

# METROPOLITAN WATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## Meeting Summary

**MS Teams Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 24, 2021**

**Start 10 a.m.  
Adjourned 12:02 p.m.**

### **1. MWWPAAC Chair's Report – Pam Carter**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Determine Quorum
- Approval of February Meeting Summary (action item)
- Regional Water Quality Committee Update

Chair Pam Carter called the meeting to order and welcomed MWWPAAC members.

Olivia Robinson, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Government Relations, took attendance by roll call. A quorum was in attendance.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the February meeting summary as written. The motion carried.

Pam reported on the March 3 Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC) meeting. Her report to RWQC included information on recent presentations to MWWPAAC to include the rate process, conveyance system, updates on construction and education programs, and the Washington Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WAWARN). The March 3 RWQC agenda included briefings on:

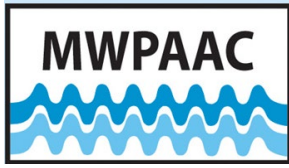
- RWQC Work Program
- Sewer Rate Schedule and Process; Asset Management: Conveyance
- Clean Water Plan Workshop

### **2. Wastewater Treatment Division Director's Report – Mark Isaacson, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD)**

Mark Isaacson, WTD Division Director, thanked members for their participation in today's meeting. He enjoys listening to comments on the rate letter but shared he'd have to leave today's meeting early. He appreciated getting a preview of the letter, which he shared with the Executive's Office along with the message to smooth out rate increases over time. The Executive is waiting for MWWPAAC's recommendation and talking to other stakeholders before determining how to move forward. The letter acknowledged the work WTD has done with MWWPAAC on the Asset Management program and a few items from MWWPAAC's work plan (e.g. the rate setting process), and Mark is looking forward to working with the Executive Board on improvements we could make to the rate development schedule. There will need to be consideration for the contract constraints and the availability of data on the internal processes. Mark reported that the finance staff have put together a technical memorandum that includes a number of assumptions in the proposed rate.

Mark also reported on the upcoming Clean Water Plan elected officials' workshop and the separate technical workshops. He's pleased about the amount of interest in all of these workshops. Going back to the rate recommendation letter that referenced more review and input with the work of the Clean

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Water plan – WTD is very willing to have our technical experts available for any deeper dives into topics. We'll schedule meetings as identified and needed.

Mark briefly highlighted the nutrients issue. Comments were due on the draft permit to Ecology about a week ago. The themes in comments were similar – scientific investment and ocean influences and non-point influences considerations. The nutrients issue is a big deal for WTD, and we'd be looking at a fourth treatment plant if they are looking at site specific regulations. We are looking for a panel of scientists and engineers to look at what is behind the data and how it is being used. Also, we are asking Ecology to provide alternatives to what they are requesting. Finally, there were some interesting letters sent from members of the public asking for a broader engagement plan. WTD also provided detailed analysis to Ecology. The final draft permit is anticipated in late summer 2021 and the final permit is anticipated in fall 2021, however the dates should be noted in pencil as dates may change.

Mark reminded members he will be retiring this year. They are holding final interviews this week and hopefully there will be a decision in early April.

Chair Pam Carter shared that MWWPAAC looks forward to future discussion on the rate process and schedule.

### 3. Subcommittee Reports

#### March 4, 2021, Rates & Finance:

- 2022 Sewer Rate Discussion

#### March 4, 2021, Engineering & Planning:

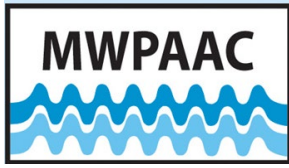
- I/I BMPs Recommendation
- Nutrients Draft Permit Update

### 4. I/I Control Program – MWWPAAC I/I Taskforce Recommendation on Regional Best Management Practices, Nicole Smith, Program Manager, WTD

Nicole Smith, Program Manager, provided a briefing on the Evaluation of Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) Reduction Concepts Phase 2. This briefing is also to prepare for a future recommendation from the Engineering & Planning Subcommittee to be discussed at the April 28 meeting. The full presentation can be found [here](#). The briefing included information on the following items:

- Overview of Current I/I Work
  - Phase 2 – Program Design
    - Regional Best Management Practices (BMPs)
    - Inspector Training and Certification Program
    - Private Side Sewer Inspection Program with Financial Assistance
- Regional Best Management Practices (PMPs) - Foundation
- BMPS Recommended

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- What will be produced for each BMP?
- I/I and Clean Water Plan
- Timeline

### 5. **Clean Water Plan Update, Nicole Smith, Senior Water Quality Planner, WTD**

Nicole Smith, Senior Water Quality Planner, presented the monthly Clean Water Plan briefing on behalf of the project managers who could not attend. The full presentation can be found [here](#). The briefing included information on the following topics:

- Planning Process Check-in
- Upcoming Action Technical Workshops
- New Information Resource – Planning Process Topic Sheet

Ben Marre, Seattle Public Utilities, provided an update on coordination of the External Advisory Group and MWWPAAC. He shared that he and John McClellan, Alderwood Water and Wastewater District, are the two MWWPAAC representatives. At the last MWWPAAC meeting members requested more information on advisory group meeting materials. In response to that request, Ben shared that he'll provide February's meeting information to Marla Oughton and have her send it out to members on his behalf. He noted the information is very informative and gives you a good sense as to why it is important to review and digest these materials. He also encouraged members to attend the upcoming elected officials and technical workshops. He and John will continue to send information out to MWWPAAC as they receive it.

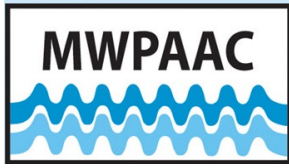
Chair Pam Carter reminded members of the two separate tracks of workshops and noted that the technical workshops are for those wanting to get down into the weeds. She encouraged members and members from their agencies to attend.

### 6. **2022 Sewer Rate Recommendation to the Executive (Action Item), Hiedi Popochock, Financial Services Manager, WTD, and Jack Broyles, Rates and Finance Subcommittee Chair**

Hiedi Popochock, WTD Financial Services Manager, reviewed WTD's Rate Recommendation that included: background information, a rate-drivers summary, and key assumptions. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

Gregg Cato, Alderwood Water and Wastewater District, and Jack Broyles, Woodinville Water District, discussed the process used to draft the rate recommendation letter. An email was sent out to members seeking their input. Greg Cato reviewed the draft letter and ten minor edits offered by members during the review period. Clarification was provided on the request for yearly increases versus every two years.

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A motion was made and seconded to approve the MWWPAAC Rate Recommendation letter. The motion carried by voice vote.

Jack then opened the floor up for discussion and comments.

Gregg reported that four more substantive edits were being proposed.

Gregg reviewed proposed amendment no. 1, adding bullets and indentation to the first three paragraphs under "Other Areas of Concern."

A motion was made and seconded to approve amendment no. 1. The motion carried by voice vote.

Gregg reviewed proposed amendment no. 2, which would add a final paragraph to the letter. "MWWPAAC and its member agencies appreciate the annual opportunity to communicate our concerns and your consideration of them. We look forward to continuing a relationship of collaboration as we all strive to provide efficient and cost-effective wastewater collection for a rapidly growing region."

A motion was made and seconded to approve amendment no. 2. The motion carried by voice vote.

Jack reviewed proposed amendment no. 3, which would add the following language at the end of the first paragraph: "In order to begin funding the needed improvements identified in the Asset Management Program, MWWPAAC would support a 4% rate increase in 2022 coupled with annual rate increases going forward."

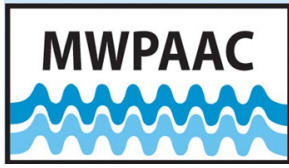
A motion was made and seconded to approve amendment no. 3. The motion carried by voice vote.

Lisa Tobin, Engineering & Planning Subcommittee Chair, reviewed proposed amendment no. 4, which would replace the third bulleted paragraph under "Other Concerns" with: "MWWPAAC members need reliable construction time schedules for future regional conveyance system improvements so that they can make informed decisions about their own capital and operating needs. We request that WTD establish a defined appeals process to review any changes in prioritization so that the impacts on local agencies can be considered."

A motion was made and seconded to approve amendment no. 4. The motion carried by voice vote.

Gregg opened the floor for any additional proposed edits. Cheryl Paston, City of Bellevue, proposed a change to the fifth paragraph, second sentence to add the following language at the end of the sentence: "(WTD has estimated costs in excess of \$6 billion to comply with the permit)."

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A motion was made and seconded to approve amendment no. 5. The motion carried by voice vote.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the MWWPAAC Rate Recommendation letter as amended. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.

### **7. General Announcements**

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.