservation
- Educate the public on the drinking water "story"
- Water reuse
- Develop a plan to recharge aquifers without impacting the environment
- Climate change and impacts

Five high level issue areas were then identified for more focused small group discussion and included:

- Water availability and risks
- Collaboration
- Conservation
- Funding
- Relationships (Regulatory and Local Government Units)

By the end of the day, the joint group identified and agreed on the content of the five issue areas to focus on for the next 2-3 years in order to continue moving forward.



Questions/Comments:

At the January 3, 2017 TAC meeting, the committee discussed, as quoted from their meeting minutes, “At future meetings the TAC would discuss the opportunities and challenges around the specific topics (one to three) that staff included in the agenda for that meeting. A summary of the TAC’s discussions would be provided to MAWSAC members prior to the MASWAC’s next meeting. At MAWSAC’s next meeting MAWSAC would consider policies or other actions needed to address the opportunities and challenges that were raised at the TAC meeting for those topic areas.” TAC will be meeting next in early March.

What is the criteria staff will use to determine tasks which will be within the boundaries of TAC Committee activities? Staff stated the statute will be referenced. The legislative report also identifies key areas of focus between MAWSAC and TAC to help narrow down and focus activities. The TAC proposed each Committee member will identify key areas they would like to see addressed. Ideas can be drawn from the diagram created at the joint meeting. A printed version containing notes will be shared with this Committee. There may need to be an old business and new business portion of the meetings in order to close the loop.

Discussion topics under each of the categories should be sent to David Brown, david.brown@metc.state.mn.us or Lanya Ross, lanya.ross@metc.state.mn.us

Other discussion:

Staff will be coming up with issues to discuss with TAC as well. One item on the list is water conservation and efficiency. In the Metro area, some communities are not developing any longer so promoting water conservation does not have the positive benefit of helping the city avoid adding wells or treatment facilities. Unfortunately, it does have a negative outcome of reducing water revenue. Rate analysis studies are being considered by the Council to better understand rate structures that can be used by fully developed cities to respond to reduced revenue from conservation from customers. Another topic is groundwater surface water interaction in the North and East. The biggest question is how can we best avoid having a White Bear Lake somewhere else. Could we protect that? Future discussion may occur about this.

What is the overall goal, is there a percentage of reduction we are looking for? Staff stated the Master Water Supply Plan identifies thresholds.

Chair Rummel stated she heard at the last Clean Water Council meeting held on Monday, January 23, 2017 a presentation from a Minnesota Public Radio survey on the public’s water IQ. It was scientifically done and showed Minnesotans rank around 41% understanding of what is going on with water. They did an analysis of people who listen to public radio versus those who do not.

How can the legislative report be promoted? It would be helpful to submit to local papers or have in a format to add to their city websites. Are we collaborating with the right people to get public support and get the funding needed? An interesting piece of information to help answer was a survey sent to 1000 homeowners in the Twin Cities. The survey said 360 people didn’t know where the source of their water supply came from

(groundwater or surface water). One of the areas of opportunity is to communicate directly to citizens. Communities have cost challenges to develop educational opportunities to present to residents. It might be a good idea for MAWSAC to help in this area.

Kudo's to Committee Member Ellingboe's staff who run the Drinking Water Institute that is available to school teachers to help educate students who are current and future consumers. Handouts are available to educate and are set up to be attractive to readers. Need to be more sophisticated with the ways information is shared due to technology. Having resources to communicate is crucial and can be challenging at the city level.

Committee Member Morris stated students in her county for a conservation day. Would appreciate information that can be shared at the event. Staff can help with materials that can be used from the Children's Water Festival. There are a lot of continuous learners. Most accessed piece of information from our website is wastewater education for kids.

Staff asked about the Drinking Water Institute teaching students over the years. Do we know who the teachers are so we can network and connect people together? Would be helpful to have those lists.

There is a water conservation toolbox is sited and connected to 6 communities outside of the Metro area. It would be helpful to have Committee members present the legislative report to the Clean Water Council. Chair Rummel will help get it on a future agenda.

UPCOMING MAWSAC MEETINGS

1. Next meeting date and future meetings

It was proposed to stagger MAWSAC and TAC meetings every other month. MAWSAC meetings for the duration of 2017 for consideration include:

March 22

May 24

July 26

Sept 27

Nov 29

Can check in throughout the year. Location is typically at the Metropolitan Council. Alternate meeting locations may be considered to allow tours of facilities. If there are conflicts with these dates, please notify Lanya Ross, lanya.ross@metc.state.mn.us .

2. Upcoming agenda items

Committee members wishing to have items added to future MAWSAC agendas should forward them to Lanya Ross, lanya.ross@metc.state.mn.us .

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary