

**Minutes of the
REGULAR MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA WATER SUPPLY TECHNICAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Committee Members Present:

Kristin Asher, Bob Cockriel, John Dustman, Klayton Eckles, Dale Folen, Mark Maloney, G.H. Crystal Ng, Jamie Wallerstedt, Bruce Westby and Ray Wuolo.

Jason Moeckel, DNR Advisor

Committee Members Absent:

Jennifer Levitt, Chris Petree, Lih-in-Rezania, Lon Schemel and James Stark.

Dean Lotter, MAWSAC Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Mark Maloney convened the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Area Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at 1:05 p.m. on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was reviewed with those present and approved unanimously.

The minutes of the January 3, 2017 regular meeting of the Metropolitan Area Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Committee were approved unanimously.

Staff indicated that Lon Schemel has decided to resign his position. Staff will review the pool of candidates to identify a local government representative from the SW geographical area to nominate as a replacement.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Proposal for How to Discuss Agenda Items – Dave Brown, Metropolitan Council

It was suggested that if members have something to say but are having a hard time finding an opening that they set their name tents on end to get the Chair's attention. The members agreed that this was a good idea, but doing this is not necessary to speak.

2. MAWSAC Update – Dean Lotter, MAWSAC Liaison

This item was skipped due to Dean Lotter's absence.

3. Update on Legislative Water Related Activities - Sam Paske, Metropolitan Council

A brief synopsis was given regarding current legislative activities related to water supply planning. Items of particular interest include the proposal for a reuse exemption from DNR permitting for projects meeting specific requirements and Governor Dayton's 25 by 25 goal to improve MN water quality 25% by 2025.

4. Technical Studies Discussion - Dave Brown, Metropolitan Council

Staff initiated a discussion of the results of the TAC member survey regarding the most critical water supply planning technical studies and how to prioritize them. Staff indicated that concerns about long term sustainability were most prevalent while there was little mentioned about short term risk.

Key highlights of the discussion included doing a better job of using the information and tools already available and taking a more cohesive approach to regional water supply sustainability measures. The group also identified a topic they feel may not have been given adequate consideration so far: the quality of water available for use.

The issue of regional contingency planning was also discussed. For instance, what happens in a multi-year drought with a longer growing season, possibly brought about by climate change? How do we create the kind of resiliency necessary to meet those types of challenges?

It was stated that existing tools and information are not being fully utilized to inform decisions. The conversation then turned to modeling, which can be used to incorporate data to make better decisions. Of course, no method of forecasting is 100% accurate, but a well-designed model with reliable inputs can be a very powerful tool to help inform decisions. Continuing to build upon the work already put into developing Metro Model 3 to improve the credibility of the outputs to help us better understand current conditions and future possibilities is critical. Models are “living” entities that constantly need to be recalibrated to accommodate new data, which is always coming in and therefore require ongoing support to remain as useful as possible.

5. Data Analysis Discussion - Dave Brown, Metropolitan Council

Staff initiated a discussion of the results of the TAC member survey regarding data analysis. Discussion of agenda items four and five largely ran together, as members generally indicated that in order to decide which technical studies are most critical, first we must understand what data is available and how it is used. This discussion will help identify gaps and determine which technical studies are most critical to regional water supply sustainability efforts.

Staff stated that credibility of data is extremely important and asked members to consider what we need for our analyses to be useful. What should be considered and what do we need are questions that need to be answered. Staff asked members to provide via email a list of their “go to” data sets for compilation by staff. Members indicated a desire to focus on real time rather than existing data and asked what data municipalities should be providing and how so it can be put to best use.

Interpretation of data is critical to put together a more complete picture of current conditions and identify how this may be effected by different scenarios through modeling. It was suggested that existing models can be used to identify gaps where more monitoring is necessary to develop a better picture of existing conditions. How to effectively communicate uncertainty will be critical to creating confidence in modeling outputs. It was then stated that the TAC’s first focus should be on the biggest threats to water supply sustainability which include large scale catastrophic issues such as contamination and lack of available water.

Staff asked if there is anything that MAWSAC should be focusing on. The need for effective data collection and management was identified. In addition, members indicated that both non-potable reuse and securing long term funding for regional water supply planning efforts are issues that they would like to see MAWSAC focus on first. In order to ensure that we are well positioned to obtain and manage data, as well as develop and maintain credible modeling capabilities, a permanent source of ongoing funding will be critical.

NEXT TAC MEETING

Staff indicated that according to the agreed upon schedule, the next TAC meeting will be held on May 2, 2017. The meeting will be at the Council's Metro 94 Office, since Room LLA at the Council's Robert Street Office is unavailable for that date.

Staff indicated that, due to the location for the next meeting, there is an opportunity to explore the MCES Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention and Air Quality functions housed at Metro 94 either before or after the meeting, if anyone is interested.

Staff asked members to watch their email for homework and updates and that any suggested agenda items for those meetings be provided to Dave Brown via email. Staff then asked members to consider hosting the June 27, 2017 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Jinger Pulkrabek
Recording Secretary

DRAFT