

Minutes

Environment Committee



Meeting Date: May 9, 2023

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

Chair, Peter Lindstrom D11
 Vice Chair, Wendy Wulff D16

Tyrone Carter, District 3
 Anjuli Cameron, District 5
 Yassin Osman, District 8

Diego Morales, District 9
 Gail Cederberg, District 12
 = present, E = excused

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lindstrom called the regular meeting of the Environment Committee to order at 4:00 p.m.

Agenda Approved

With no objections the agenda was approved. Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. **Motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by CM Wulff, seconded by CM Carter to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2023 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

Consent Business

None at this time.

Non-Consent Business

1. **2023-98: Ratification of Declaration of Emergency Repair of Interceptor 8253-327 along State Highway 41 in Chanhassen** (Chris Remus, 651-602-4538)

It was moved by CM Wulff, seconded by CM Cederberg, that Metropolitan Council ratify the Emergency Declaration for repairs to Interceptor 8253-327 along State Highway 41 in Chanhassen in the amount not to exceed \$1,000,000.

Discussion

CM Wulff asked: When was the last time the pipe was inspected?

Staff responded: There hasn't been a camera in this particular pipe because it is a forcemain, which makes it difficult to almost impossible to inspect.

CM Carter asked: When was the pipe originally installed?

Staff responded: I believe in the early 1980's.

CM Cameron asked: Can you speak to what the protocols are for pipe failure and how quickly we initiated that response?

Staff responded: We try to work as quickly as possible. MCES service workers noticed it

around 7am in the morning, after further investigation by MCES CCTV crews, an emergency declaration was submitted that afternoon. The Emergency Declaration was approved by the Regional Administrator that evening, and work began the following morning. Because of operational risks to the system, we try and address these situations as soon as we can.

Motion carried.

2. 2023-103: Ratification of Emergency Declaration for Repair of Minneapolis Interceptor 1-MN-330 MH 71 (Tim Wedin, 651-602-4571)

It was moved by CM Wulff, seconded by CM Osman, that the Metropolitan Council ratify the Emergency Declaration for repairs of the maintenance hole for Interceptor 1-MN-330 at 27th Street West and Girard Avenue South in Minneapolis in an amount not to exceed \$350,000.

Discussion

CM Wulff asked: Could they not see the damage right away or did they damage it as a result of trying to fix the other part?

Staff responded: It is unclear, we are still doing some investigating on whether the damage was done prior to the repair the City was doing as a part of the sinkhole or was caused due to the City's repair work in the area.

CM Cameron asked: Are there other jurisdictions where they have control of the pipes feeding into our interceptors?

Staff responded: That is fairly standard for a lot of our system. When other cities connect into our systems, where they're conveying regional flows, we are the ones controlling and operating that system.

CM Cederberg asked: Will the City of Minneapolis pay for some of the repair or is it solely the responsibility of MCES?

Staff responded: We will repair our manhole and then the City of Minneapolis will make their repair and build their connect to our manhole. They will also do the road reconstruction as well.

Motion carried.

Information

3. Launching the FOG Task Force (Martina Nelson 651-602-4728, Andrew Wiatros 651-602-4736)

Staff from the Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention Section presented on launching the FOG Task force. FOG, defined as Fats, Oils, and Grease, is disruptive when discharged into a drain. It sticks to the sides of sewer pipes restricting wastewater flow, which ultimately can lead to a blockage. MCES has noticed a continual increase in FOG discharged at liquid waste receiving sites as well as throughout our conveyance systems.

Launching the FOG Task Force will:

- Help support and educate our communities, businesses, and residents
- Assist customer community concerns regarding FOG discharge from neighboring establishments, food services, industry, and schools
- Help mitigate the overall amount of FOG entering the sewer systems

By launching the FOG Task Force, staff will be able to gauge interest in developing a regional FOG strategy, developing a toolkit for communities & businesses, as well as strengthening relationships with community customers and businesses. In the future the task force hopes to



secure funding and grants to help communities in developing dedicated FOG control programs and to assist businesses install properly sized grease interceptors and providing education on proper maintenance in the process.

Discussion

CM Cederberg asked: What regulations are in place for the disposal of FOG into wastewater?

Staff responded: It depends on the source:

Industrial facilities: The Industrial Waste & Pollution Prevention Section has the authority to address the excessive FOG discharge as a prohibited waste discharge.

Food service establishments: Our rules give us the same authority, but we typically partner with the community to try and get the food service establishment to install or replace the grease interceptor with a properly sized one. Authority and options for action vary from city to city based on the adopted ordinance.

CM Carter asked: What percentage of the restaurants contribute to FOG breakdown?

Staff responded: We don't have those numbers quiet yet, the majority of the issues tend to be where there are a lot of restaurants.

CM Carter: An individual restaurant wouldn't have an individual interceptor, it would be within a group area?

Staff responded: Every food establishment should have their own grease interceptor. When there are issues downstream of a food service establishment, we can track it back to them pretty well.

4. MCES Budget, Rates and Workshops (Ned Smith, 651-602-1162)

Staff from Pretreatment and Finance presented on preliminary budget, rates, and workshops for MCES. A comparison of the 2024 executive summary was discussed. 2024 preliminary regional municipal wastewater charges have increased by 6.8 percent (17.9 million) due to inflation. The 2024 revenue sources, \$361 million, can largely be attributed to municipal wastewater charges, at 78 percent. Transfers from SAC, industrial waste charges, and the use of reserves also contribute to revenue sources. \$361M of expenses include:

- Debit services
- Salaries & Benefits
- Materials, Supplies & Chemicals
- Rents & Utilities
- Interdivisional services
- Consulting & Contractual
- Pay GO and other miscellaneous expenses

Staff shared the 2024 Rate Setting Schedule that began May 4, 2023 and will extend through August 23, 2023. The schedule includes in-person and virtual industrial workshops, municipal customer forums, an Environment Committee review of customer input & 2024 rate adoption recommendations, Council rate adoption, and the Council preliminary operating budget adoption.

Discussion

Chair Lindstrom asked: Do cities add their own charges on top of ES' SAC fees?

Staff responded: It depends on the city and its infrastructure.

CM Carter: Can you explain what brewery strength charges are?



Staff responded: Brewery's do great work to recycle and capture as much of the spent grains but some of it still comes through the pipes to us and it costs more to treat it than domestic waste. The small to medium breweries are charged a per barrel charge at 97 cents a barrel.

Reports

General Manager, Leisa Thompson, welcomed the new committee members. She shared that the Environment committee workplan will be presented at the next meeting to help give a sense of what's ahead.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Environment Committee meeting of May 9, 2023.

Approved this 00 day of Month 2023.

Council Contact:

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