

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, October 22, 2019

Committee Members Present:

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

Committee Members Absent:

Raymond Zerán

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, October 22, 2019.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Phillip Sterner, seconded by Wendy Wulff to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Susan Vento to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2019, regular meeting of the Environment Committee. Motion carried.

CONSENT BUSINESS

Approval of the Consent Agenda (Items 2019-272 JT, 2019-293 JT, 2019-294 JT, 2019-295 JT, 2019-296 JT, and 2019-297 JT)

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

1. 2019-272 JT: City of Lilydale 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File 22172-1

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 Lilydale's Comprehensive Sewer Plan.

2. 2019-293 JT: City of Coon Rapids 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File 21880-1

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 Coon Rapids's Comprehensive Sewer Plan.

3. 2019-294 JT: City of Falcon Heights 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File 22192-1

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 Falcon Heights's Comprehensive Sewer Plan.

4. 2019-295 JT: City of Corcoran 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File 21893-1
That the Metropolitan Council adopt the Advisory Comments and Review Record attached to the business item and take the following actions:

Recommendations of the Environment Committee:

1. Approve the Corcoran's Comprehensive Sewer Plan component of the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
2. Advise of City that the means and timing of regional wastewater service to southwest Corcoran will be determined as part of a Study that will begin in 2020 and be completed in time to be reflected in the City's 2025 System Statement.

5. 2019-296 JT: City of Arden Hills 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File 21914-1
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 Arden Hills's Comprehensive Sewer Plan.

6. 2019-297 JT: City of Hampton 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan, Review File 22170-1
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 Hampton's Comprehensive Sewer Plan.

NON-CONSENT BUSINESS

7. 2019-304: St. Croix Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant Odor Control Building Fire Restoration
It was moved by Susan Vento, seconded by Wendy Wulff that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to award and execute a construction contract for the St. Croix Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant odor control building fire restoration, MCES Project No. 070227, Contract No. 19P023, with Total Mechanical Services, Inc., with an amount not to exceed \$2,761,131.00. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. Water Supply Planning Overview

Ali Elhassan, Manager, Water Supply Planning provided an overview of the water supply planning function within Environmental Quality Assurance. The presentation highlighted the legislative direction to the council to carry out water supply planning activities, how Thrive 2040 guides the work of the function, what services are provided by staff to the communities of the region to advance water supply sustainability and what are the different resources that are maintained to enable staff to provide services to the communities.

Comments and Questions:

Committee Member Vento inquired about equity and the Thrive lens related to affordable clean water in the region and if there any stress points. Staff stated the equity lens is a challenge as we are the planning agency rather than the water supplier. The supplier addresses equity when they set up their water rate. Minnesota has affordable rates compared to other areas of the country.

Committee Member Sterner stated in the 1940's water came from surface water more than groundwater. What are the pros and cons on why groundwater became more prevalent? Staff shared growth was occurring in the 1940's and 1950's in Minneapolis and St. Paul. It was easier to extend infrastructure from the river at that time. Beyond proximity to the river, infrastructure was more expensive to implement. At the time there was plenty of clean ground water available.

Committee Member Sterner asked how long it takes to recharge aquifers? Staff stated a model exists in the metro area for groundwater recharge. Depending on location in the Metro area and which aquifer is accessed will determine the length of time it takes to recharge. As an example, the Prairie du Chien aquifer, which is where the majority of the region (approximately 65%) pulls its water from, takes 50-100 years to recharge. The deepest aquifer takes 10,000 years to recharge.

Chair Lindstrom asked what would happen if a community disagrees with another community's direction. Staff stated it is resolved at the community levels.

Chair Lindstrom asked about contaminant plumes. Is most of the activity around the supplier level or do we have a role in resolution? Staff stated it is a supplier responsibility to ensure safe delivery of water; our role is supporting communities to know the extent of these plumes.

Committee Member Wulff shared the Savage and Burnsville area on the map. Savage and Burnsville had a gravel mine that was pumping groundwater into the Minnesota River for dewatering in their operation. The state assisted in helping them build a treatment facility. She also stated Elko New Market discovered they had radium in their water supply. They had to pay for a facility to be built to remove the radium. The source of the radium was naturally occurring in the soil.

Committee Member Sterner asked if there is a possibility for water suppliers to work together to reuse wastewater. Staff stated this has been discussed and researched as part of the water resources policy plan in 2015. Jeannine Clancy, Assistant General Manager, Technical Services shared wastewater reuse was addressed in the water resources policy plan; however, the implementation process was not identified. In 2018, a customer work group session was convened which included public works directors, city engineers, finance directors, and city managers who evaluated when the Council would come forward and participate with a community on a water reuse project. We currently have a reclaimed wastewater facility in East Bethel.

Committee Member Wulff stated in parts of the country where water is scarcer, reuse projects are sometimes easier to do because water may be very expensive. Our water is more accessible in our region.

Committee Member Sterner asked about reuse options that are being considered. Staff stated the state began looking at the reuse topic over the past 3 years. State agencies are responsible for the regulations related to reuse. Different reuse sources (grey water, stormwater, wastewater) are being evaluated. Grey water is difficult to use because of plumbing code or to use it inside. The grant program that we administer addresses fixtures that help conserve water. One option is toilets that use 1.3 gallons per flush versus 3 or 6 gallons per flush. In 2021 additional funds could be requested from the Clean Water Council. This is a popular program for communities.

Committee Member Vento thanked staff of Environmental Services for the work they do and how informative they have been since she joined the Council.

2. General Manager Report

General Manager Thompson thanked Council members for attending the special celebratory event in Rogers on Friday, October 11 in recognition of the Council's acquisition of the Roger's Wastewater Treatment Facility. Over 40 people attended the event including elected officials and staff representing the Cities of Rogers, Dayton and Corcoran, Council Chair Slawik, and Council Members Johnson, Lindstrom, Wulff, Sterner, and Vento as well as Hennepin County Commissioner Jeff Johnson. City of Rogers Public Works staff were recognized for the years of service and regulatory compliance. Operations staff from Rogers and MCES were thanked for a seamless transition. Council staff announced and outlined the planning process for the new Crow River Water Reclamation Facility and invited the communities to participate. The new Crow River Plant will be commissioned by 2030. The day ended with a tour of the existing Rogers Plant.

As 2019 is wrapped up, Committee Members were encouraged to share any topics or information they would like staff to present as part of the 2020 work plan for Environment Committee to leisa.thompson@metc.state.mn.us.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary