

**METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**  
390 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Committee Members Present: Chair Peggy Leppik, Kirstin Beach, Craig Peterson, Roger Scherer,  
Lynette Wittsack, Daniel Wolter

Committee Members Absent: Russ Susag

**CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Leppik called the regular meeting of the Council's Environment Committee to order at 4:02 p.m. on Tuesday, March 11, 2008.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

It was moved by Wolter, seconded by Wittsack to approve the agenda.

It was moved by Wittsack, seconded by Wolter to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2008 regular meeting of the Environment Committee. **The motion carried.**

**BUSINESS**

**2008-69 Authorization to Award and Execute a Contract for Solid Waste Removal at Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant**

It was moved by Wittsack, seconded by Scherer that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute a contract with Veolia ES – Vasko Rubbish Removal in the amount of \$649,386.98 to provide solid waste disposal services at the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant for a period of three years with an option to extend for two additional one-year periods.

**Motion carried.**

**INFORMATION**

**New Germany Rural Growth Center Update**

Bryce Pickart, Assistant General Manager-Technical Services, explained that the Water Resources Management Policy Plan allows the Council to acquire and operate a wastewater treatment plant upon a city's request and per meeting the following criteria: 1) mechanism for staged, orderly growth; 2) agreement on growth forecast; 3) wastewater treatment plant expansion feasibility. New Germany has met the criteria, and the full Council will take action on New Germany's comprehensive plan update in April. If approved, MCES will acquire the wastewater treatment plant in April and will assume financial responsibility for the plant expansion. The estimated cost is \$5 – 6 million.

**Bloomington/Edina Wastewater Service Study**

Bryce Pickart reviewed the policy/planning and reconveyance issues, and the Bloomington/Edina service plan conceptual approach. Bill Cook, Engineering Manager, informed the committee that dense redevelopment patterns will exceed sewer capacity, and presented service alternatives. Based on the timing of the development projects, service will be needed by 2012.

**Proposed Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Changes**

Keith Buttleman, Assistant General Manager-Environmental Quality Assurance, and Rebecca Flood, Environmental Compliance Manager, informed the Committee that National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits issued in 1984 authorized CSO discharges and committed Minneapolis/Saint Paul and the Metropolitan Council to a construction program with the intention of eliminating regulators and CSOs. The permit provides a legal structure for dealing with overflows. The overflow volume has reduced significantly since 1984 as a result of sewer separation efforts. Minneapolis is not yet fully separated and work is continuing to eliminate remaining CSOs. Although no overflows occurred in 2007, some CSOs are expected in Minneapolis during heavy rainfall events. The CSO NPDES permits expired in June 2001, and its requirements

remain in effect until the permit is reissued or officially terminated. The City of Saint Paul has requested permit termination, while Minneapolis wants it reissued. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has indicated that permits might not be reissued, which raises concern if there is a CSO event in Minneapolis. Staff will be meeting with MPCA, Saint Paul, and Minneapolis over the next few weeks.

**Water Supply Planning – Groundwater Model Demonstration**

Lanya Ross, Senior Environmental Scientist, explained that the purpose of the model is to enable assessment of current and projected groundwater withdrawals, future availability of water, and to identify alternatives in areas facing possible future water supply limitations. All of the major aquifers of the seven-county metropolitan area will be modeled. The Council's Metro Model will be available to the public for water supply management, protection, and research.

**Service Availability Charge Economics**

Jason Willett, Environment Services Finance Director, reviewed the impact of the housing market on service availability charges (SAC), and presented scenarios based on how quickly the housing market recovers. Other variables that affect SAC rates are: investment earnings rate, system flow, capital investment plan. Using the SAC reserve and its impact on rates was discussed. Council policy allows the use of the minimum reserve only in an economic downturn or natural disaster and as approved by the Council. Rate increases can be reduced if the SAC reserve fund balance is fully used.

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M. Harder  
Recording Secretary