

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Committee Members Present:

Sandra Rummel-Chair, Harry Melander, Lona Schreiber, Wendy Wulff-Vice Chair

Committee Members Absent:

Cara Letofsky, Marie McCarthy, 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, October 23, 2018.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Harry Melander to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2018 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS

2018-268: Disposition of Surplus Property in South Saint Paul

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Lona Schreiber, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to re-convey property that was part of the original South Saint Paul Wastewater Treatment Plant site to the City of South St. Paul in accordance with the original acquisition agreement. **Motion carried.**

2018-291 SW: Construction Contract Award for the 1-MN-310 4th Street Access Shafts and Tunnel Repair

It was moved by Wendy Wulff, seconded by Harry Melander, that the Metropolitan Council authorizes its Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract for 1-MN-310 4th Street Access Shafts and Tunnel Repair Project 807665, Contract 18P259, to PCI Roads for their low, responsive responsible bid of \$3,929,674.00. **Motion carried.**

2018-292: Proposed Change to Industrial SAC Program

It was moved by Lona Schreiber, seconded by Wendy Wulff, that the Metropolitan Council approve a change to Sewer Availability Charge (SAC) assessments for process flows from industrial customers, effective January 1, 2019. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION

1. Local and National Sewer Rates: Competitiveness and Trends:

Dan Schueller, Principle Financial Analyst presented an overview of wastewater treatment rates in the region and comparisons against national trends. Overall, the region continues to enjoy retail sewer rates that are 40% lower than the national average. The comparisons are based on a biennial survey of all 109 municipalities conducted by MCES and a triennial, nationwide survey by the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA). Within the region, MCES rates continue to be about 55% of the average retail sewer rate, and retail rates range from \$157 to \$672 per year. Compared to peer agencies (>100mgd), MCES's 40% lower rates put the region in the lowest fifteenth percentile for fees, while maintaining

MCES's upper quartile for performance, based on its platinum awards. In addition, MCES' debt per capita is just under one half of the peer average.

Comments / Questions:

A Committee Member inquired about whether other cities across the country who experience large costs are due to a lack of maintenance in their infrastructure, regional growth or another reason. Staff stated there are many variables that factor in to the costs for cities. Ned Smith, Director of Finance and Revenue stated in addition to the variables many cities with higher debts have combined sewers that require Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandated infrastructure investments. (i.e. consent decrees)

In addition, clarification was sought if we are doing anything to educate our customers to encourage maintaining and improving infrastructure. Committee Member Wulff stated Inflow and Infiltration requirements encourage maintenance of the city systems.

2. General Manager Report

No report at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Susan Taylor
Recording Secretary