

Minutes

Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting Date: June 18, 2024

Time: 12:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

- Chair, Scott Anderson
- Kristin Asher
- John Dustman
- Robert Ellis
- Dale Folen

- Rich Hibbard
- Elizabeth Kaufenberg
- Karla Peterson
- Matt Saam
- Jim Stark

- Seng Thongvanh
- Tom Wesolowski
- Jim Westerman
- Ray Wuolo

= present

Call to Order

Committee Chair Anderson called the regular meeting of the Water Supply Technical Advisory Committee to order at 12:06 p.m. There was not a quorum.

Agenda Approved

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

Approval of Minutes

There being no quorum, the approval of the minutes was delayed to the next meeting of the committee.

Information Items and Committee Work

1. Committee administration (Greg Johnson 651-602-7464)

Jen Kader summarized the process for developing the Metro Area Water Supply Plan including activities to date and next steps. New members Rich Hibbard, Karla Peterson, and Seng Thongvanh were sworn in and introductions were made. Greg Johnson provided an overview of the meeting.

2. Local water demand projections, version 1 (Greg Johnson 651-602-7464)

Johnson presented an overview of the local water demand projections and methodology followed by committee discussion.

Peterson asked if there was a way to incorporate climate change and Kaufenberg asked if the projections account for population changes. Johnson noted that total per capita per day water use is trending downward while population is increasing which is good. There will be research on potential water savings and there is a lot of data and examples from southern states that have significantly lower total per capita per day water use compared to the Twin Cities Metro Region.

Stark asked about the many unpermitted private wells. Johnson noted that based on previous discussions and advice from TAC that they are excluded from the analysis because they account for less than 3% of the total water use in the Metro Region, and most of that water does not leave the watersheds, it returns to the ground via septic systems. Stark asked if it

would be possible to loop that in and Johnson responded affirmatively.

Peterson asked for clarification on the reason for developing the projections. Ross noted that it is helpful as a starting point for communities and provides information for models and scenarios. Peterson asked if there are special notations for cases where water is leaving the aquifer but not going back into the watershed (i.e. bottling companies). Johnson noted that does need to be accounted for.

Johnson noted that historical water use from all the private high-capacity wells in the metro region are being gathered from MPARS for every city and township and will be added to the municipal water demand projections to provide the total water demand projections from for the entire metro region for groundwater systems through 2050.

3. Developing shared definitions (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803)

Ross presented key water supply planning-related terms, based on MDH and DNR language, that need more consistently understood definitions, and TAC was asked to review and recommend revisions that would be shared with those agencies in a work group.

Stark asked why the group was working with agency definitions that may have different uses in greater Minnesota. Kader responded that Met Council is working with these agencies to develop shared, consistent definitions between the agencies. This work is starting first in the Metro area, to promote clarity in understanding during the local comprehensive plan update process. Input from others outside the metro area will also be sought to improve definitions.

Folen noted that the industrial water use definition starts with thermonuclear power, which is odd as it's not likely that municipal water supply is going to those energy plants.

The committee did a small group exercise and shared the following recommendations:

- Support for using MDH terms for public water systems in the Metro Area Water Supply Plan
- Change references to “private wells” to “privately owned wells” to make it clearer when referring to those that don’t tie into public water supply.
- Change “institutionalized water use” to better reflect “essential services”
- Change “maximum daily demand” to “peak daily demand” since this can change daily it is not really an absolute maximum but a peak.
- Clarify that water for non-essential use is consistent with the DNR hierarchy of water use.
- Clarify the difference between “total water delivered” and “average daily demand” and keep those definitions separate. Demand is what is used by customers and total water pumped would be total water delivered. Total demand and total production are two different things.

4. Reviewing the Metro Water Supply Plan definition of sustainable water supply (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803, Jen Kader 651-602-1114)

Ross and Kader delivered a presentation summarizing the proposed high-level explanation of water sustainability used in the Water Policy Plan and how it would act as an umbrella for a more specific definition of water supply sustainability for the Metro Water Supply Plan.

The TAC reviewed the proposed definitions and provided feedback.

Proposed definition of water supply sustainability:

- In some areas of the metro, groundwater flow is purposefully managed/controlled to contain contaminated groundwater.
- A plain-language definition of sustainability is not using more groundwater than the recharge amount



- Remove or replace the old term “safe-yield”
- Replace “support” with “effect”
- Since “protected flows” has a specific definition in certain rivers, add “natural/normal flows”
- The final sentence about uncertainty and risk is a caveat and does not fit in with the rest of the definition as written. Could include minimize risk to quantity and quality or the concept of resilience.
- Big question – does the definition apply to supply infrastructure as well, or just the supply source? There are benefits to focusing specifically on supply source, leaving infrastructure aside. However, some of the biggest concerns when looking at the entire system and what people are drinking are regarding infrastructure. General consensus after discussion: assume “water supply” includes all water (even water not for consumption).

Proposed high-level explanation of water sustainability in the Water Policy Plan:

- The middle sentence is backwards and does not add value

5. Enhancing measurability of definitions of success, regional indicators, and performance measures (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803, Jen Kader 651-602-1114)

Ross and Kader delivered a presentation on the measurability of definitions of success and existing content that enhances measurability in the MWSP including regional definitions of success, commitments, and indicators as well as example metrics from the 2015 MWSP.

Peterson asked what approach MAWSAC was taking for the goals and whether they would set easily attainable goals or reach goals. Folen asked what consequences there would be for not attaining the goals, noting that some cities will have no problem and others would find meeting them impossible. Ross noted that there would have to be different individual community goals and this discussion is related to the idea of a regional goal. She noted that if what we would like to use the goals for is clear, it helps the Met Council as a regional technical assistance tool.

Sventek noted that the DNR is advocating for a goal of 90 gallons per person per day for the region with 75 gallons per person per day for residential water use. Kader suggested that an option for a goal could be a trending direction and not a specific number. Peterson noted that people tend to grab onto a single number and use it everywhere so she likes that idea.

The TAC participated in a paired activity to create SMART goals. The input from this activity will be compiled after the meeting and there will be a follow-up survey and opportunities to respond with additional input.

6. Equity-focused Water Efficiency Grant Program (Jen Kostrzewski 651-602-1078, Henry McCarthy 651-602-1946)

Kostrzewski and McCarthy presented on the purpose and results from the last round of water efficiency grant program and noted efforts to improve the equity focus for the upcoming round, including a pilot project with St. Paul Regional Water Services.

Peterson suggested including a map layer to ID targeted areas for lead service line replacement. Since the contractors are already talking to homeowners, they might be able to talk about toilets or other water efficiency opportunities or deliver literature/information at the same time. St. Paul could also provide information when calling in response to spikes in water use. A lot can be done with existing resources. Also, many water savings could be had with small, relatively inexpensive fixes. A coupon to a home improvement store could be provided.

7. University of Minnesota Turfgrass Program (Greg Johnson 651-602-7464)

Johnson presented on the history of the turfgrass program. A follow-up survey will be sent to TAC members for additional input.



8. Water policies that support the Metro Water Supply Plan (Jen Kostrzewski 651-602-1078, Steve Christopher 651-602-1033)

Kostrzewski summarized the Water Policy Plan changes since the joint meeting on May 15th.

9. Metro Area Water Supply Plan update and TAC discussion (Lanya Ross 651-602-1803)

Ross summarized the status and proposed revisions to the MWSP and requested TAC support to MAWSAC for its release for public comment.

Due to lack of quorum, the TAC could not take formal action to recommend this support to MAWSAC. Anderson noted that both TAC and MAWSAC have been working on this for a long time and there has been good participation from committee members. TAC members present indicated their support via an informal 'fist-to-five' poll with all members indicating 4s (good support) for moving forward.

10. Government Affairs and Legislative Updates (Judy Sventek 651-602-1156)

No update. Still working with Governor's Office on new MAWSAC members but there is no progress to report.

11. TAC Chair Updates (Scott Anderson, 952-563-4867)

No update.

Next Steps

1. Share TAC input with MAWSAC at the July 10 meeting of MAWSAC.
2. Respond to follow up emails and surveys which will have clear actions and deadline requests
3. Next TAC meeting: Joint meeting of MAWSAC and TAC on October 23, 2024
 - Review public input on draft MWSP
 - Discuss how Met Council staff should respond to comments

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:55p.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 June, 2024.

Approved this 23rd day of October 2024.

Council contact:

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