Minutes

Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: August 8, 2023 **Time**: 12:00 PM **Location:** 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

- ✔ Chair, Wendy Wulff
- ✔ Annika Bankston
- ✔ Jeff Berg
- ☐ Sandeep Burman
- ☐ Jack Gleason
- ✔ Pat Shea
- ✔ Erik Smith
- ✔ Mike Huang
- ✔ Phil Klein
- ☐ Brad Larson
- ✔ Valerie Neppl
- ☐ Jamie Schurbon
- ☐ Lisa Volbrecht
- ☐ Kevin Watson

✔ = present ☐ = absent

Call to Order

Committee Chair Wulff called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee to order at 12:00 p.m.

Agenda

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Klein and seconded by Huang to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee of May 9, 2023. **Motion carried.**

Information Items and Committee Work

1. Committee administration (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803)

   Ross introduced a new staff role for Jen Kostrzewski as the Assistant Manager, Planning and Policy for the Water Resources group. Judy Sventek then gave an update on the process for filling vacancies on the committee. Greg Johnson gave an update from the July 11th TAC meeting. Ross finally shared some other Met Council committee activities that are relevant to MAWSAC's work and may be of interest to the committee.

2. ES Policy Research Project (Jen Kostrzewski 651-602-1078)

   Kostrzewski recapped the goals and approach of the ES policy research project and noted that the Water Policy Plan is both the Met Council policy plan and the region's policy plan. She then provided an overview of the *Water Reuse* paper including the primary drivers and focus for both stormwater reuse and wastewater reuse. Recommendation areas include:

   - guidance/regulatory structure development,
   - internal application at MC facilities, and
   - partnerships, grants, and other resources promoting regional application.

   Key discussion points included:

- Comments shared related to reuse policy research paper
- Is greywater reuse included; Minneapolis is interested in this topic? Staff responded that greywater was defined but not heavily discussed in the research paper.
- There are a lot of success stories for reuse in the region. Would be good to highlight those while also talking about barriers.
- Financing – if we reduce water use, how do we pay for our water infrastructure?
- For Hugo ponds – there are modifications desired/lessons learned.
- Are we looking at how to retrofit to install reuse systems?
- TAC feedback matching what they're (MAWSAC) hearing.
- CWF there when there is a connection to water quality. How to finance with the primary focus in water quantity?
- Comments shared related to water availability, access, and use policy research paper
- Asset management – is this really us showing the way or connecting to existing resources?
- Do we need water treated to drinking water quality for all uses? No. Are we pushing too much towards that level of treatment? Not just matching treatment level to use for a city, but for a household.
- We should look to national examples to replicate.
- How do we get to a common understanding of ethic around shared water when different communities have different pressures on quality and quantity
- Land use connections – how lot lines are drawn have impacts on ability to maintain stormwater ponds
- How do we help people make connections between actions taken and unintended consequences that impact water
- Plentiful water in Minnesota (or perception of) will make it hard for public to make bigger changes. Should we focus on changing opinion or on changing policy?
- Perception versus reality - Behavior change happens over time, but information about issues and consequences needs to be available to help promote that. This is even more true with a resource you can't see. Need to help people relate and absorb. But if it becomes too dystopian, psychologically, we will push people to just disengage. The key is to be more proactive, less reactive.

Kostrzewski then provided an overview of the *Water Availability, Access, and Use* paper including the primary drivers, focus and crucial concerns. She noted this paper takes a holistic approach. Recommendation areas included:

- Integrated planning to support sustainable waters.
- Research, data collection and assessments to gain a greater understanding of water availability, uses, and users.
- Technology, behavior, and training to identify and improve regional water management, supply, and treatment.
- Water conservation and reuse are tools to help reduce and augment our water demand.
- Funding, partnerships, and support to build regional water equity, stewardship, and sustainability.

Key discussion points included:

- Water supply asset management role is better served by organizations other than Met

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- We're not good at matching quality to use. Are we pushing too far into the treatment side for our water supply cost analyses? How much drinking water quality water do we really need?
- How to retrofit?
- There are different issues in different subregions. How to get to a common ethic/understanding of "our water"?
- Talk about how communities deal with ponds and platting boundaries, because plat boundaries can mess with the management of ponds.
- Need to coordinate water management objectives
- How much should this work be trying to change public views of water versus working with current public understanding and fit policy to that?
- How to communicate the risk of running out of water? How to move from a reactionary to a proactive stance?
- How to support taking small steps to mitigate risk?
- Should we let people live with consequences? "Well, we ran out."

3. Updated Metro Area Water Supply Plan (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803)

Ross noted that the Metro Area Water Supply Plan is the place to include specificity for water supply. She summarized the changes made to chapter one based on input since 12/20/2022. Chapter two content was also summarized and Ross noted that this chapter would include measures needed to understand progress towards the goals. Some examples of measures for investment, actions, and outcomes were presented for feedback.

Key discussion points included:

Ideas for tracking progress toward water infrastructure goal

- Water supply infrastructure
- # of miles of pipe installed – new, replacement
- # of new homes, density/distribution
- Dashboard to help communities compare to others (especially those participating in conservation efforts)
- Cost reductions
- Interconnections and redundancy for resilient supply
- Installation of smart meters
- Reduction of leaks and water loss (need an audit program to help fund water loss)
- What is being treated for (manganese, PFAS, etc.)
- Funding for treatment
- Not just individual LGUs – how do we understand this on a broader scale?
- Capacity of existing infrastructure
- Rate payer assistance to secure revenue

Ideas for tracking progress toward water quality goal

- MDH DWSMAs – 10-year goal that all vulnerable sources are protected. Are we

aligned?

- How are we protecting?
- BWSR 1W1P connections
- CWF investments
- Public health metrics with water quality ties (at community level – are there local issues emerging?)
- Funding for folks not on public supply? Especially for low-income households
- Lead pipes inventory (removal)

Ideas for tracking progress toward land use+water supply goal

- White Bear Lake challenges are resolved
- Water amounts available and how that is reflected in existing permits (how much is "left")
- Residential, industrial, business use - how much do they want to use and how much is allowed?
- Water balance – use, recharge (are we protecting areas for recharge?)
- One water analysis – is there a good opportunity to do water reuse to supplement/provide supply? How much water is available and can be used more than once?

Ideas for tracking progress toward groundwater/surface water interaction goal

- This is a tough one – groundwater and surface water operate on different timescales
- Health and function of groundwater dependent surface water features
- ID of priority areas that may need more in-depth modeling/study

Ideas for tracking progress toward sustainable water quantity goal

- Diversity of water being used (reuse, other sources)
- Impervious surface cover (as it limits recharge)
- Water conservation
- Per capita water use – reporting indoor and outdoor separately
- Progress against a goal – regional, subregional, individual LGUS
- Water balance (estimated time to an issue if current practices do not change, or what's your current status, types of practices needed)

4. Subregional Engagement (Jen Kader 651-602-1114)

Kader noted that subregional engagement is about to kick off with the goal of building a shared understanding at a subregional level for water supply as well as the sequencing and resources needed to sustain this effort over time. This approach is an adaptation of the existing subregions that extend to the edges of the metro area. McCarthy explained how the subregions were created, but the boundaries are flexible depending on circumstances. It's unclear how communities without municipal water supplies will want to engage but the conversation needs to be started.

5. Proposed Approach to 2050 Water Demand Projections (Greg Johnson 651-602-1016)

Johnson's presentation summarized the purpose of the water demand projections and how they are utilized in the region. He detailed the water demand methods that have been used in the past and compared them to the proposed method for the update to the Metro Area Water Supply Plan, which incorporates land use scenarios and a variable range.

Key discussion points included:

- Interest in winter water use (indoor), to calculate water fees.
- Think about how to estimate water demand for cities without public water supply systems.
- Don't have a big range of estimated water demand unless it is explained very well. The 20% range seems to represent short-term variability.
- Think of long-term average and potential short-term extreme high use.

Next Steps

- Start to prepare draft MWSP for public engagement in 2024
- Consider RDG milestones and WRPP policies drafted with committee input
- Share input on projects
- Work on revising MAWSAC and TAC bylaws and charter based on committee input
- Next MAWSAC meeting: November 14, 2023 – continue to draft MWSP content and explore regional water supply policy

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee meeting of August 8, 2023.

Approved this xx day of xx 2023.

Council contact:

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