

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

Committee Members Present:

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

Committee Members Absent:

Wendy Wulff, Vice Chair

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lindstrom called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 2:02 p.m. on Tuesday, June 8, 2021 with the following roll call:

Aye: 5 Lindstrom, Fredson, Sterner, Vento, Zeran
Absent: 1 Wulff

Governor Walz notice was read at the beginning of the meeting as follows:

NOTICE: Governor Walz has declared a peacetime emergency (Emergency Executive Order 20-01) in response to COVID-19 and the Metropolitan Council Chair has determined it is not practical or prudent to conduct an in-person meetings for reasons stated in the Governor's Emergency Executive Order. Accordingly, committee members will participate in this meeting via telephone or other electronic means and the meeting will be conducted under Minnesota Statutes section 13D.021 at the date and time stated above. We encourage you to monitor the meeting remotely. If you have comments, we encourage members of the public to email us at public.info@metc.state.mn.us. We will respond to your comments in a timely manner.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Without objection the agenda was approved.

It was moved by Sterner seconded by Fredson to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2021, regular meeting of the Environment Committee.

Aye: 5 Lindstrom, Fredson, Sterner, Vento, Zeran
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 1 Wulff

Motion carried.

CONSENT BUSINESS

None at this time

NON-CONSENT BUSINESS

- 2021-135: Wastewater Treatment Plant Solids Processing Contingency, Contract 20P168A

It was moved by Fredson, seconded by Vento that the Metropolitan Council authorizes its Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract to SKB Environmental, Inc. (SKB) for contingency transport and disposal of dewatered sludge for a total award not to exceed \$3,400,000.

Aye: 5 Lindstrom, Fredson, Vento, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Wulff

Motion carried.

2. 2021-136: Metropolitan Council HVAC, Piping, Mechanical, and Sheet Metal Services Amendment, Contract 15P114

It was moved by Fredson, seconded by Zeran that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to execute a contract amendment with UHL Co. Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$100,000 for additional HVAC, piping, mechanical, and sheet metal services for all MCES locations, Contract 15P114.

Aye: 5 Lindstrom, Fredson, Vento, Sterner, Zeran
Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Wulff

Motion carried.

3. 2021-137: Metropolitan Council Mechanical Pipefitting Services Amendment, Contract 15P113

It was moved by Zeran, seconded by Sterner that the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to execute a contract amendment with Corval Constructors Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$1,400,000 for additional mechanical pipefitting services for all MCES locations, Contract 15P113.

Aye: 5 Lindstrom, Fredson, Vento, Sterner, Zeran
Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Wulff

Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan Update

Staff provided an overview to the Environment Committee members on the update to the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan. The presentation began with a recap of the process and content of the current 2040 Water Resources Policy Plan. After providing them history and background for the current plan, staff went over the proposed high-level process and timeline for the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan Update. Finally, staff presented a few new issue areas that we are hearing from partners and stakeholders that we need to consider as part of the plan update. These new issues will be shared with other partners and stakeholders later in 2021 as a starting point. The goal is to get further input on these issue areas as well as get input on other issue areas that we need to begin to develop and investigate further as we work on new policy areas and implementation strategies for the new plan. Council members were asked for feedback on the proposed process, timeline and new issue areas. This is the first of many presentations on the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan that we are planning over the next few years.

Comments and Questions:

- Staff asked if there were any questions about the process or schedule or anything that should be taken into consideration. Staff mentioned that they will be returning to continue the conversation and that they will be developing a long-term plan for Committee input on the 2050 WRPP that they will be sharing with the Committee soon. Additionally, staff will be seeking

input earlier on and more often throughout the WRPP update process from council members, partners, customers, and stakeholders.

- Staff stated we are seeking a plan that is more representative of the region and has greater input from the region. Adoption of the plan is planned for 2025.
- Chair Lindstrom appreciated that staff are beginning to get input sooner rather than later. When referencing stakeholders, he asked if that included cities or water management agencies and whether it extended beyond that. Staff stated we will be focusing on watershed organizations, our wastewater customers, water supply partners, as well as focusing on getting input from our rural communities as well as our urban areas. We are working on the entire process and would like input as well from nonprofits, other partners and the citizens of the region which could be done via survey. Details are being worked out. If there are any other considerations, please let Judy know at judy.sventek@metc.state.mn.us.
- Committee Member Sterner stated there are a number of stakeholders such as the Clean Water Council, Department of Ag, other state agencies, environmental groups, fishing groups, etc. He recommended checking in with these stakeholders on the issues they are looking at such as microplastics and other contaminants of emerging concern not on our list to determine what else is on their radar. Staff shared that chlorides is a big issue at the moment as well as nitrates and that while we did not mention them today, we are aware of microbeads and other emerging contaminants as well and will be looking into those.
- Committee Member Vento asked about whether we should consider the issue of cyber-security. Special efforts are being made at our sites to make sure our work is secure; we may also want to have those conversations with cities, townships and counties as it relates to their work. Chair Lindstrom concurred.
- Chair Lindstrom stated emerging issues struck a chord for him and wanted to make sure we are thinking about how climate adaptation fits into all of this. He mentioned the MTC bus garage and stormwater reuse project as ways we can promote water use reduction.
- Chair Lindstrom stated this will be a topic of discussion over several years.

2. General Manager Report

Wastewater and COVID testing update – we were participating in a project at the beginning of the pandemic at Metro but withdrew due to funding and increasing cost. Phase 2 is starting, and we began participating. It is a Health and Human Services and CDC wastewater surveillance project. It will include Metro, Blue Lake, Empire, and Seneca. There is value in tracking the variants, so it will be interesting to participate, and additional funding is available.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Environment Committee Meeting of June 8, 2021.

Lori Connery (substitute for Susan Taylor)
Recording Secretary