

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

#### Committee Members Present:

Sandra Rummel-Chair, Marie McCarthy, Harry Melander, Wendy Wulff-Vice Chair

#### Committee Members Excused:

Lona Schreiber, Edward Reynoso

#### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Rummel called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 10, 2017.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Harry Melander to approve the amended agenda moving the General Manager's report as the first information item on the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Harry Melander to approve the minutes of the November 29, 2016 Special meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

#### BUSINESS

##### 2017-15 Large Diameter Interceptor Cleaning

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Marie McCarthy, that the Metropolitan Council authorizes its Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract for Large Diameter Interceptor Cleaning Project 807642, Contract 16P149, to Doetsch Environmental Services for their low, responsive responsible bid of \$4,106,442. **Motion carried.**

##### 2017-16 North Area Interceptor Phase 9 Rehabilitation Project

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Marie McCarthy, that the Metropolitan Council authorizes its Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract for North Area Interceptor Phase 9 Rehabilitation Project 808690, Contract 16P241, to Michels Corporation for their low, responsive responsible bid of \$9,889,235.57.

**Motion carried.**

##### 2017-17 Plant Engineering Master Contracts

It was moved by Harry Melander, seconded by Wendy Wulff, that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to award and execute master contracts for wastewater treatment plant projects, Group A (Contract 16P125 A & B), with Black & Veatch and Brown & Caldwell, each at \$6,000,000; and Group B (Contract 16P125 C, D & E) with HRGreen, SEH and TKDA, each at \$2,500,000.

**Motion carried.**

#### INFORMATION

##### 1. General Manager's Report

Ned Smith, Director of Finance and Revenue and Lisa Barajas, Manager, Local Planning Assistance provided information on a proposed joint Community Development and Environment Committee meeting considered for January 31, 2017 at 4 p.m. Voting will not be required at this meeting and would be considered a working session.

The goals of the working session are to seek additional feedback on the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) guidelines last updated in 2007 as well as other work or research staff could undertake for regional planning activities.

The MUSA implementation guidelines define how the Council reviews requests from local governments pertaining to changes to MUSA staging and service expansion areas as well as how the Council will consider density in its review of amendments in next the next round of comprehensive plan updates.

In a presentation to the CDC, MUSA evolution was reviewed, how the Council has been working to stay ahead of growth, and has worked to support development through Thrive 2040 planning areas. Requested amendments to the MUSA have included connecting existing homes that have failing sewer and septic, changes to support new residential development, and land brought in to MUSA staged for future development. CDC discussion centered around the number of changes and requests received, how we are meeting the policies for density, and the use of wastewater system going forward. Background information provided to CDC will be forwarded to this Committee.

#### Comments/Questions:

Is there a new direction being taken? Staff stated MUSA changes were last adopted in 2007. We are seeking to make housekeeping changes that will align with Thrive 2040 outcomes and seek committee direction on any other aspects that need to be addressed. Nothing specific has been proposed for major changes. The joint discussion will be good to seek information on how the process occurs and possibly consider updates.

## 2. Industrial Waste Electronic Reporting System

Larry Rogacki, Assistant General Manager, Support Services introduced Tina Nelson, Assistant Manager and Travis Houle, Intern of the Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention (IWPP) of MCES. A project was completed recently to receive data electronically from our permitted industries. MCES is the first utility in the nation to deploy a project of this nature that received federal approval.

The purpose of the IWPP is to protect our collection system, the general public and the environment by administering permits, confirming compliance, take actions as needed if permits are not followed, assess charges to recover treatment costs and encourage sustainable practices.

A need was identified to implement a methodology for customers to submit data electronically. This was due to the amount of time and resource allocation needed to enter data manually. Having an electronic submission option reduces the amount of paper utilized and would allow for electronic submission of receipts with the data stored in the database for reference. This increases the level of customer service and would fulfill a request we've had from customers to be able to submit in this manner.

The project was developed in a 3-phase process. The first phase involved collaborating with customers both internally and externally to determine if purchasing the system or building it to our specifications would be the best. Phase two was implementation. Development and testing was completed and approval sought from the EPA and MPCA. Deployment occurred in phase 3 in June 2016.

Early adopters included 21 facilities with more than 90 enrolled and using the system as of January 2017. Adoption is voluntary; however, outreach is planned with further enrollment by other facilities anticipated. New user training will be offered with demonstration of the system and an opportunity for customer feedback to be provided. Feedback has been received from several contractors on our interface. One contractor that reports for 19 different state agencies stated our interface is more user friendly than any they've experienced.

This project supports the Thrive outcomes of stewardship, sustainability, and prosperity. The opportunity to integrate software systems, adopt less resource-intensive practices with user and staff accountability for inputs and collaborative planning, implementation, data validation and security are anticipated.

Comments/Questions:

Is there a goal to enroll 100% of the customers? Staff is in the process of enhancing the database and hopes to eventually require enrollment.

Can the same system be used for MPCA? We currently are required to generate a paper report for the MPCA. By 2020 we are hoping to have an electronic submission option.

How have the changes effected staff? The current manual system requires the double entry of data in to multiple systems. Staff is learning the new system while double entering data for customers who have not enrolled.

Appreciate the foresight to begin this process and kudos to Travis Houle for the work done in his internship with MCES.

3. Wastewater Reuse Task Force

Deborah Manning, Assistant Manager, Plant Engineering presented information on a proposed wastewater reuse policy task force. The task force would review the Council's existing wastewater reuse policies and recommend clarification needed to respond to opportunities for wastewater reuse. Existing policies are available in the Thrive MSP 2040 plan.

Thrive MSP 2040 commits the Council to pursuing wastewater reuse where economically feasible as a means to promote sustainable water resources. According to the 2040 water resources policy plan, we accomplish this by working with our partners, promoting a more sustainable region, maximizing regional benefits from regional investments, and providing efficient, high-quality, sustainable wastewater services.

Wastewater reuse involves treating wastewater treatment plant effluent to a higher degree depending to produce reclaimed water. Additional policy clarification is needed to respond to reuse opportunities. One opportunity is SKB Environmental who is partnering with Enerkem to build a facility that would utilize reclaimed water. The proposed project would be a \$200 million investment encompassing 200,000 square feet and processing 400,000 tons per year of municipal solid waste to produce 20 million gallons per year of clean, cellulosic ethanol. It would create 104 direct green jobs and would require 2 million gallons of reclaimed water per day from our Empire plant.

Project and policy issues for reclaimed water service exist. MCES would need to determine the potential regional benefit, the value of not using groundwater, and the potential future reclaimed water users that should be considered in system design. On the funding side, questions about sources of funding, who pays for the infrastructure, and how MCES would recover capital and operating costs need to be worked out. Potential partnership opportunities could exist with local or regional water supplies to deliver reclaimed water.

MCES staff will work with customers, regulators, academics, other stakeholders, and consultants to support the proposed task force's work. Task force recommendations will be brought to the Environment Committee. Next steps will include obtaining approval for task force formation, getting input from MAWSAC and the MAWSAC TAC as well as other stakeholders such as regulatory agencies, and collaborating with communities. Staff will provide an update to this Committee the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2017.

Thrive lens outcomes for this effort include collaboration, prosperity by generating jobs, and sustainability through wise use of water resource recovery.

Comments/Questions:

Starts with assumption there may be a regional benefit that the region may say it is worthwhile to invest regional funding.

Are we putting together the task force because of the proposal by SKB/Enerkem or are we looking at overall proposals. Staff stated it is anticipated the task force addresses the overall issues. It will be helpful to use a case study but the task force focus is not limited to the case study. The request from SKB is an example to explore the larger question.

The Metropolitan Council in collaboration with Metro Cities are developing recommendations for task force members and drafting criteria.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Susan Taylor  
Recording Secretary