

# Minutes

Environment Committee



**Meeting Date:** September 26, 2023

**Time:** 4:00 PM

**Location:** 390 Robert Steet

## Members Present:

Chair, Peter Lindstrom D10  
 Vice Chair, Wendy Wulff D16

Tyronne Carter, District 3  
 Anjuli Cameron, District 8  
 Yassin Osman, District 7

Diego Morales, District 9  
 Gail Cederberg, District 11  
 = 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

Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. With consensus the agenda was approved. **Motion carried.**

## Approval of Minutes

It was moved by CM Wulff, seconded by CM Morales to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2023 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

## Consent Business

None at this time

## Non-Consent Business

1. **2023-220: MWWTP Water Systems Renewal & Improvements Phase 1 - Distribution System Renewal, Contract 22P076A** (Tim Amstutz, 651-602-1221)

It was moved by CM Wulff, seconded by CM Osman, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract 22P076A with Corval Constructors, Inc., to provide construction services at the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWTP) in an amount not to exceed \$39,877,080

### Discussion

CM Cederberg asked: Is Corval Constructors a local Minnesota company?

Staff responded: Yes, they are local.

CM Lindstrom: What do you attribute the small difference between the independent cost estimate and low bid?

Staff responded: A detail review of the project plans and specifications that helped us to develop a bid schedule that was mostly unit price bid items. We had 183 bid items.

**Motion carried.**

**2. 2023-221: Additional Materials Interceptor Rehab Project 6-MO-650 Real Estate Property Acquisition and Condemnation (Tim Wedin, 651-602-4571)**

It was moved by CM Cederberg, seconded by CM Morales, that the Metropolitan Council adopt Resolution 2023-20 authorizing the acquisition and condemnation of real estate property for the Interceptor Rehab Project 6-MO-650, MCES Project No. 819022.

**Discussion**

CM Cederberg asked: What gives the Metropolitan Council authority to acquire property through condemnation?

Staff responded: The met council has authority to acquire property through condemnation proceedings through Policy FM9-1 as well as MN statute 473.504.

CM Carter asked: Are any of the parcels occupied?

Staff responded: One parcel that we are looking at is currently occupied. We are working with the property owner to make sure we are acquiring the proper easement extents needed in addition to fair compensation.

**Motion carried.**

**Information**

**1. White Bear Lake Comprehensive Plan Update (Sam Paske 651-602-1015, Judy Sventek 651-602-1156, Greg Johnson 651-602-1016)**

Judy Sventek, Water Resources Manager and Greg Johnson, Principal Engineer, presented on the White Bear Lake Comprehensive Plan updates. Two million dollars in funding was allocated by the Minnesota legislator to the Metropolitan Council to develop a comprehensive plan to ensure communities in the White Bear Lake area have access to sufficient drinking water. It will also allow for municipal growth while ensuring sustainability of surface and ground water resources for future generations. The Metropolitan Council is establishing a working group consisting of various commissioners or commissioner designees from the DNR, MDH, and MPCA; representatives from MAWSAC and St. Paul Regional Water Services; and community representatives from the White Bear Lake Area focused on helping to achieve this mission. The objectives of this plan include:

- Evaluating methods for conserving and recharging groundwater in the area
- Determine which existing groundwater supply wells, if converted to surface water sources, would be the most effective and efficient in ensuring future water sustainability in the area
- Identify a long-term for converting groundwater supply wells identified in clause 2 to surface water
- Include any policy and funding recommendations for converting groundwater supply wells to surface water sources, treating and reusing wastewater, and any other recommendations for additional measures that reduce groundwater use, promote water reuse, and increase groundwater recharge

The plan will be submitted to the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representative and senate committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources finance and policy by June 30, 2027.



## Discussion

CM Lindstrom asked: Will the representatives be staff members of the city or community members?

Staff responded: It will be a mixture of both. Most members are city staff, agency staff or city Councilmembers. They are all appointed by their cities.

CM Lindstrom asked: Is the decision-making process going to be majority vote or unanimous?

Staff responded: We hope to go with as much consensus as possible. We are going to have a consulting firm to facilitate this process to ensure we do this right.

CM Cederberg asked: Will the communications be on a webpage?

Staff responded: Yes, we are in the process of building out a website where you'll be able to find more information and updates.

## 2. **Water Research Policy** (Jennifer Kostrzewski 651-602-1078, Judy Sventek 651-602-1156)

Staff from Water Resource presented an update on the Water Policy Research Project. The presentation recapped the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan, which focuses on ensuring sustainable water resources in the region. Staff discussed the importance of water quality. Regional water policies are necessary to restore and protect the quality of our waters and to ensure protection from future contamination threats. Some crucial concerns include:

- Population growth
- Land use change
- Climate change
- Chloride
- Elevated nutrient levels
- Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)
- Wastewater surveillance

Recommendations include:

- A new policy for environmental justice and water equity
- Revisiting the finance policy and
- Taking new actions on the following policies:
  - Watershed approach policy
  - Policy on sustainable water supplies
  - Addressing and protecting regional waters
  - Investment
  - Wastewater sustainability



## Reports

**General Managers Report:** General Manager of Environmental Services, Leisa Thompson stated, The complexity of water isn't going to get any less. The milestone of White Bear Lake is massive. In the past people haven't felt like they've been heard so it's exciting to help groups find their common ground and be able to partner or work towards solutions.

## Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

## Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Environment Committee meeting of September 26, 2023.

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### Council Contact:

Nneka Onah, Recording Secretary  
[Nneka.Onah@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:Nneka.Onah@metc.state.mn.us)  
651-602-8101

