

Minutes

Metropolitan Area Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting Date: September 8, 2022

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

- Chair, Mark Maloney
- Scott Anderson
- Kristin Asher
- John Dustman
- Robert Ellis

- Dale Folen
- Gary Krueger
- Crystal Ng
- Sam Paske
- Lin-in Rezanian
- Matt Saam

- Jim Stark
- Bruce Westby
- Jim Westerman
- Ray Wuolo

= present, E = excused, A = Absent

Call to Order

Committee Chair Maloney called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee to order at 1:05 p.m.; there was a quorum for the meeting.

Agenda Approved

Consensus; approved.

Approval of Minutes

Consensus; approved.

Information Items and Committee Work

Introduction to the master water supply plan update (Lanya Ross, 651-602-1803; Ali Elhassan, 651-602-1066)

Lanya Ross noted that the update of the Master Water Supply Plan (MWSP) is part of the committee's 2022 workplan and is required by Minnesota Statutes 473.1565. It is one piece of a larger regional planning effort which includes the Regional Development Framework, the Water Resources Policy Plan and connects to local water supply planning. She outlined why Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC), and other advisory committees are doing this regional planning work, which is shaped by Met Council Environmental Services vision for our region's water supply: clean water for future generations.

The approach and content of the MWSP reflect the fact that water supply is not a regional system. Water supply system operation is a local responsibility and planning is done locally in partnership with cities and state agencies. However, water supply sources are interdependent and local decisions can impact each other. Collaboration is a great way to pool and pull from our shared experience, expertise, and expectations. Articulating the value of participation will be important in our work as well.

Through her presentation, Lanya shared:

- The required content of the MWSP, per Minnesota Statutes 473.1565.
- Some staff observations about the last process to update the MWSP and ideas for this coming update.

- Proposed contents for the next MWSP update – a chapter articulating a regional vision and goals, a chapter providing region-wide water supply information/context, and subregional chapters. She acknowledged that These contents are different than the last version of the MWSP to support the feedback provided by our working groups, advisory committees, etc. We want those at the local level to be able to have ownership. Lanya noted that the proposed subregional chapters will likely be the bulk of the work; MAWSAC could be a steering committee to keep the work going and engaging the subregional groups in developing their chapters.
- A draft schedule for the different components of the proposed MWSP update – Lanya highlighted that, at the end of the day, MAWSAC has to approve the MWSP in 2024. There is much work – which is broken down over the next two years – to do before and leading up to that point. She asked committee members to make sure to get their leadership up to speed and onboard before they have to vote on it.

Proposed content for the introductory chapter of the master water supply plan (Lanya Ross, 651-602-1803; Ali Elhassan, 651-602-1066)

Lanya Ross outlined the proposed content for Chapter One of the MWSP and asked for committee input with the goal of sharing an updated document at a planned workshop on November 1 for the subregional water supply work groups and MAWSAC and TAC.

Subregional chapters of the master water supply plan (Lanya Ross, 651-602-1803; Ali Elhassan, 651-602-1066)

Ali Elhassan gave an overview of a proposed approach for subregional planning, with the goal of developing a framework for how subregional water supply planning groups could shape more customized content in the MWSP. This approach recognizes that each subregion has their own issues and values; there will be a local focus, and support for empowering communities to develop their own solutions / tackle the issues. This approach would generate content that was developed, owned, and implemented by the local communities to obtain and sustain water stability.

Draft content in water supply planning atlas (John Clark, 651-602-1452 and Henry McCarthy, 651-602-1946)

John Clark gave an overview about a project that could be used to support the work of this group, the Water Supply Planning Atlas. The atlas is a compendium of water data and information presented in a visual and narrative way. Its purpose is to assist with outreach and engagement and to promote a shared understanding of water supply and its issues. The regional story is a culmination of the individual, local stories.

John talked about:

- Potential audiences
- How the atlas can be used
- Challenges to developing such an atlas
- The design of the atlas
- Draft atlas contents at a regional scale and for different subregions
- Next steps

DISCUSSION:

Chair Maloney shared his appreciation for the project, noting that the northeast metro would have benefitted from this years ago. Success comes from what buy-in there is from subregions. He asked what would be the big win? What audience needs to know about it?

- John responded that a win would be helping public water suppliers to talk with their Council members and for customers to understand water supply challenges and the value of public water supplies. It would also be a win to support conversations between communities.



Committee member Stark asked if the atlas captures geologic atlas information. He highlighted some good information from old 1970's Metropolitan Council-U.S. Geological Survey reports like Norvitch, 1972.

Committee member Wuolo also suggested review of Geoffrey Delin's (U.S.G.S) infographics.

Committee member Kruger suggested a link to the MPCA groundwater contamination atlas.

Chair Maloney stressed the need to manage the update process, asking what frequency would be best or possible?

- John acknowledged the importance of periodically updating the atlas; some of the data it refers to is updated rarely, but some data is updated continuously. Consider using the subregional water supply work groups to guide this.

Committee member Asher shared her appreciation for this good work but noted that people are going to care about the issues that the atlas highlights. Where to funnel people who want to be engaged?

- John appreciated this point and stressed the need to think about addressing this as the project moves forward.

BREAK

Group discussion to shape proposed approach for developing subregional chapters of the master water supply plan (Lanya Ross, 651-602-1803; Ali Elhassan, 651-602-1066)

Lanya reconvened the group and asked the teams to address the big question: How can we approach this project in a way that works? This question is broken down into five (5) smaller areas of focus:

1. How (to effectively bring people together)?
2. Who (participates with what roles)?
3. What (is useful in subregional chapters; are the common themes; value to government vs. operations vs. consumers)?
4. So that... (what do people get out of it)?
5. Resources & challenges

Groups were given 10 minutes to discuss, and 10 minutes to create their recommendations to add to the board. The exercise was followed by discussion and clarification of points and questions proposed by the committee members.

Figures 1 and 2 below illustrate the group discussion.

Committee members identified these considerations for how to bring people together:

- Get political leaders, administrators on the team to support 'one water'
- Talk to managers of SWCD's, WMO's, etc. to get them engaged
- Clarity
- Resources (money, guidance)
- Have a good crisis
- Find trusted leaders as champions to encourage participation
- Don't jump to solutions before all can contribute to understanding the problem(s)
- Do a SWOT analysis at the start of subregional work
- Once started, keep the momentum going and focused; don't stop, unless there is no longer need to collaborate

Committee members identified these considerations for who should participate:

- MC = facilitate, provide information
- State – sign off on plans and provide resources
- Huge water users need to be part of it; private partners are beneficial (e.g. Savage)
- Ag community
- Current subregional water supply work group participants, because of high engagement and knowledge
- SWCD's and watershed authorities could be much more influential (and have funding), and county staff should be involved where surface water connects to groundwater
- Bring communication resources to the table to help with public messages
- Local elected officials, at the right time
- Roles may differ by topic issue in the subregional area

Committee members identified these considerations for what is useful:

- A statement of the problem(s)
- Emergency response collaboration
- Overlapping wellhead protection areas and vulnerability
- Separate chapters for counties?
- LCCMR grants prioritize joint projects

Committee members identified these considerations for what people will get out of it:

- It provides a forum to discuss local considerations together (e.g. wellhead protection plans)
- It helps for comprehensive plans; making it easier/better than starting fresh every 10 years
- It will share/coordinate/leverage communication with the public regarding progress and initiatives
- It will help with consistent messaging re: chloride so the public hears a clear rationale for action
- It will lead to shared water conservation program best practices and do some of it regionally (messaging, for example)
- It will increase interconnects to improve system resilience
- Interconnection challenges will be acknowledged, including their impacts for implementation (bypass?, change plan?) Example: technical challenges like flow, pressure, chemical issues, etc. Does it work?
- Local challenges are identified and considered in planning (including cross-city)
- Funding requests get support
- The region and communities are better prepared for uncertainties through collaboration and sharing information
- Infrastructure costs are avoided
- Goal uniformity supports better protection
- Source water is protected

Committee members identified these resources and challenges:

- Self-sufficiency, not recognizing connections
- Political subdivisions
- Competition
- Development pressures



- Crises that require immediate action different from long-term plans/goals
- Short-term versus long-term view

TAC 8/16/22 SUBREGIONAL APPROACH

④ HOW?
How to effectively bring people together?

③ WHO?
Who participates with what roles?

⑤ CHALLENGES

RESOURCES

SWOT analysis
@ start of subregional work

Advice
• Get political leaders, administ. on the team
• One water

Advice
Clarity resources (H, guidance)

Talk to Mgrs of SWCDs, WMOs, etc. to get them engaged

Have a good crisis 😊

once started, Keep the momentum going & focused. Don't stop, unless no more need to collab

MC = facilitate, info
State = sign off, provide resources

Everybody:
land use, pub. safety, electeds, city managers, subregional groups

3) Huge water users need to be part of it, private partners are beneficial (e.g. Sugar fin)

3) SUCD's, Water shed Authorities could be much more influential (+ funding?) + County Staff where SWD connects to gov.

3) Bring communication resources to the table to help w/ public messages

3) Local elected officials, at the right time

Current Sub reg. work group participants, because high engagement, knowledge

Ag. community

trusted leaders as champions to encourage participation

Don't jump to solutions before all can contribute to understanding of problem(s)

Barriers self sufficiency, not recognizing connections

Barriers Political subdiv. competition, development pressures

Crisis that requires immediate action different from longer-term plan/goal

Short-term vs long-term views

Figure 1. Poster one of two to support TAC discussion about a subregional approach.

To 2023 →

② WHAT?
What is useful in subregional chapters?

① SO THAT...
What do people get out of it?

Statement of problem(s)

Emergency Response Collaboration

Draw funds more easily (unique sources)

LCCMR grants prioritized joint projects

Avoid infrast. cost

Better prep. for uncertainties (collab, share info)

Goal uniformity & better protection

Source water protection

Funding requests get support

1) Provide a forum to discuss local considerations together, e.g. Well head protection plans.

1) Help w/ Comp Plans easier/better than starting fresh every 10 years

1) Increase interconnects to improve system resilience

1) Challenge - land use decisions, authority, development are held closely. (at the local level)

1) Share/coordinate/leverage communication w/ public regarding programs & initiatives

1) Help w/ consistent messaging re climate so the public hears a clear rationale for action

1) Share water conservation program best practices and do some of it regionally (averaging, for example)

Interconnects challenges are acknowledged - impact implementation (impass? change plan)

Tack challenges of flow, pressure... does it work? Chem. issues, etc....

Local challenges are identified & considered in planning (cross-city)

Overlapping well-head protection areas + vulnerability

Separate Chapter for Counties?

Figure 2. Poster two of two to support TAC discussion about a subregional approach.

Metropolitan Council updates (Ali Elhassan, 651-602-1066; Sam Paske, 651-602-1015)

Member updates

Next Steps

- Plan for the next committee meetings and fall workshop with subregional work groups
- Agency review (input from leadership) for chapter one, to support MAWSAC endorsement in December 2022
- Finalize proposal for subregional approach to master water supply plan update, to receive input/revision at fall workshop with subregional work groups

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee meeting of September 8, 2022.

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