

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Mears Park Centre, 390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Meeting of the

METROPOLITAN AREA WATER SUPPLY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 25, 2006

Committee Members Present:	Peter Bell, Chair	Metropolitan Council
	Bev Aplikowski	City of Arden Hills, Mayor
	Tom Furlong	City of Chanhassen, Mayor
	Chuck Haas	City of Hugo, Council Member
	James Japs	DNR, Assistant Director-Waters
	Peggy Leppik	Metropolitan Council Member
	Linda Loomis	City of Golden Valley, Mayor
	Faye Sleeper	PCA, Watershed Section Manager
	John Stine	Dept of Health, Director, Environmental Health Division
	Barry Stock	City of Savage, Administrator
Committee Members Absent::	Dennis Berg	Anoka County, Commissioner
	Joe Harris	Dakota County, Commissioner
	Gene Hugoson	Department of Agriculture, Commissioner

Call to Order

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The minutes of the April 27 meeting will be corrected to show Mr. Japs in attendance. It was moved by Mr. Haas, seconded by Mr. Japs to approve the May 25, 2006 agenda and the minutes of the April 27, 2006 meeting. **Motion carried.**

Advisory Committee Schedule Update

The updated schedule was reviewed, as well as the draft Water Supply Well Approval Process for municipal and non-municipal wells. Mr. Buttleman, Assistant Manager, explained that the flow chart is a rough draft and welcomed suggestions and comments. Mr. Japs reminded staff to include the comments submitted by the Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Elvrum, Water Supply Planning Manager, assured him that the changes will be incorporated.

Chair Bell asked the Committee if it is satisfied with the schedule and tasks completed to date or if it has additional direction on future items. Mr. Buttleman noted that the first several meetings are intended to provide background information on either conditions here in the metro area or comparative information regarding other parts of the country. Analysis and recommendations based on that information will come out of further discussions, such as the response to the workshops and other discussions later this year. Mr. Bell asked about the schedule for reviewing the report to the legislature and whether enough time is being allocated for the Committee's review, as the most important task of the Committee is the issuance of that report. Mr. Buttleman responded that a preliminary draft will be ready at the September 28th meeting and further review

can take place in October and November. Issues that need to go into the report will be discussed between now and September.

Mr. Haas commented that review of the preliminary draft by committee members and their respective staff will enable the committee to get input to bring back to these meetings. Chair Bell directed staff to forward material as it is developed to Committee members.

Mr. Stine asked how discussions of best practices will be handled, as it is not shown on the agenda. Will best practices and comparisons be reviewed on each topic? Mr. Bell stated that some will be presented today and will be reviewed throughout discussions as material is reviewed. Mr. Stine suggested that the committee may want a broader discussion of best practices separately later in the summer after it has had more time to explore the issues. Mr. Moore stated the intent is whenever there is a chapter prepared on a topic that is going to go into the report, e.g. safety or security, best practices will be discussed. The workload may make it necessary to program some additional meetings later in the year. Mr. Bell commented that this is the data phase, and the comprehensive work to be performed by the Committee will take place later in the year when it is reviewing the report.

Ms. Leppik inquired as to the due date of the report. Mr. Elvrum responded that it is due prior to the start of the legislative session. Ms. Leppik commented that it is likely to be the first Tuesday after New Year's, so reviewing the final report on 1/25/07 as shown in the schedule is confusing. Mr. Elvrum answered that the final report will be approved by this Committee before it is submitted to the Legislature in December.

Chair Bell asked if the final result of phase 1 is essentially the approval of the final report and if further legislative action is required to determine what phase 2 is going to be. Mr. Elvrum responded that the legislation is fairly vague, it just requires a report to the Legislature and requires preparation of a regional master plan (no deadline noted). The only other deadline is a report to the legislature every five years, and this Committee has a sunset date of the end of 2008. Phase 2 can be started without legislative action. Mr. Buttleman commented that staff interpreted the sunset for this advisory committee as a reasonable date to project the completion of the regional master plan as well, although the legislation does not specifically say that. It seems reasonable that the last act of this committee would be the regional master plan as well as a recommendation as to whether there is a need to continue re-authorizing the advisory committee.

Preliminary Report on May 24, 2006 Water Supply Workshop

Chair Bell reported that a number of Committee members attended the workshop held in Maple Grove. This was the first of three workshops scheduled, and was attended by approximately 50 stakeholders representing cities, counties, watershed districts, private industry, elected officials and citizens.

Ms. Leppik thought the workshop was well organized and well received. There was quite a mix of people with different backgrounds, including elected officials, water experts. Most came from western suburbs, but were some from other areas.

Ms. Loomis thought that the way it was organized gave people a chance to discuss their concerns.

Mr. Stine was glad to be there because it was not a typical bureaucratic meeting. It was a brief presentation followed by a lot of discussion in small groups. There was a lot of agreement among the participants on the need for a regional perspective on water supply.

William G. Moore, General Manager, reminded members that there are two additional workshops – May 31, Woodbury, and June 7, Apple Valley. Useful meeting from our perspective.

Ms. Loomis observed that there was a lot of the discussion that seemed to be sort of aquifer centric. Coming from a city that uses surface water as a municipal source everybody seemed to be focused more on what is under the ground than what's on top of the ground, although there was discussion about impact of aquifer use on the surface water.

Ms. Leppik noted that these meetings are in the suburbs. It's important that we try to get input on the surface waters because so many of the suburbs do use aquifers. Mr. Buttleman said that yesterday's workshop was fairly well attended by St. Paul and Minneapolis representatives. In addition, representatives attended from Becker, St. Peter, and Duluth areas.

Update on Technical Studies

Mr. Elvrum gave a brief update about some of the projects staff has undertaken.

The Water Supply System Inventory is developing a database of water supply systems as well as gathering information about water use. The database is ready to go. A web-based form is being used that will be sent out to all communities, mostly to confirm that their information is correct and to fill in a few gaps.

Water Demand Projections are being updated. Resource Limitations - staff is looking at available resources in each community and trying to identify where demand projections do not meet the local available resources.

Looking at ground water and surface water monitoring that is being done in the region. There are several different organizations involved and for the most part they communicate, but there might be some overlap or gaps.

Evaluate Institutional Arrangement. Looking at local and regional structure of managing water supply systems. There was quite a bit of debate at the May 24th workshop

regarding funding strategies for regional infrastructure or regional needs. Mr. Elvrum noted that examining funding for planning is one of the requirements of the legislation.

Regulatory and Permitting Process. Flow chart distributed today is first step and will be discussed further.

Safety and Security Assessment. Looking at what the region (not each water supply system) is doing for safety and security planning. Exploring regional opportunities and national examples. Mr. Bell asked if each municipality has a security or safety protocol, and if it is reviewed and updated on a periodic basis. Mr. Stine responded that it is a requirement of the Safe Drinking Water Act and every water supplier is required to have a security plan. Accountable for that to the EPA. The State assists in that review and plans are filed on a regular basis. Mr. Stock stated that it is taken seriously. Mr. Haas asked if the Act requires some sort of identification of an alternate water source for a public municipality. Mr. Stock responded that a contingency plan is required for any water system. The DNR requires some as well and the Health Dept through the Safe Drinking Water Act, but every component of every security plan should identify what will be done in the event of no supply being available. Mr. Japs noted that there is a state requirement for water emergency and conservation plan so there is an element in there regarding emergency preparedness. He suggested that this might be a good thing to add to the July agenda. It would demonstrate how that plan fits in with the federally required plan. If a community has a federally approved plan, that element of Minnesota's water emergency conservation plan does not have to be completed. At any rate, that type of information is not wanted in the State's files because it then becomes public information and could be a security issue.

Groundwater Recharge and Geologic Mapping
Working with MN Geological Survey to look at aquifer recharge.

Groundwater Contaminant Mapping
In conjunction with the MN Dept of Health, conducting contaminant mapping. We have an idea of the location of some of the big plumes and naturally occurring contaminants (e.g. radium);

Mississippi River Analysis
After the drought of 1988 a lot of work was done quickly to summarize how much water was available and identify the competing interests. Since the mid-1990s discussion has abated. There are misconceptions about release from the reservoirs. Working with Army Corps of Engineers to summarize available information to bring to this committee for discussion as to what needs to be addressed regarding surface water, specifically the Mississippi River as it is used for drinking water in the region.

Water Use and Conservation
Evaluating past water use, and current & potential conservation methods. Researching national examples and what role, if any, the region can play in looking at water conservation.

Although it is not part of this project, the Council is involved with source water protection planning effort (Minneapolis, St. Paul & St. Cloud) to look at the upper Mississippi River basin. We will use that as part of the overall planning here; the Council has also undertaken a water re-use study to examine the feasibility of using wastewater effluent for industrial use. Both of these efforts tie in with what this Committee is trying to do:

Water Supply System Governance

Dave Jochim, RW Beck Inc., explained that the objectives of today's presentation are to share information and examine how other regions have responded to water supply and water system planning issues.

Multiple jurisdictions have gotten together on a regional or quasi-regional basis. Typically, several steps are taken to identify the functions that they want to accomplish, e.g. regional planning, water supply, water transmission. There are a number of structures available to accomplish this, ranging from loose, inter-local type of agreements to fairly rigid structures. Each state is different in the types of powers it grants to entities. Reviewed why organizations initially formed, their accomplishments, and different financing options. Five example organizations were chosen for review to provide a spectrum of organizational structures and the variety of issues they faced.

Jamie Buss, Richardson Richter & Associates, reviewed the accomplishments, powers and challenges of the following organizations: Palm Beach County Water Utilities; Cascade Water Alliance; Tampa Bay Water, South Nevada Water Authority; and Ruhrverband (Ruhr Association). The Committee asked that a column for the metro area be added to the tables showing powers, accomplishments and local v. regional control. It was pointed out that Cascade Water Alliance is an example where banding together did not work and a number of organizations chose to opt out of this alliance. Differences and similarities with our region were briefly touched on.

Mr. Furlong asked how prevalent regional water organizations are throughout the country. Mr. Jochim responded that they are very prevalent and have been driven by economics. Mr. Stine commented that this region is unique in terms of groundwater availability and quality.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.