

Minutes

Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee



Meeting Date: March 15, 2022

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members Present:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair, Wendy Wulff | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Huang, City of Chaska | A Michael Robinson, Chisago |
| A Annika Bankston, Minneapolis | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phil Klein, City of Hugo | A Jamie Schurbon, Anoka County |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeff Berg, Dept of Agriculture | A Brad Larson, City of Savage | A Patrick Shea, SPRWS. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sandeep Burman, MDH | A Susan Morris, Isanti County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Vollbrecht, St. Cloud PU |
| A Mark Daleiden, Wright County | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valerie Neppl, Dakota Cty | A Kevin Watson, Vadnais Heights |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Gleason, DNR | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catherine Neuschler, MPCA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tonja West-Hafner, Bklyn Park |
- = present, E = excused

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Wulff called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee to order at 1:01 p.m.

Agenda Approved

Chair Wulff noted that a roll call vote was not needed for approval of the agenda unless committee members offered an amendment to the agenda. Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the January 18, 2022 joint Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting minutes was moved by Committee Member Mike Huang, and seconded by Committee Member Phil Klein; **the motion carried.**

Information Items and Committee Work

2022 work plan proposal (Lanya Ross, Emily Steinweg)

Lanya Ross gave background information on the proposed work plan noting how MAWSAC fits into the preparation and informing of the Met Council's planning activities, such as the Metropolitan Council's Regional Development Guide (RDG), Water Resources Policy Plan (WRPP), Master Water Supply Plan (MWSP), and other regional plans and projects.

2022 Work Plan Proposal: Proposed Goals

- 1) Document summarizing how MAWSAC influenced regional plans and projects
- 2) Draft approach or proposed work plan to engage subregional work groups
- 3) Shared support for subregional approach to MWSP update

The 2022 MAWSAC Report is informing the conversations around state and regional policy, including informing budgets. Also, the report is now being shared with legislative and Council audiences.

Lanya thanked Chair Wulff for her February 9 Committee of the Whole presentation, and Member Klein, TAC Chair Mark Maloney and Committee Member Stark for their presenting for the Clean Waters Council.

Comments & Discussion:

Member Klein noted that the presentation was well-received; it assisted with building awareness of the issues we are facing. The regulations we need to meet for clean water may need to be redrafted to be more flexible.

Chair Wulff relayed that the Committee of the Whole & the Council were very receptive and highly appreciative of the work MAWSAC had done. She made a point to uplift the collaboration and bottom-up working style, which was praised by the committees.

Lanya mentioned an invitation to present the report to the Subcommittee on Minnesota Water Policy. She will send out a request for volunteers to present at this occasion once the date is set.

Current Framework & Examples for Feedback/Input

The planning framework includes the following hierarchy of documents; water supply is a regional responsibility and under the authority of our local communities:

- **Regional Planning Guide (Thrive MSP 2040):** sets the framework for our region including land use policy
- **2040 Water Resources Policy Plan:** provides a framework for integrative water planning (wastewater, water supply and surface water)
- **Master Water Supply Plan (2015):** Provides water supply-related considerations for developing regional and local plans and supporting programs
- **Local water supply plans:** provide information and identifies local actions for a sustainable water supply

Lanya gave an overview of opportunities for members to influence regional planning that they would encounter in 2022. To learn more, Committee members were encouraged to watch the presentation about the Regional Development Guide at the March 9 Metropolitan Council meeting.

Input Requested: Master Water Supply Plan

Because the master water supply plan will influence the update of regional plans, Council Water Supply planning staff asked committee members to consider the process from the last cycle and share reflections and lessons learned. This aids in:

- Transferring knowledge to new members
- Highlighting what content (technical information, priorities, etc.) or approaches should be kept and what needs to be updated in this next go-round

Committee members were asked:

- **What sticks out / did you like?**
 - Member Klein: Schedule and the milestones are very useful, giving a description of the work done, where we are at, and strategies to get to where we want to be.
 - Member Neopl: We recently updated our groundwater plan, and we used a lot of the information in this to guide our planning update. It has been very useful for local government units with decision making.
- **What do you want to see but didn't?**
 - Member Neopl: The plan focuses on water quantity, but not on pollutant impact.
 - Chair Wulff: PFAS blew up after this [document] was created and will be something we will need to address. Where people are in the development cycle (water needs in a new vs. an established home or area) is something we should consider. Also, new homeowners may not have the expendable income to invest in water-saving initiatives. Reaching out to cities to work with these new developments could be a venue – such as the classes for new homeowners.
 - Member Huang: When we think of water use, we think of it as an immediate need. If you look at it from a financial perspective, we need to be able to show a return on investment

(ROI) to incentivize a new (or other) homeowner to plant indigenous or other garden that reduces water need, and consider ways to shift the culture to assist all homeowners (in whatever stage) to use less water in the long-run. There may be opportunities when big developers submit their plans to look over the landscaping plans to incentivize them to use less sod and have more indigenous species (or other plants) to reduce the need for water.

- Ali Elhassan: How to incentivize developers – which was mentioned – is a gap as we have only targeted with current developments. We need to think about providing the funding for new developments as we plan for 2050. Outreach to developers could be an avenue.
- Member Burman: The new plan is really comprehensive and laid out the road map for the next several years very well. We have to keep it at a level that outlines finite goals.

Observations on the MWSP & New Framework

Emily asked for feedback on layout or other thoughts while reviewing the document. Lanya went over how the current MWSP process is slightly different from what staff are recommending for the next (2050) plan based upon the lessons learned. She outlined those observations, noting the more collaborative, grassroots model that is being developed in partnership with the communities that are being served. She opened up the floor to committee members to improve the process. Committee recommendations being:

- Work with the subregional water supply work groups, especially partners like the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
- Mural (if in a hybrid environment)
- Meet in-person and extend to three (3) hours to balance for the need to commute. For meetings with non-local customers (and in the chance of double-booking) it is helpful to have the hybrid option. Personal time before the meeting and light refreshments s will be provided.

Minn. Stat. § 13D.02, subd. 4 (emphasis added). The location of Council members who participate in a “hybrid” meeting from remote locations must be noticed because, when some Council members participate in Council or committee meetings by interactive technology “each location at which a member . . . is present [must be] open and accessible to the public.”

Government affairs and legislative update (Ali Elhassan, Sam Paske)

Ali stated that many bills which are being (or have been) introduced are having a great impact on our water planning (e.g. the bill specific to White Bear Lake). He asked that we begin incorporating speakers from partner organizations and to provide us with updates surrounding the issues they are facing, especially given the dynamic situation with regard to water management in the region.

Next Steps

- Finalize work plan and design 2022 meetings
- Verify committee meeting schedule; REVIEW AND PROVIDE INPUT on bylaws
- Support filling committee vacancies

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:33 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 March 15, 2022.

Approved this 00 day of Mo 2022.

Council Contact:

Tessa Wegenke, Recording Secretary
Tessa.Wegenke@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1274