



Environmental Services Commission Notes

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Center for Urban Waters located at 326 E D St, Tacoma, WA and via Zoom Meeting

April 11, 2024

Chair Beaumier called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Chad Sutter, Mindi Keller, Matthew Benedict, Karen DiNicola, and *Esther Beaumier.

Commission Members Absent: Bruce Martin, Grant Middleton, Erich Sachs, Alex Harman, David Dailey, Jeff Paradise, Marty Campbell, and *Richard Doenges.

Chair Beaumier welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the lack of a quorum. Informal discussion ensued regarding the following:

Public Comment

The public comment period is reserved for items on the current agenda only. Comments will be limited to the amount of time announced by the chair, presiding officer, or staff liaison, no more than five minutes per person per meeting.

No Public Comment was received.

ES Utility Overview: Wastewater, Stormwater, Solid Waste

Cassandra Moore, Environmental Compliance Assistant Division Manager, provided a brief overview of the Environmental Services Department, noting it includes three utilities and five divisions. She stated the Business Operations Division is not directly related to one utility but provides public facing and departmentwide shared services.

Hugh Messer, Operations & Maintenance Division Manager, provided an overview of the wastewater utility, noting there are 225 full time employees. He talked about the growth impacts to wastewater, planning for growth based on Puget Sound Regional Council projects and anticipated growth from Home In Tacoma (HIT). He spoke about the importance of developing an equitable plan that addresses impacts of population, needs of replacing aging infrastructure, community and stakeholder expectations, and financial constraints. Kirk Elliott, Operations Assistant Division Manager, discussed the Central Treatment Plant's (CTP) National Pollutants Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) draft permit and discussed notable changes which include moving to cBOD testing, removing peak wet weather (PWW) testing requirements, and adding a new parameter (Enterococci). He then discussed replacing the existing lab information system with HACH WIMs to provide Operators quick access to key information needed to operate treatment plants. Mr. Messer discussed upcoming facilities projects: CTP outfall cathodic protection improvements, roof replacements, and clarifier upgrades. Tyler Robertson, Maintenance Assistant Division Manager, discussed the South Tacoma pump station project to rehab the wet well and pumps, digester cleanings, completion of the asbestos survey at the CTP, replacement of hypo tanks, PWW hypo pump replacement, mixed liquor channel spray system replacement, multiple pump station rehabs, and completed Narrows pump station. Mark Lewis, Transmission Assistant

*Non-voting Commissioner

Division Manager, discussed the remodeling of buildings A and B at the CTP and the relocation of Transmission's administrative offices to Building B.

Discussion followed regarding the following:

1. Flows at the CTP
 - a. Commissioner Sutter how flow is reported and how data is captured.
 - b. Staff noted there are not flow meters installed, but there is enough information from other sources to capture accurate flow data.
2. Pump Stations
 - a. Commissioner Sutter asked about capital costs for the pump stations and whether the South Tacoma Pump Station was the newest one.
 - b. Staff confirmed it is the newest pump station.
3. Asbestos Remediation
 - a. Commissioner DiNicola asked about asbestos remediation completed at the CTP and whether surveys have been done on other city-owned facilities.
 - b. Staff stated tiles and countertops have been removed. They will need to follow-up to see if the City is looking at other city-owned facilities
4. PSNGP size requirement
 - a. Commissioner DiNicola asked about the size requirement needed to meet the PSNGP possible requirements.
 - b. Staff stated the plant in nitrifying very well, however denitrification would be need as well and the tank volume we have now will not be sufficient to meet possible TIN requirements.
5. Growth and Capacity Concerns
 - a. Commissioner DiNicola asked about capacity issues, the pressure on the treatment plants, and increasing costs to citizens because of over development.
 - b. Staff stated everything is being evaluated and staff is working closely with the Planning and Development group to evaluate future impacts including who will pay for upgrading sewer lines.

John Burk, Science & Engineering Division Manager, provided an overview of the stormwater utility, noting it includes nine watersheds, consists of approx. 562 miles of storm pipe, has approximately 97 full-time employees, and is divided into seven sections. He then talked about capital projects including various treatment and green projects in the Flett Creek Watershed and Upper Buckley areas. Mr. Burk also discussed the Puyallup Ave Interceptor project, ongoing planning efforts, natural systems management, the City's NPDES Stormwater Permit compliance, and anticipated new permit requirements. He then reviewed some growth impacts to stormwater, environmental cleanups, 2023 outreach efforts, and enhanced Stormwater Maintenance Grants.

Discussion followed regarding the following:

1. Infrastructure & pervious pavement
 - a. Commissioner Keller asked about the twin 96ers and where they are located and about whether any issues with pervious pavement have been identified.
 - b. Mr. Burk showed the location on the map and noted they are seeing some issues with moss and have contracted with Pierce County for street sweeping of roads with pervious pavement as they have a specialized sweeper for that material.
2. Stormwater Manual & IDDE Training
 - a. Commissioner Keller asked if the draft stormwater manual is open for public comment.
 - b. Staff confirmed the manual is open for public comment.

- c. Commissioner DiNicola inquired whether the employee required IDDE training can be tracked.
 - d. Staff confirmed it is being tracked by the City's Training group.
3. Capital Projects
- a. Commissioner DiNicola asked about the Puyallup Avenue Interceptor project and whether the Upper Buckley is just basic treatment. She then asked about permit requirements and mixed-use centers and whether the comp plan includes adding greener spaces in the city.

Lewis Griffith, Solid Waste Division Manager, provided an overview of the solid waste utility, noting there are approximately 57,192 residential customers and 5,258 commercial customers, and residential customers have been steadily rising. He stated the division is comprised of four sections with approximately 180 full-time employees. He then reviewed 2023 overall disposal and recycling tonnages, 2023 budgeted revenues and expenses, the Tacoma Recovery & Transfer Center facilities, and discussed the development of a site master plan. Mr. Griffith discussed recent accomplishment including new CNG trucks added to their fleet and savings achieved from CNG versus DGE since 2021. He concluded by reviewing upcoming challenges the utility is facing with the end of the contract with LRI in February 2030, stating staff is evaluating rail haul options, identifying sites for a rail yard, potential to collaborate with JBLM & Pierce County.

Discussion followed regarding the following:

- 1. Future Haul Options
 - a. Commissioner Keller asked if staff has explored working with Tacoma Rail for garbage hauling.
 - b. Commissioner DiNicola asked about Pierce County solid waste plan.

Commissioner Other Items of Interest

Kurt Fremont, Business Operations Division Manager, talked about his recent trip to Washington D.C. with ES Director Mike Slevin.

Adjournment

The meeting was declared adjourned at 5:57 p.m.