

Minutes

Committee of the Whole



Meeting date: May 21, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Street

Members present:

- Chair, Charlie Zelle
- Judy Johnson, District 1
- Reva Chamblis, District 2
- Tyronne Carter, District 3
- Deb Barber, District 4
- John Pacheco Jr., District 5

- Robert Lilligren, District 6
- Yassin Osman, District 7
- Anjuli Cameron, District 8
- Diego Morales, District 9
- Peter Lindstrom, District 10
- Gail Cederberg, District 11

- Susan Vento, District 12
- Chai Lee, District 13
- Toni Carter, District 14
- Vacant, District 15
- Wendy Wulff, District 16
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Call to order

Council Chair Zelle called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:03 p.m.

Agenda approved

Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of minutes

Due to a lack of quorum, approval of May 7, 2025 minutes will be moved to the next Committee of the Whole meeting on June 4, 2025.

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment was read by Council Member Lee.

Information

1. Climate Action Work Plan Annual Report (Laura Bretheim 612-474-1781, Lisa Barajas 651-602-1895, Jeff Freeman 612-349-7527, Jen Kostrzewski 651-602-1078)

Lisa Barajas, Executive Director of Community Development, provided a high-level overview of the Climate Action Work Plan's (CAWP) annual report on progress and implementation of CAWP. The CAWP defines the vision for the Met Council to reduce its contributions to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in the region and to make its services and facilities resilient to the impacts of climate change.

The CAWP is a five-year plan which includes six commitments, 20 strategies, and 73 actions. The CAWP core commitments are rooted in environmental justice principles. Jen Kostrzewski, Assistant Manager of Water Resources, reviewed the 2024 theme: Focusing on the Region, which includes regional policy leadership, interconnected planning to align multiple climate plans, and staffing focus to understand gaps in climate workforce. Presenters noted that over half of the 73 CAWP actions are on track or completed and discussed significant progress on regionally focused commitments. Another 2024 theme is ongoing staffing gaps and the positive impacts of bridging the gaps in order to increase capacity to meet all commitments.

Laura Bretheim, Project Coordinator for Sustainability at Metro Transit, gave a rundown of commitments, including an overview of operational GHG emissions. The Council's GHG emissions are slightly higher compared to the previous four years. However, most emissions come from energy used in the wastewater treatment process as well as bus service, light rail propulsion, and facility operations.

Jeff Freeman, Sustainability Manager at Metro Transit, provided an overview of Metro Transit and Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) emissions with metrics scaled to reflect operations. Work is underway to develop additional metrics that are scaled to reflect levels of service, such as total emissions per passenger traveled by type of service, setting targets for facility energy consumption and emissions by process in wastewater treatment systems.

Presenters shared three project highlights: home energy efficiency audits for HRA single-family units; building automation systems to improve energy efficiency in 21 Metro Transit facilities; and a low dissolved oxygen demonstration project for wastewater treatment. Presenters concluded their presentation by discussing their environmental justice work and thanking the CAWP team members for their efforts.

Council members thanked CAWP staff for their ongoing work and commented on the importance of working with and educating various local communities including the elderly. Council members suggested the implementation of a financial metric to show financial benefits and savings to detractors. Council members asked about solar power, and additionally, requested a presentation cheat-sheet with talking points for conversations with community members and stakeholders

2. Audit Updates (Matt LaTour 651-602-1174)

Matt LaTour, Chief Audit Executive, introduced himself and provided an overview of internal and external auditors, the role of auditors, and audit framework. Matt shared an overview of audit staff roles and qualifications – the average tenure of Met Council audit staff is five years, which demonstrates expertise in the audit framework.

Matt provided a snapshot of current audits including body worn cameras, IT facility security, cloud computing, and Metro Transit customer comments and complaints process. Also discussed were future audits in the next 18 months, which are prompted by a risk needs assessment. In addition to current audits, Matt highlighted 2024 accomplishments including 17 significant investigations and provided an overview of Audit Committee activities and audit benchmarking.

Council members asked questions regarding waste and fraud and how comparable organizations are structured. Council members inquired about auditing investments for Blue Line readiness and the process to cycle back and re-audit. Staff noted that risk assessments would find out if the correct controls and/or staff are in place. The risk-needs assessment would prompt what needs to be re-audited.

Council members acknowledged the valuable work of the Audit Committee and suggested biannual updates to the Management Committee. Council members encouraged one another to join the Audit Committee that has two current vacancies.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Council's Committee of the Whole meeting of May 21, 2025.

Council contact:

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