

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 13, 2018

Committee Members Present:

Sandra Rummel-Chair, Cara Letofsky, Marie McCarthy, Harry Melander, Wendy Wulff-Vice Chair, Edward Reynoso, Lona Schreiber

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Rummel called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:03 p.m. on Tuesday, January 23, 2018.

APPROVAL OF AMENDED AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Cara Letofsky, seconded by Wendy Wulff to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2018 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. Motion carried.

BUSINESS

1. 2018-42 SW Reclaimed Water Agreements with Enerkem

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Harry Melander that the Metropolitan Council authorize staff to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding and a Design Cost Deposit Agreement with Enerkem related to reclaimed water service. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. Customer Service:

Jeannine Clancy, Assistant General Manager, Technical Services and Ned Smith, Director, Finance and Revenue provided a summary of efforts MCES is doing to address customer service as part of its strategic vision process. MCES's vision is to be a valued leader and partner in water sustainability. The first way to address this is through improving our customer service by implementing a customer service improvement plan by September 2018.

Our customers are defined as communities, industries, and watershed management districts as well as organizations. Our stakeholders include internal and external people and entities who have an interest in our work.

Our role is to protect public health and the environment in partnership with our customer communities and promote the economic vitality of the region.

Our customer service philosophy is to be committed to strengthening customer relationships by being proactive, accessible, responsive, respectful, and transparent while delivering valued services to our community partners.

To begin this effort, we looked at the value of the services and had conversations with our stakeholders and customers. Value was broken down in to 3 segments: financial; health, safety, and environment; and customer service.

Financial focuses on charges and fees, retain our AAA bond rating, optimize the budget plan, preserve our assets, and be fair and transparent by communicating with customers. For health, safety, and environment we want to be sure we comply with permits, minimize impacts and lead by example. For customer service, we want to be a good neighbor, meet capacity needs, communicate information, engage customers, and coordinate with others.

Our 2018 customer service initiatives are to conduct a third-party customer service evaluation, continue improvement of Customer Forums and provide MWC data based on feedback received in 2017, launch a customer service coaching program, tailored to each department's needs, for MCES staff and direct interactions with customers, and continue development of a customer portal to improve online access to information with MCES.

Comments / Questions:

No comments or questions at this time.

2. Wastewater Reuse-Related Amendments to the Water Resources Policy Plan Update:

Jeannine Clancy provided an update on the public process for the wastewater reuse-related amendments to the Water Resources Policy Plan. The process has begun to engage the public and obtain feedback with the three alternatives to the Plan outlined in prior meetings. Two workshops and a public hearing have been scheduled. The South Metro Location will take place at the Inver Grove Heights Community Center in Community Room 1 on Tuesday, February 27 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., The North Metro Location will take place at the Brooklyn Park Library in the Mississippi River room on Thursday, March 1 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The public hearing has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 13 from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Metropolitan Council offices in St. Paul in room LLA.

Public comments would be received until March 23 after which a summary of all formal comments received would be presented to the Environment Committee on April 10 and then the Council on April 25.

Comments / Questions:

A suggestion was made to consider holding workshops and public hearings later in the day to allow those who work during the day an opportunity to attend. Staff stated due to the focus of the workshops and hearing is policy largely related to the municipal wastewater charge, the target audience is public works directors, elected officials, city managers and financial officers. The workshops and meetings are scheduled to facilitate their attendance as part of their work day. Members of the public still have an opportunity to comment. Project meetings are typically scheduled during the evening hours to allow members of the public to attend. Adjustments could be made at the direction of this committee.

Chair Rummel concurred those who attend the workshops are typically city staff and the public hearing is available for public comment. It was suggested to leave the schedule as printed.

Copies of the public notice will be provided to the committee members.

Committee Members are encouraged attend the workshops and/or the public hearing.

Committee Member Wulff volunteered to chair the public hearing.

3. General Manager Report:

Attended the 2018 NACWA Winter Conference and Board Meeting during the week of February 5 through 9. One of the sessions was helpful, in that it discussed resiliency in the face of crisis. Presentations were heard from Houston and California after the hurricane and fires. Good insights were shared for crisis management such as damage assessments, load and impact on staff.

Appreciating the excellent work our staff does when compared to other utilities across the United States. We celebrate of successes. Looking forward to 2018. We feel strong support from this Committee.

Chair Rummel was supportive of our vision to be a valued leader and partner in water sustainability. Great work.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary