METROPOLITAN WATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

General Meeting Summary

Microsoft Teams Meeting **Wednesday, April 29, 2022** **Start 10 a.m.**
Adjourned 11:20 a.m.

1. **MWPAAC Chair's Report – John McClellan**

   a. Welcome and Introductions
   b. Determine Quorum
   c. Approval of March Meeting Summary **(Action Item)**
   d. Regional Water Quality Committee Update (RWQC)

Chair John McClellan welcomed members to the meeting.

A quorum was in attendance, and the March meeting summary was approved as written by voice vote.

Chair McClellan provided a summary of the April 1 RWQC meeting. The following briefings were provided.

- Proviso Response and Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) Policy Questions Initial Analysis Group 2: Source Control and Legacy Pollution
- Wastewater Treatment Division's 2027 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge Recommendations and Options
- Briefing on Pending Ordinance Related to Proposed Capacity Charge Code Changes

Chair McClellan shared for the May 6 RWQC meeting the following briefing topics are expected:

- RWSP policy questions initial analysis
- Executive's Proposed 2027 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge
- Capacity Charge Methodology

Chair McClellan shared there will be vote today on the draft MWPAAC Rate Letter to King County Council. Matt Hobson, Rates and Finance Chair will lead that process.

2. **Wastewater Treatment Division Director's Report – Kamuron Gurol, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD)**

Kamuron Gurol, WTD Director introduced Government Relations Assistant Emily Baker who recently joined WTD's government relations team. Emily will be taking on some of

the MWPAAC work that Executive Assistant Marla Erickson and Olivia Robinson, Government Relations have been doing.

Sewer Rate

Last week, Executive Zahilay transmitted his proposed sewer rate to the King County Council. He is recommending the proposed WTD rate of 12.75% that has been discussed with MWPAAC. WTD has been monitoring media attention and have done a couple of interviews and coverage continues. WTD government relations and communications staff met with public information officers and other interested parties from our partner agencies to hear any further questions they had. WTD's communications team has prepared a tool kit on the sewer rate. Let government relations know if your agency was not able to attend the last meeting and would like more information.

Kamuron thanked members for working with WTD on this process over the last several months. WTD truly does appreciate members' comments and letters that help make this process more transparent and engaged.

Rating Agencies

WTD meets with rating agencies every year in preparation to issue debt and to refresh WTD ratings and WTD is as explicit with them as we are with MWPAAC. Some of the standards these agencies use to assess the creditworthiness of an organization include asset condition (both understanding that condition and having plans for renewal and replacement), regulatory compliance and capital planning, liquidity and reserves, and other indicators of financial strength. The ratings agencies then rate WTD's creditworthiness in preparation for issuing/selling municipal bond debt. WTD will be receiving those ratings in the coming weeks. WTD's ratings are currently nearly the highest possible for a government agency of our type - AA+ for S&P and Aa1 for Moody's. This helps WTD issue debt at the lowest rate. WTD will provide an update once ratings are received.

Third-Party Review of Capital Program

Kamuron reminded the committee of the third-party review process was part of Executive Braddock's response to executive rate letters received in 2026. This is an independent third-party review of larger projects. WTD received three qualified proposals and awarded the contract to PMA. Final negotiations are underway and the contract is on track to be executed mid-June and notice to process is anticipated in July. Kamuron thanked Ben Marre, Comprehensive Engineering and Planning Vice Chair, for being part of the selection process.

METROPOLITAN WATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

General Meeting Summary

NACWA Water Week

Kamuron shared some pictures from NACWA's 2026 Water Week that took place in Washington, DC, April 13-16, 2026. NACWA hosts this annual event to highlight water and wastewater issues for Congress. He attended along with Government Relations Administrator Sharman Herrin and Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) Policy Advisor Abby Hook, along with Ellen Stewart and Susan Saffery from Seattle Public Utilities. It was great to have both utilities represented. Both utilities had the opportunity to brief Representatives' and Senators' offices. It was also a good opportunity for WTD to thank members for their support of legislation important to WTD – the Wastewater Infrastructure Pollution Prevention and Environmental Safety (WIPPES) Act and the reauthorization of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) and State Revolving Fund (SRF) federal loans. WTD is tracking administrative budget negotiations which may reduce those amounts. WTD also used the opportunity to share concerns about rate affordability in the coming years and the need for an environmentally protective and financially sustainable rate path. Kamuron shared there is strong congressional delegation support of the utility that is very engaged in what is happening in the region.

Kamuron also participated in a NACWA Board meeting where he had the opportunity to connect with colleagues from agencies across the United States.

Project Update

Kamuron provided an update on the Brightwater Membrane Replacement project.

Kamuron recognized Deputy Director Bruce Kesser for his 20 years of service and his retirement. He also thanked MWPAAC members who have and will contribute to selecting WTD's new Deputy Director, which he hopes to announce in June.

3. **Subcommittee Reports**

April 2, 2026, Joint Subcommittee Report

- Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) Asset Renewal & Replacement Policy Options

METROPOLITAN WATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

General Meeting Summary

4. **2026 Utility Summit – Next Steps,** Laura Belmont, Policy Analyst, Sound Cities Association, and Abby Hook, Policy Advisor, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

DNRP Policy Advisor Abby Hook co-presented with Sound Cities Association Policy Analyst Laura Belmont on the next steps for the Utility Summit. The full presentation can be found here. The briefing included the following topics:

- Utility Summit 2025
- Sound Cities Association (SCA) Education Series and Toolbox
- King Count Next Steps
- Questions for Discussion

5. **Discussion of Executive's Proposed Sewer Rate, Kamuron Gurol, WTD Director**

Kamuron Gurol, WTD Director, reported on the Executive's 2027 Sewer Rate and Capacity Charge proposal. The Executive's proposal aligns with WTD's recommended rate proposal. However, the Executive is expecting WTD to figure out how to bend the curve (rate trajectory) down. WTD will be working together with partners to find a pathway. Priorities include:

- Single digit rate increases; moving away from double-digit increases
- Looking at the "when" and "how" to address the stacking problem and address the "what" questions. Things to be explored include:
    - Current/known obligations
    - Other CSO obligations under the modified consent decree
    - Lower and East Waterway cleanup – we don't want recontamination
    - Later obligations – the "what"

WTD needs to have conversations with Ecology and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) simultaneously. Another consideration is where Ecology is going to land on nutrient obligations. WTD is looking at the near term and then, more importantly, what the long-term obligations are, and for a collaborative process to chart that pathway. There are cost constraints and WTD will be looking at what are the cheaper, more effective investments that can be made now and to shift the larger investments out a few years. WTD needs to find the most sustainable rate possible and chart the path together with an expansive point of view.

METROPOLITAN WATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

General Meeting Summary

6. **Discussion and Vote on 2027 Sewer Rate Letter to the King County Council, John McClellan, MWPAAC Chair (Action Item)**

Matt Hobson, Rates and Finance Chair, shared there are two motions that will require approval. The first motion is to waive the seven-day requirement in the bylaws for receiving materials that require a vote. The second will be to approve the rate letter to King County Council (KCC). He reported the Executive proposed his rate last Friday and the MWPAAC Executive Board waited for that to be announced before finalizing the draft. Essentially, the letter to the KCC is the same as the letter sent to the Executive. There were no changes made to the context of the letter. Chair McClellan noted the Executive Board felt it was important to convey the same messaging to the KCC as it did to the Executive. Matt reviewed the process to submit proposed amendments to the letter.

The first order of action is a motion to waive the seven-day requirement in the bylaws for receiving materials that require a vote.

> A motion was made and seconded to waive the seven-day requirement. The motion carried by voice vote.

The next order of action is a motion to introduce the letter for discussion.

> A motion was made and seconded to approve the MWPAAC Rate Letter to the King County Executive for discussion.

Matt asked if there were any members who wanted to introduce any amendments.

No amendments were introduced.

> Gregg Cato, Rates and Finance Subcommittee Vice Chair, made a motion to approve the MWPAAC Rate Letter to KCC as written. Ben Marre, Comprehensive Engineering and Planning Vice Chair, seconded. Olivia Robinson, WTD Government Relations, took a roll call vote. The motion carried (14-Yes, 0-No).

7. **General Announcements**

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.