

Minutes

Environment Committee



Meeting Date: November 08, 2022

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

Chair, Peter Lindstrom D11
 Vice Chair, Wendy Wulff D16

Raymond Zeran, District 9
 Susan Vento, District 11

Kris Fredson, District 14
 Phillip Sterner, District 15
 = present, E = excused

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lindstrom called the regular meeting of the Environment Committee to order at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by CM Wulff, seconded by CM Sterner to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2022 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

Consent Business

None at this time.

Non-Consent Business

1. **2022-280 JT: 2022 Unified Operating Budget 4Q Amendment (Matt Gsellmeier 651-602-1802)**

It was moved by CM Wulff seconded by CM Vento, that That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the amendment of the 2022 Unified Operating Budget as indicated in Attachment A, Table B-1 to increase wastewater expenses by \$7.925M and increase wastewater revenues by \$3.825M.

Discussion

CM Wulff: Are the increase in costs included for our budget next year?

Staff responded: We have included some of those price increases, we've been ramping up our materials and supplies knowing that those prices have been going up. There's some uncertainty I won't say for sure there might be some additional request for next year. We've captured in the millions, that impact without specifically saying what we might need in 2023.

CM Wulf stated: As long as that's accounted for next year that's fine.

CM sterne: Would it make sense to do longer range purchases or long-term contracts to avoid being at the mercy of inflation?

Staff responded: The challenges we are facing right now with chemical suppliers are there's only a few supplier that will complete the bid. They are uncertain about what's going to happen with inflation right now. We usually have contracts for a few years, when we can sign them, we will. We are facing the challenge right now of getting some of those longer-term contracts but we are working to put us in the best position possible.

CM Sterner: What numbers do you see for inflation?

Staff responded: We look at the current rates that we are paying, we also look at the demand that we are going to have, that's how we reach our projection.

Motion carried.

Information

1. **Climate Action Work Plan: Environmental Services Strategies (Jen Kostrzewski 651-602-1078, David Ponder 651-602-8369)**

Jennifer Kostrzewski, Environmental Analyst and Lisa Barajas, Executive Director of Community Development presented the Climate Action Work Plan, Environmental Services Strategies. This presentation discussed building on existing climate work, defining commitment strategies and actions to deliver services across the region. The Climate Action Work Plan will help in moving forward with their pledge made in Thrive MSP 2040, to become a climate leader.

Discussion

CM Wulff stated: I appreciate all the work Environmental Services (ES) has done. The only concern I have going forward is that we don't do anything that raises the cost or energy or makes it less reliable.

Chair Lindstrom stated: I am excited that this plan incorporates some of the things we are already doing and some of the things we could be doing as long as it makes financial sense and a good course of action on many different levels.

2. **2022 Residential Wastewater Rates (Dan Schueller, 651-602-1624)**

David Schuller, Principal Financial Analyst, presented the 2022 Residential Wastewater Rates. The presentation included the process of wastewater rate reviews over 111 communities in 2022. David discussed historical sewer charges per household, peer agency comparisons, and wastewater charge details.

Discussion

CM Vento: I am curious if there's any more clarification on north saint Paul and the significant amount that's being charged there. Any insights into this?

Staff responded: I'm not sure why that is, they have a base increasing block charge.

Chair Lindstrom stated: It's good to see that people are moving away from just the flat rate.

Reports

General Managers Report: Leisa Thompson, General Manager of Environmental Services stated, A contract that was approved last September for legal services was awarded a 5-year contract for 5 million. As of end of August we've spent \$246,000. We are getting really good value. I think we are in good hands, working with this firm and carefully using the funds.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Environment Committee meeting of November 08, 2022.

Council Contact:

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