

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

#### Committee Members Present:

Sandra Rummel-Chair, Cara Letofsky, Marie McCarthy, Harry Melander, Edward Reynoso, Lona Schreiber

#### Committee Members Absent:

Wendy Wulff-Vice Chair

#### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Rummel called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:06 p.m. on Tuesday, April 24, 2018.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Cara Letofsky, seconded by Lona Schreiber to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Lona Schreiber, seconded by Cara Letofsky to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2018 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. Motion carried.

#### BUSINESS

1. 2018-108 Contract for Alfa Laval Dewatering Centrifuge Equipment

It was moved by Cara Letofsky, seconded by Lona Schreiber, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a sole source contract for dewatering centrifuges used at Metropolitan Council Wastewater Treatment Facilities to Alfa Laval to provide Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) parts and services in an amount not exceed \$2,500,000 over a 5-year period beginning May 2018 through April 2023. Motion carried.

2. 2018-109 Proposed Policy Amendment to the Water Resources Policy Plan

It was moved by Edward Reynoso, seconded by Lona Schreiber, that the Metropolitan Council adopt the recommended wastewater reuse-related amendment to the Water Resources Policy Plan that includes a regional cost share based on the regional wastewater system benefit only. Motion carried.

#### INFORMATION

1. Evaluation of Metro Sewage Sludge Incinerator Ash as a Phosphorus Source for Crop Production - 2017 Progress Report:

Staff member Larry Rogacki introduced Dr. Carl Rosen and Persephone Ma from the University of Minnesota who presented the 2017 progress report of Metro sewage sludge incinerator ash as a phosphorus source for crop production.

The objective of this presentation was to describe the viability of sewage sludge incinerator ash as a phosphorus fertilizer in terms of its impacts on plant growth, soil characterization, and soil microbial populations. In other words, does it work, how well does it work, and what environmental impacts exist.

An incubation experiment was conducted using jars of soil with individual treatments to mimic field conditions to study the release of soil fertilizers in a controlled environment. A field study was also conducted on plots with

different fertilizer treatments to measure impact in realistic environmental conditions.

Results of the studies were provided with the following conclusions:

- Does it work? Yes, it increases soil levels of phosphorus.
- How well does it work? More will be known after the third year of evaluation.
- What environmental impacts are there? No red flags with metals. Will continue to monitor EPA Part 503 parameters; microbial impact requires further analysis.

Comments or Questions:

- Dr. Rosen clarified that the ash was landfilled in the 1980's. Regulations were not as stringent back then resulting in higher metal concentration, but this has been rectified since then. He further stated he received concerns of the sewage sludge potentially containing pharmaceuticals. Because sewage sludge is incinerated, pharmaceuticals are not in the ash, which helped the citizen understand the process better. General Manager Thompson stated we have an Industrial Waste pre-treatment program at the Council that has effectively addressed metal removal.
- Do we have a market using the ash? There is very little nitrogen in ash making it a good choice for fall application. There are advantages that would need to be explored.
- Is there a limitation on how far the sludge could be trucked? Dr. Rosen stated there shouldn't be a limit because it is ash and could compete with conventional fertilizer.
- It is fascinating we can utilize ash for our crops versus disposing in a landfill. Do we help fund the research? U of M is grateful for the funding from the Council that has assisted with the research.
- What is done with the corn? Dr. Rosen stated the Rosemount experiment station grows corn and soybeans and the U of M purchases what they need. The rest is sold to help the function of the station.
- Do you tell people how it is grown and who is the taste tester? Dr. Rosen stated most of the crops are not used for human consumption. He would recommend for these types of uses. The contaminants absorbed is minimal.
- Yields were good in 2017. Average 220 bushels per acre, some were as high as 270 bushels. Very good year, did not have to irrigate. Was there a difference for those areas that had the products? Dr. Rosen stated there was no statistical difference between the treatments.
- You used Round-Up Ready Corn. Are they treated with a pest resistant formula? Were there some that were not treated with Round-Up Ready? Have you seen this type of crop being treated more resistant to pests? Dr. Rosen stated Round Up Ready are widely used. A high-bred was selected typically used in the area. Unless it is organic, Dr. Rosen stated he didn't think this product would be approved for organic. He stated they are targeting the conventional market. Can control weeds easily with Round-Up Ready Corn. No weeding was required.
- Persephone Ma stated she has been working on this project for 2 years and will be working on it for another 2 years.

2. General Manager's Report:

With spring arriving, we are paying attention to river levels. We have 124 years for river crest data for St. Paul. There have been 63 floods during this time frame. Over 30% of river flooding have occurred in the last two decades.

Larry Rogacki, Assistant General Manager, Support Services updated Committee members. We receive a daily update from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration office on river level in the St. Paul area. The projection is the river will continue rising through Sunday or Monday. The river will be 6-8 inches below flooding of Child's Road. No significant impact at this time. Our effluent pumps have been activated. At this time, no significant impact is anticipated. When we reach 16 feet, we need to build the alternate access for Childs Road.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Susan Taylor  
Recording Secretary