

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 28, 2020

#### Committee Members Present:

Peter Lindstrom, Chair; Wendy Wulff, Vice Chair; Kris Fredson; Phillip Sterner; Susan Vento; Raymond Zeran

#### Committee Members Absent:

None

#### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lindstrom called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 28, 2020.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Phil Sterner, seconded by Kris Fredson to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Phil Sterner, seconded by Raymond Zeran to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2020, regular meeting of the Environment Committee. Motion carried.

#### CONSENT BUSINESS

Approval of the Consent Agenda (Items 2020-17 JT)

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Susan Vento to approve the consent agenda business item. Motion carried.

1. 2019-17 JT: City of Maple Grove 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File 21999-1  
That the Metropolitan Council adopt the Advisory Comments and Review Record attached to the business item and take the following action:

##### Recommendations of the Environment Committee:

1. Approve the City of Maple Grove's Comprehensive Sewer Plan.

#### NON-CONSENT BUSINESS

2. 2020-44: Brooklyn Park and Osseo Interceptor Rehab 7015 A&B, 4-OS-457, M224 Land Acquisition

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Raymond Zeran that the Metropolitan Council pass Resolution 2020-3 authorizing the acquisition of temporary easements for the Brooklyn Park and Osseo Interceptor Rehabilitation project and staff to initiate condemnation proceedings. Motion carried.

#### INFORMATION

1. Contaminants of Emerging Concern: PFAS and Wastewater Treatment:  
Larry Rogacki, Assistant General Manager, Support Services and George Sprouse, Manager, Process Engineering presented an informational item regarding PFAS and wastewater treatment.

A variety of substances that are newly measurable or that have newly developed information on their impacts are classified as contaminants of emerging concern. For wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) these contaminants also cause concern because, in many cases: WWTPs receive them in their influent (WWTPs don't produce them), current processes may not destroy them, they may be significant at very low concentrations, standard/approved measurement methods may not be available, they do not yet have a developed regulatory direction, and they may be very costly to address. For these reasons, source control, rather than new treatment processes, is often the most efficient approach to managing these contaminants.

MCES has and is accomplishing activities related to PFAS. These include actively engaging with those state and regulatory developments that could have implications for our WWTPs, leveraging the research activities of the wastewater/water reclamation organizations to generate useful information, and having an Industrial Waste and Pollution Prevention (IWPP) department that is active in PFAS source identification and monitoring. IWPP has actively engaged with industries to identify and reduce industrial PFAS discharges.

#### Comments & Questions:

Chair Lindstrom inquired further about the list of compounds and implications to human and animal health. Staff responded that the list of compounds of emerging concern and suspected health and environmental impacts is dynamic and continuously being updated and discussed.

Committee Member Zeran stated he understands prevention is key as well as monitoring. Where is the monitoring occurring? At the plant or elsewhere? The IWPP has the capability to monitor specific discharges to landfills, etc. It is part of our current tools to do source monitoring. Larry Rogacki shared that these compounds are present at very low concentrations, some as low as 4 parts per trillion. Trying to sample is complex, there are no established methodologies for sampling or analysis. The Industrial Waste program has focused on industrial waste discharges and has worked with industries to determine what products are being used. This is an easier approach to quantify. This is further complicated by the fact that PFAS is everywhere and it's difficult to specifically pinpoint individual sources.

Committee Member Vento inquired about the MPCA completion date for administration of competitive RFP to identify a project consultant by March 2021 and the deliverable of best management practices report to MPCA by June 30, 2023. The timeline doesn't seem like it is urgent. Staff clarified that MPCA is funding this project through a legislative grant process. They will be looking at biosolids across Minnesota, where they are land applied, the level of PFAS compounds present, how they are being applied, and will be using this data to determine next steps. Biosolids management is a complex process. Committee Member Vento stated she would prefer to have information shared with Minnesota on how to reduce the frequency of exposure.

Chair Lindstrom inquired it takes a year to find a consultant and a year to develop the report, when would the regulation be implemented. He stated he has a feeling we may be hearing more about the health implications. A quicker pace would be preferred. We will do what we can and what we need to do. If we can help with the research, that would be good. Staff stated we are currently involved in the research that is occurring.

Committee Member Fredson requested clarification on what Maine is doing that Minnesota is not doing. Staff clarified there are no criteria that have been identified in Minnesota related to PFAS compounds in biosolids. In Maine, they place screening criteria on biosolids and need to be below the criteria for land application. It is not clear how and where the criteria were determined.

Committee Member Fredson asked if it meant the soonest we would develop a similar requirement or recommendation may be June 30, 2023. Staff stated the legislature may do something on their own. The project the PCA has initiated addresses only biosolids and best management practices.

Chair Lindstrom stated hopefully Minnesota has a heightened understanding of what happens to ground water and the ramifications.

Committee Member Wulff said she appreciates the effort to get ahead of the issue. It is important to understand we can test at tiny amounts that it might not have a significant impact. It is more important to find the right numbers than to come up with a quick answer on something that may not be significantly impactful. Staff stated the example of mercury is a good comparison. We could have spent millions of dollars on a treatment plant to remove mercury from the influent. Because there was a main source, it was more cost effective to implement at the source (dental offices) which reduced the mercury coming into the plant by 60-70%. PFAS is harder to pinpoint the source because it is everywhere.

Committee Member Fredson asked for clarification on the application of biosolids for agricultural use in 2018-2019. Is there any communication to recipients that there potentially be contaminants? Staff stated we communicate with the communities, neighbors, people along the path, but the specific communication is not known. Staff stated they can look that up and will share with the committee members.

Committee Member Fredson asked if there is any indemnification to the Council if they are found to be contaminated later. Staff stated we cannot predict.

Committee Member Sterner asked if SKB is actively taking the substance? Staff stated SKB is receiving industrial waste. Both we and they test for leachate for PFC's. The future is not clear at this time.

## 2. General Manager Report

General Manager Thompson stated there is still a great deal we do not know about PFAS. The regulators are working to quickly develop their regulatory strategies and we will be tracking this closely. Given the challenges of removing these chemicals from the waste stream, pollution prevention to keep them out of the wastewater is part of the solution. We've seen benefits of using this approach with mercury.

If Committee members have items they would like brought before this committee, please let [leisa.thompson@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:leisa.thompson@metc.state.mn.us) know.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Susan Taylor  
Recording Secretary