

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

Committee Members Present:

Peter Lindstrom, Chair; Kris Fredson; Phillip Sterner; Susan Vento; Wendy Wulff, Vice Chair; Raymond Zeran

Committee Members Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lindstrom called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:01 p.m. on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 with the following roll call:

Aye: 6 Lindstrom, Fredson, Sterner, Vento, Wulff, Zeran
Absent: 0

Chair's statement was read at the beginning of the meeting as follows:

NOTICE: The Metropolitan Council Chair has determined it is not practical or prudent to conduct in-person meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, committee members will participate in this meeting via telephone or other electronic means and the meeting will be conducted under Minnesota Statutes section 13D.021 at the date and time stated above. We encourage you to monitor the meeting remotely. If you have comments, we encourage members of the public to email us at public.info@metc.state.mn.us. We will respond to your comments in a timely manner.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Without objection the agenda was approved.

It was moved by Sterner, seconded by Vento to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2021 regular meeting of the Environment Committee.

Aye: 6 Lindstrom, Fredson, Sterner, Vento, Wulff, Zeran
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 0

Motion carried.

BUSINESS

2021-242: Industrial Control System (ICS) Host Server Hardware, Contract 21P107

It was moved by Zeran, seconded by Wulff, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute Contract 21P107 with Paragon Development Systems, Inc. and Marco, Inc., to provide the Council with equipment from Cisco and Hewlett Packard host server hardware for the Industrial Control Systems (ICS) in an amount not to exceed a total of \$523,092.

Aye: 6 Lindstrom, Fredson, Vento, Sterner, Wulff, Zeran
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

Motion carried.

2021-243 JT: PFAS Legal Services Contract, Contract 21P096

It was moved by Fredson, seconded by Vento, that the Metropolitan Council authorizes its Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract for PFAS legal services, projects 807849 and 808941, contract 21P096, to Barnes & Thornburg LLP for legal services including legal advice and consultation on PFAS-related issues in an amount not to exceed \$5,000,000.00.

Aye:	4	Lindstrom, Fredson, Vento, Wulff
Nay:	0	
Abstain:	2	Sterner, Zeran

Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. MAWSAC/TAC Update

Staff presented an update on the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). MAWSAC and TAC were established by Minnesota Statutes 473.1565 to assist the Council in its water supply planning work. Wendy Wulff chairs MAWSAC, and Mark Maloney of Shoreview is the chair of TAC. Currently, the committees are focused on a shared work plan to develop a 2022 report to both the Metropolitan Council and legislature, which will include water supply-related recommendations. This resource will be available to the Council and stakeholders as the regional development guide (currently called Thrive MSP 2040) is updated. MAWSAC and TAC have been meeting regularly this year to develop water supply-related recommendations in the areas of water quality and contamination, intersection of land use and water supply, groundwater-surface water interaction, and infrastructure. Draft problem statements, goals, and actions discussed by the committees were shared. Drafting the 2022 report content will begin shortly, and there will be opportunities for review by committees and key stakeholders before the report is finalized and approved by MAWSAC and shared with the Council and legislature.

Comments and Questions:

Chair Lindstrom stated since we are talking about problems happening today that are a result of land use decisions from year past, what problems specifically do you think are happening today. Staff stated there is a range of examples in our region. We are addressing sites that were caused by past land use practices. Even though land use has changed, the contamination still persists because it takes time to filter out of the system.

Staff member Ali Elhassan shared that MAWSAC is a unique advisory committee to the Council that is responsible for the approval of the Master Water Supply Plan in addition to being an advisory committee.

2. Update on Land Application Communications Materials for Dakota County

Staff presented a brief review of the history and current state of the Land Application program at the Empire WWTP and summarizes feedback received during recent outreach efforts to customer communities and program partners. Feedback was used to enhance communications about the program. Staff will review new messaging, communications materials, and summarize the recent investments made to support land application program improvements.

Comments and Questions:

Chair Lindstrom stated he recalls we have 1500 or so acres in the program and anticipated growth. How much growth is anticipated in the next year to 5 years. Staff stated the facility requires approximately 500 acres per year currently. With growth, the facility is physically able to produce double the current biosolids amount, requiring approximately 1,000 acres. This does not account for changes in precision farming practices or regulatory requirements that may impact land use needs.

Committee Member Vento inquired if other waste treatment systems around the country that may be doing something similar. Staff stated land application is a common practice. If we consider nationwide, it is more than half of the wastewater utilities that do land application. In Minnesota, it could be 90% as it is very common.

3. General Manager Report

In the near future we will bring an information item on our equity goal work. As part of that work, Committee Members were reminded about the Diamond Inclusiveness Assessment they recently received. This is part of the equity initiative work which aligns with Council equity goals and helps Environmental Services. This survey was sent to a cross section of internal and external stakeholders which will help us identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement. Input is valuable, confidential, and will close on September 24.

If Committee members have items they would like brought before this committee, please let leisa.thompson@metc.state.mn.us know.

Committee Member Sterner shared that he recently went to the Southwest part of the state and was able to see water issues they experience. Most of their wells are 65 feet deep and have water shortage issues. There are creative ways of addressing the issues.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Environment Committee Meeting of September 14, 2021.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary