

Minutes

Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting Date: March 12, 2024

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

Chair, Scott Anderson
 Kristin Asher
 John Dustman
 Robert Ellis

Dale Folen
 Elizabeth Kaufenberg
 Kim Larsen
 Matt Saam

Jim Stark
 Jim Westerman
 Ray Wuolo

= present

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Anderson called the regular meeting of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee to order at 12:07 p.m.

Agenda Approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Saam, seconded by Folen to approve the minutes of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee of October 10, 2023. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Folen, seconded by Stark to approve the minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Policy Advisory Committee (MAWSAC) and Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of January 9, 2024. **Motion carried.**

Information Items and Committee Work

1. Committee Administration (Greg Johnson 651-602-1016)

Johnson presented the results of the availability survey and the committee discussed the meeting schedule for the remainder of 2024 and 2025. No changes were indicated for 2024 meetings. Saam noted a conflict on 2nd Wednesdays and Folen a conflict on 4th Tuesdays. The committee also agreed to keep the June 18th meeting date for the next TAC meeting.

2. Forecasts Update (Greg Johnson 651-602-1016)

Johnson summarized the population forecasts and noted that version 1 is out for public comment. Version 2 is expected to go out for comment summer 2024 and there will be a public hearing in the fall.

Saam asked if the Systems Statements are available yet. Kostrzewski responded that they are released after the plan is approved and are expected September 2025.

Johnson also provided an update on the metro region water demand projections. The Water Supply planning group is coordinating its projected water service populations with the Wastewater planning group's sewer service populations which will not be available until mid-May. Johnson also stated that the water demand projections will be available on Met Council's website when they become available versus in the appendix of the Water Supply Plan which

was done for the previous plan.

3. Subregional Input and TAC Discussion (Lanya Ross, 651-602-1803)

Ross summarized the feedback obtained from the subregional input process. She thanked committee members for their time and efforts to launch the water supply planning at a subregional level approach. Ross noted that other comments and feedback are welcome and will be incorporated into revised chapters by the May meeting.

Anderson shared that he participated in West and Central subregional meetings and thought they went well. He said that the joint workshop was really well done and well-attended with a lot of opportunity to collaborate and provide input.

Ross asked for advice on identifying gaps or techniques to engage others that haven't participated as actively in the process yet, particularly rural water users.

Stark noted that, in the table on slide 10 of the presentation, there are many more similarities than differences. This surprised him, as he initially expected there to be more differences. Ross noted that the shared high-level focus area is similar amongst all subregions, but how the actions are carried out is where there will be more differences between subregions. Folen noted that the categories in the chart are broad enough that many issues fit. He gave the example of water quantity. Water quality concerns are vastly different in each of the subregions, but they all fit under the "water quantity" category in the chart.

Ross noted that one of the challenges of crafting a 10-year plan is to identify the right level of detail and specificity. Ross requested that the TAC review each of the subregional chapters as they have interest and time and share feedback and suggestions with staff.

The TAC participated in a small-group activity regarding requests of the Met Council. They provided the following feedback:

- Stark noted that a lot of the items regarding lab standards, labs, and analysis seem to be a state agency responsibility with no role for the Met Council.
- Wuolo noted that some issues are statewide, but likely have more importance in the metro area. He gave the example of chlorides.
- Anderson noted that you can't stop at the metro area boundary. We have to acknowledge what's going on in the rest of the state.
- Kostrzewski noted that sometimes when looking to address problems that are statewide and working with agency partners that the metro area can be used as a pilot area.
- Folen noted that we have the resources in the metro to pilot or show what is possible, but we still need to work out a solution.
- Stark noted that the Met Council's capacity to build relationships with others is a strength and ability of the Met Council and could be used to bring people together to address issues like road salt.
- Asher asked if there's a way to put out a call to action to agencies or other statewide resources.
- Kostrzewski noted that the Met Council's role has historically been as a conduit through which agencies work with local governments in the metro area and that there is now the potential to make that flow go both ways.
- Folen noted that he disagrees with developing a central tracking tool for water supply infrastructure. Anderson agreed.
- Ellis asked if there were any suggestions from the subregional groups with which Met Council staff disagreed. Ross and Kostrzewski noted that there are some actions that will need to be reviewed by Council staff and leadership to determine what our role should be, and that the process is just beginning. Feedback will be used to revise the



subregional chapters.

4. **Water Policies and Metro Water Supply Plan (Jen Kostrzewski 651-602-1078 and Lanya Ross 651-602-1803)**

The TAC participated in a small group activity to review the water supply actions that local stakeholders identified as being regionwide or having a strong Met Council role and connecting them to draft policies in for the Water Policy Plan. The following feedback was provided.

Local stakeholder-identified water supply actions where the TAC didn't see a fit in the draft regional policy structure that was presented:

- Urban agriculture opportunities and workforce development
- Financial assistance, support funding, west metro model

Local stakeholder-identified water supply actions that fit the draft regional policy structure but that TAC members felt shouldn't be a Met Council role:

- Incentivize business
- Peer to peer outreach for private well and septic owners (rural)
- Suggest multi-jurisdictional planning and support it (what's the difference from what's different from what's being done now?) This seems duplicative.
- Work group to ID changes to statutory requirements.
- Change water source determination – “determination” is too strong of a word
- Determine needed chemistry for injection – this should be a MDH role
- Inventory data analysis with laboratories
- Conservation ordinance database – this should be a DNR role
- Central tracking tool – a firm no to this idea
- Data collection standards – this has been done by others
- WW treatment discharge vs. aquifer recharge

Kostrzewski summarized the regional planning cycle. She noted that TAC feedback helped to see how objectives could be consolidated.

5. **Three Plans Update (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803)**

Ross summarized the goal, intent, and timeline of the Three Plans project. The TAC participated in a small group activity to review the possible changes and provide feedback.

- Abby Shea (MDH) noted that feedback she has heard from stakeholders was that changing DNR and Met Council deadlines could allow some synergies for smaller cities to be considering all of the same type of planning at the same time especially if they hire a consultant to do both.
- Anderson noted that flipping the approach to knowing the capacity of the natural resources could be helpful in determining how many people could be served instead of vice versa.
- Wuolo noted that there is no other option than to expand the regional modeling and local water supply planning cannot be done in isolation. Ross noted that there are questions about who should own and be responsible for the model.
- Shea noted that municipal engineering and public works aren't always on the same page as municipal planners and they are looking for guidance from Met Council on land use to protect drinking water areas.
- Ross noted that there is a Three Plans steering team meeting tomorrow and will bring these items to the steering team as part of that.



6. Government Affairs and Legislative Update (Sam Paske, 651-602-1015 and Greg Johnson, 651-602-7464)

HF 3536 (Elkins) introduced to make water supply and housing a regional system. Met Council was surprised by this and Paske noted that it does not mesh well with the approach that Met Council is currently taking with water suppliers and there are concerns that it may undermine the work and trust that has been built. There is currently no companion bill in the Senate and the proposed bill modifies statute chapter 473 where the definition of a system is not clear cut. It only fits into the capital budget portion and is unclear how it this could practically be done.

Anderson asked what the intent is from the Met Council. Paske noted that Met Council will be very transparent as more is learned. There have been additional conversations with Metro Cities acknowledging concerns and the work that has been done to build up trust.

Johnson noted that the kickoff meeting for the White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan work group occurred in January. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 14th where the problem statement will be developed and the DNR will be giving an update on the groundwater model in the area. The work group is scheduled to meet again in April to begin evaluating solutions. It is anticipated that TAC input will be solicited as part of the process. The report is due to the legislature by June 30, 2027.

7. TAC Chair Update (Scott Anderson 952-563-4867)

Anderson noted the collaboration and cooperation that has been built over a long period of time. He thanked the folks that volunteered to be at the subregional work groups and noted that Met Council staff rely quite a bit on TAC input.

There are four current vacancies on TAC with five applications to fill those vacancies. The original approach was to wait for the governor to fully appoint MAWSAC and then MAWSAC would fill TAC after that, but it has been more than a year and the timeline for the governor's appointments is still unclear. The TAC agreed to request that MAWSAC fill the TAC vacancies sooner.

Stark noted that this week is National Groundwater Awareness Week.

Next Steps

1. Share TAC input with MAWSAC at MAWSAC's April meeting
2. Next TAC meeting: Joint meeting with MAWSAC on May 15, 2024
 - Review draft MWSP content and connections to regional water supply policy
 - Discuss how stakeholder input has shaped the draft
 - Provide advice and support for public review process

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee meeting of March 12, 2024.

Approved this 23rd day of October 2024.

Council contact:

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