

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 12, 2017

#### Committee Members Present:

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

#### Committee Members Absent:

Edward Reynoso

#### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Rummel called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:02 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12, 2017.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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

It was moved by Lona Schreiber, seconded by Harry Melander to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2017 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. Motion carried.

#### BUSINESS

1. 2017-286 SW Wastewater Reuse Policy Task Force Report  
It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber, that the Metropolitan Council accept the Wastewater Reuse Policy Task Force Report. Motion carried.
2. 2017-287 SW Wastewater Reuse-Related Amendments to the Water Resources Policy Plan  
It was moved that the Metropolitan Council authorize a public hearing on the proposed wastewater reuse-related amendments to the Water Resource Policy Plan. Withdrawn.

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber to postpone consideration of the item and refer to Committee of the Whole for further discussion prior to Environment Committee and full Council authorization of a public hearing. Motion Carried.

3. 2017-288 SW Joint Powers Agreement with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for the Watershed Outlet Monitoring Program  
It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber, that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to negotiate a joint powers agreement with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to accept and expend Clean Water Funds from the Minnesota Legislature to continue the monitoring of seven streams and river segments in the Council's watershed outlet monitoring program. Motion carried.

#### INFORMATION

1. Proposed Sewage Thermal Energy Recovery at Towerside:

Jeannine Clancy, Assistant General Manager, Technical Services, and Larry Rogacki, Assistant General Manager, Support Services provided an update on a wastewater energy recovery project at the Towerside development in the Prospect Park area of Minneapolis.

Potential benefits include reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a less expensive source of energy.

Staff shared that we have limited information from the proposer and limited information on comparable systems in operation. At present there are several operational considerations and questions including corrosion, additional odor issues, solids disposition, flow interruption, inspection, maintenance costs, access for maintenance crews and biological treatment process impacts.

Additionally, construction considerations and questions include risk of impacts during construction to an existing large, deep interceptor in a highly urbanized area, and the temporary conveyance needed for construction. These situations will also raise the cost of construction.

The Council does not currently have the legal authority to sell or gift heat value to private entities or pass on related costs to municipal wastewater treatment ratepayers. Regulatory risk and compliance with our NPDES permit is another consideration and question.

The proposer will be given the opportunity to respond to the questions and considerations. In order for the Council to consider this proposal further, a funding source would be required.

#### Questions or Comments:

A Committee Member inquired if Towerside had made a formal application request. Staff stated the concept was shared as an information item at this Committee in 2015. No formal written application request has been received. Staff stated we met with the proposer to share questions and concerns.

Committee Member Melander disclosed he sits on the board of the organization making the request. He stated he appreciates the due diligence that has occurred, and that this area of the region was given a grant to explore an alternate energy source for the Stadium Village area. He suggested providing an opportunity to continue the conversation. Staff stated a letter has been drafted and will be sent with our considerations and questions to Ever-Green Energy. Their response will be shared with this Committee.

A Committee Member clarified that if we were to do more work with this project a budget would be needed. The legislative piece is also critical and other partners would be needed to move that forward.

A Committee Member asked if geothermal could be considered instead. Staff stated the density of the area would require the drilling of many wells as well as additional space and cost is a consideration. The Committee member further stated she didn't want to put a lot of staff time in to it. She was in support of giving Ever-Green Energy an opportunity to respond. She also expressed concerns about the Council lobbying for someone else's project.

A Committee Member stated the proposer should be the initiator of needed legislative changes.

Chair Rummel stated she was concerned with the minimal information shared as well as the perceived amount of work that may be expected for the Council to undertake as part of the project. She asked if staff had talked to the other three facilities who have implemented this type of project. Staff stated we have approached the facility in Vancouver, developed as part of the Olympics, and learned maintenance and labor costs were higher than expected. We have not spoken with Scotland or New Jersey (which is not a pretreatment sewage thermal application).

## 2. General Manager Report:

Thank you for your support of our work in 2017. We look forward to 2018. We've seen interest in collaborating for integrated water management. For example, despite poor weather and driving conditions, 74 participants attended a full-day Water Summit on December 5 and discussed priorities and how to move forward. Staff who put the day together did a great job.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Susan Taylor  
Recording Secretary