



**Joint Meeting of Water System Advisory Committee (WSAC)
and Creeks, Drainage, and Wastewater Advisory Committee (CDWAC)**

November 9th, 2016 Meeting Notes
Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue
Room 4901
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Committee Members & CAC Staff	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
WSAC		Sheryl Shapiro	CDWAC Liaison and CAC Program Manager
Tom Grant	Y	Julie Burman	WSAC Liaison
Melissa Levo	Y	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Kelly McCaffrey	Y	Madeline Goddard	SPU, Deputy Director, Drainage and Wastewater Branch
Teresa Stern	Y	Joan Kersnar	SPU Drinking Water Planning Manager
Kyle Stetler	N	Brian Landau	SPU Drainage and Wastewater Policy Advisor
Rodney Schauf	N		
Paul Reed	Y		
Michael Godfried	Y		
CDWAC			
Clifford Armstrong III	P	Guests	
Schyler Hect	N	Wendy Walker	Guest
Patrick Jablonski	P	Steven Cole	Guest
Christina Ciampa	N	Ben Billick	Guest
Seth McKinney	N	Kirsi Longley	Guest
Noel Miller	N	Joel Carsley	Guest
Devin O'Reilly	N	Colum Lang	Guest
Gary Olson	N	Sue Morrison	Guest
Evan Osborne	Y		
Mariella White	Y		

ACTION ITEMS

Committee members noted a potential outreach need regarding the possibility of under-reported incidents of overflows in South Seattle. Brian noted that would likely be something prioritized by the new DWW outreach lead. Note to remind Brian to pass this information along

to new outreach lead. Brian passed this information to Rachel Garrett; she is developing a workplan but not sure whether this will be a high priority for 2017.

- Brian to provide sewer overflow records to date for this year. Committee interested in seeing if we will likely surpass 2015 figures.
- Sheryl to distribute the 2016 Workplan for Committee members to review in advance of December meeting for 2017 work planning.
- Sheryl to send 2017 Elections Process email with a summary of position descriptions. Missed that date! She noted that if steps don't happen in a timely manner, we can defer the election to January but hope to conduct it at the December meeting.
- Committee members interested in serving as Officers in 2017 were encouraged to speak with current officers or Sheryl about the role and commitment.

Follow-up to ACTION ITEMS from previous meetings:

- Sheryl has requested information from staff on the impacts of chemical root treatments to trees growing into sewer mains to follow-up on the questions from the June meeting presentation on the CMOM (Capacity Management and Operations Maintenance) Roadmap. We expect to have that information at or before the November meeting.

1. Regular Business

Opened the meeting at 5:38PM

- WSAC Co-Chair, Kelly McCaffrey, opened the meeting and reminded attendees to sign-in.
- Committee Members, SPU staff, and guests introduced themselves.
- Meeting notes from September were approved.
- Sheryl indicated emergency exits, bathrooms, and noted that she would be following up with more details concerning emergency supplies and procedures at a future meeting.
- Sheryl provided key Membership Updates.

2. 2019 Water System Plan Overview: Joan Kersnar, SPU Drinking Water Planning Manager

Joan provided an overview of Water System Plans and the schedule for updating the current Plan by April 2019. CDWAC-WSAC Members were asked to weigh in on elements of the 2019 Water System Plan that they would like to be briefed on and review (do we have ok to post the blank template of topics- or should we include in notes?), between now and the end of 2018. Based on the level of interest on particular topics, Joan said they could coordinate agenda items for future months.

Water LOB Liaison, Julie Burman, elaborated on some of the topics of potential interest to CDWAC-WSAC. She said many of these overlap with topics that WSAC and CDWAC have been requesting:

- **Water Demand Forecast:** Specifically, demographic information, questions about predicting water supply needs in the future, and assumptions the SPU economists have been using (both about water demand and about growth in the PNW region).
- **Firm Yield:** The estimate of water available based on historic data. Julie said she believes the amount of water supply we're forecasting now will remain the same. She said the presentation

may be a little hard to follow, but the bottom line is interesting. She encouraged Committee members to be thinking hard about how we present this information to the public.

- **Climate Change Analysis:** Presentation likely primed for Summer 2017. This topic includes covering the various climate change scenarios, and how they might impact water supply and demand, as well as key takeaways from the findings in that analysis. This will tie in well with the topics that will be covered by staff in the 11/16/16 All-CAC meeting, but will focus on water supply.
- **Water Use Efficiency Goal Setting (Water Conservation):** This would be on the 10-year regional water conservation program. What should the goal be, and what kind of program mix should be? The adoption process requires public input for setting those goals: The discussion is around, “if you don’t need a new source of supply, why do water conservation?” Julie feels it’s an important discussion to have, with residents, with wholesale customers, and with retail customers who may not all have the same values.
- **Capital Facility Plan:** This is the 20-year Capital Program outlook for the Water System Plan. It will show how investments have changed over the years. Staff will be looking to the Committee to provide input on how to display the information they’re trying to convey.
- **Public Involvement:** Julie felt that in the past, SPU hasn’t done a good enough job articulating to customers how important the Water System Plan is and how we want them reviewing it. She said she is seeking CAC input on how to emphasize the importance of public input on the Plan. For the last Plan, WSAC hosted a public meeting on the plan.

Joan noted that the Plan will need to be approved by the Department of Public Health by April 2019, so said they are anticipating a public review in March 2018. She said she will bring to the Committee any elements of the Plan before they go to public review.

- **Committee member question:** When do you want these (topic surveys) collected?
 - **Answer:** I was envisioning that the chairs would use it to help build agendas for 2017. We could come to the December meeting with the first two items if they’re of interest. We want to balance this with whatever else might be going on; retail water rates, Strategic Business Planning, etc. My intent is that those first years, where we go more detailed, will go into the Water System Plan, so that we’re not confusing the Council and Public. We’ll have it be the same as the Strategic Business Plan, and then extend it 20 years out.
- **Committee member question:** Julie, since this is your last time with CDWAC-WSAC, can you explain the reasons why we’re doing water conservation?
 - **Answer:** We call them Drivers:
 - Retain capacity for water efficiency in case there was a drought, or because of the uncertainties of climate change.
 - Continue to protect natural resources; take less water.
 - Provide a way for customers to manage their bills.
 - Equity considerations.
- **Committee member question:** Am I hearing correctly that ultimately the decision of whether this Plan, wherever it lands regardless of public input, is ultimately up to City Council?
 - **Answer:** Yes
- **Committee member question:** And what’s in the Plan matters in terms of receiving low-interest loans from the State Revolving Fund? Does that matter for the utility, or is that for a private corporation to use a loan?

- **Answer:** It's for the utility. For example, we've received loans for the buried reservoir projects. For us, it would be a very large project that makes it worthwhile to go through the process to get that loan. The benefit is that, over time, it lowers rates. The interest rates can be 1-2% lower. These loans aren't available to private developers.

3. DWW LOB Policy Program Update & Sewer Back-up Prevention Policy Development: Brian Landau, SPU Drainage and Wastewater Policy Advisor

Brian last spoke to the Committee in February 2016. He reviewed updates to the Drainage and Wastewater LOB Policy Program, and reviewed basic Policy 101. Brian said the Policy workgroup is working on 7-8 policies, but as they looked at the issues around each of the 8 policies, they realized they needed to narrow down their list.

- Climate Change: guidance to DWW Capital Improvement Project (CIP) teams on how to adapt to rising sea levels. He said they originally tried to address precipitation but was too much to swallow at once. Hoping to address precipitation in 2017.
 - Informal Drainage System: Provide clear direction on the types of drainage infrastructure improvements SPU would prefer to be installed.
 - Level of Service: Provide a Level of Service Framework for DWW Planning
 - Drainage Mainline Extensions: Director's Rule to clarify when standard adjustments can be made to the Stormwater Code drainage mainline extension requirement
 - Capacity Constraints: Director's Rule to clarify where Stormwater Code-defined capacity constrained areas/infrastructure are identified in the City so peak flow control be applied to those areas.
 - Side Sewers: Define how to determine the required diameter of a side sewer connection from any single building with multiple dwelling units contained within (such as apartment or condominium buildings)
 - Side Sewer Assistance: Develop a program recommendation that will help customers with the maintenance, repair and/or replacement of side sewers.
 - Infiltration and Inflow: I/I Reduction Project Guidance for planning and capital projects in separated sewer areas
 - Sewer Backup Prevention (Backwater valves): Guidance for Why and When SPU will support installation of backwater valves
- **Committee member question:** Can you explain what the image is on the bottom of each slide?
 - **Answer:** This is really a process toolbar for each of our policy initiatives. The image is a dashboard of the major milestones for each project. A dark green color indicates the milestone has been completed.
 - **Committee member question:** Were there policies in place already in these areas?
 - **Answer:** There were inconsistent decisions being made, or we didn't have a policy on some of these things. The goal is to develop policies that will help us get these projects built and done more efficiently.

Brian then went into more detail on the Sewer Back-up Prevention Policy Development, and said he was looking to get feedback on what CAC members think about our recommendation. He covered:

- Background Information on Sewer Backups (Why, Where, How).
- Policy Question: Backwater Valves (when should SPU use them to prevent backups)
- Policy Development

Brian posed the question: *Why should SPU care about Sewer Backups?*

- **Committee member comment:** It's good customer service
- **Committee member comment:** It's expensive to fix
 - For whom? It depends on where fault lies. A lot of cost to the customer / the utility
- **Committee member comment:** It makes a big mess, especially for the environment
- **Committee member comment:** It can be indicative of a bigger infrastructure issue

Madeline asked Committee members and guests: *How many of your sewer overflows occurred during a big rain event?*

- Two people noted that they had experienced sewer overflows. In both cases, they were after a big rain event. Both instances were backups related to the side sewer, not a backup from the public sewer system.

Brian reviewed the number of backups caused by SPU that are reported to SPU. In 2015, one of the wettest years on record, SPU had a record number of reported properties with sewer overflow into home from SPU system. Brian posed the question: *What are the causes of backups from Sewer Overflows?*

- **Committee member comment:** FOG
- **Committee member comment:** Trash in the system
- **Committee member comment:** Capacity, extreme weather
- **Committee member comment:** Blockage
- **Committee member comment:** Mechanical failures

The top concern, Brian explained, is storm events (extreme weather, capacity). He said that given this, he can imagine more sewer backups in the future, because we're seeing warmer, wetter trends. Brian reviewed a map of overflows. He posed the question: *What is interested about where they are located?*

- **Committee member comment:** Less around water bodies
- **Committee member comment:** A lot of sewer backups in partially separated systems
- **Committee member comment:** More overflows in North Seattle
 - Brian noted that we don't exactly know why this is, but we do think there may be underreporting in south Seattle. Our infrastructure could be performing better down south, but it could be underreporting. We've identified this as a potential data gap.

Brian gave an overview of backwater valves, shared an education video and reviewed the benefits and concerns of backwater valves. Brian explained that the proposed policy would allow SPU to fund a backwater valve when a customer experiences a sewer backup from SPU sewer system due to extreme weather and capacity, or rare instances of due maintenance (such as roots).

Brian said that the proposed policy would not go into specifics on implementation, as the support/funding could play out in several ways. For example:

- Through SPU's claims program, SPU has reimbursed customers for backwater valve installations.
- The Broadview project is an example where backwater valves were installed as part of a capital investment project. The Broadview neighborhood has longstanding sewer and drainage problems. During heavy rains, water can overwhelm Broadview's sewer system and cause sewage backups into homes, which is a serious public health issue. Stormwater runoff can also flow from streets onto private property and cause damage. Broadview's high water table, steep bluff, lack of consistent drainage and aging sewer pipes contribute to the complexity of these issues. Since 2012, Seattle Public Utilities has been working with the community to identify sewer and drainage projects in the areas of Broadview that are most impacted.
 - o Madeline noted that the Broadview projects was the first time that SPU has done anything like this. She also noted that they have conducted an equity analysis on the 14th Ave S and S Concord St Combined Sewer System Improvement Project, and may install sewer backup prevention devices on up to 33 privately owned side sewers of impacted properties. *Reference:*
<http://web6.seattle.gov/DPD/LUIB/Notice.aspx?id=19863>
- Brian noted that since 2012, SPU has paid out \$1.8million in sewer backup claims. Madeline said that these claims may be more costly than SPU covering the cost of sewer backup prevention devices on the front end.
- **Committee member question:** Does (the fact that there are more overflows in North Seattle) point to a particular outreach need? That is, if you suspect there are unreported incidents?
 - o **Answer:** Yes, that is a potential outreach need. We just hired a new DWW outreach lead, and something like this is likely to be prioritized.
 - o **Answer (Madeline):** Leslie Webster's (DWW Planning Lead) current model shows we have capacity issues throughout the City. That's one reason we're going through a system assessment. People don't like to call in. There's a lot of renters, and a lot of folks who don't speak English. So, we're putting flow monitors in and trying to monitor it ourselves.
- **Committee member question:** How do backwater valves differ from backflow preventers?
 - o **Answer:** That's for water systems. It's under a pressured system. Backwater valve is used for stormwater systems.
- **Guest question:** What kind of sensor does a backwater valve use?
 - o **Answer:** Pressure. It just automatically triggers.
- **Committee member question:** So, you're saying that in a stormwater event, if the valve is activated, you wouldn't be able to flush your toilet? And yet you're promoting these things?
 - o **Answer:** Basically. There's storage in your sewer in your drainage line. But the amount of time the valve is activated is pretty short. (The duration of time the valve is activated depending upon how much water is flowing in the wastewater system during the storm event. So, the valve could be activated for minutes to several hours depending on the size of the storm).
- **Committee member question:** If a customer has not experienced a sewer backup from a SPU sewer system, is there a reason SPU would support the installation of a backwater valve?
 - o **Answer:** Yes. If they find homes at risk (during modeling) Sewer Capacity Capital Projects in which the level of service cannot be met.
- **Committee member question:** What does support mean?

- **Answer:** Support refers to funding of backwater valves. We're not specifically designing that part of the policy. Could be rebate, could be addressed in a capital project. That's more the implementation or how.
- **Committee member question:** Is that implementation still being determined?
 - **Answer:** Yes
- **Committee member question:** You're saying its cost effective for SPU to put these in? Do customers ever put these in on their own?
 - **Answer:** Yes, and our plumbing code requires them in some instances. They're not that expensive.
 - **Committee member question:** What's "not that expensive"?
 - **Answer:** The cheapest are 300 to a couple 1000s. Plus labor. (To clarify: the valves themselves are not too expensive (the more expensive have alarm systems); rather it's the labor/installation costs which are greater)
 - **Answer (Madeline):** That's why Kevin Burrell gave a presentation on perhaps having our own SPU program. There are those services available for insurance, but we want to provide other options. For 14th and Concord project, it was more economical for us to pay to put in backwater valves, then deal with potential issues later.
- **Committee member comment:** I think it's a good idea. We have two systems in our basement, one for stormwater and one for sewer. Seattle is a very wet environment and to have a finished basement, I didn't realize how difficult it is to have a basement in Seattle if you don't want it to flood. A lot of people don't realize this is the case, especially if they moved here from a dry state, such as say Illinois.
- **Committee member question:** Do you have your sewer overflow records to date for this year? With all the record rain we're having, I imagine we could have surpassed 2015.
 - **Answer:** I don't but could get them for you.

4. CAC Program Updates: Sheryl Shapiro, Julie Burman, and Members.

a. 9/28 All-CAC Meeting Debrief

- **Committee member comment:** It was really nice of her (General Manager/CEO Mami Hara) to talk to us.
- **Committee member comment:** I think she took the opportunity to meet with us very seriously and I think she enjoyed it.
- **Committee member comment:** I got the impression that she was very pleased to have these Committees.
- **Committee member comment:** I was impressed with her as well. She expressed the ability to look at the high strategic level and basic operating level. Seemed to be a good manager of people as well.
- Sheryl thanked Chairs for the preparation of their questions and work for that meeting.

b. Preparation for 2017 CDWAC/WSAC Officer elections

Sheryl walked through the Officer Election process.

- Traditionally, CDWAC-WSAC has had two Co-Chairs per committee. SWAC has a Secretary, and Sheryl encouraged Committees to organize their officers as they see fit.
 - Interested individuals were encouraged to speak with current officers or Sheryl about the role and commitment:
 - 2016 CDWAC Co-Chairs: Devin and Schyler
 - 2016 WSAC Co-Chairs: Rodney and Kelly
 - CAC Members may self-nominate or nominate others. Please send nominations by next Thursday. Sheryl will follow up with a process-oriented email, and summary of position descriptions, on 11/10. If steps don't happen in a timely manner, we can defer the election to January but hope to conduct it at the December meeting.
- **Committee member question:** Do the current four positions expire?
 - **Answer:** Co-Chair positions are for 1 year, but they can run again.
 - Need to keep in mind membership terms as well. For example, Devin's second term ends in the middle of next year. Kelly's second term ends in December.

c. Preparation for 2017 Topics/Workplan

Sheryl reviewed how they have gone through the annual work planning/topics process in the past. At the December meeting, we will tee up the large topic areas: Policy, Programs/Projects, Planning, Collaborative opportunities with Solid Waste, field trips. Sheryl said she would like to explore topics where we can go more in depth, possibly as a series over a couple months.

When putting together your workplan, CAC members were asked to consider 1) what topics they found particularly interesting this year 2) where members have specific interests (for example, corrosion control, or wildfire fighting) and 3) what the utility wants/needs feedback on.

Members have communicated in the past that it can be frustrating to be an *Advisory* Committee member, but to be just learning. SPU can provide PowerPoints as briefings on a number of topics, but decisions may already be made in those areas. CAC members were advised to consider their roles in these topics when putting workplans together. Is the role informational only? If so, is a presentation the best format? Can the content be shared via a link or document? When is it preferred to have staff present the information in person? Will it be timely to provide feedback on content or graphics? CAC members should understand their level of input for these topics.

Sheryl also noted that in the Committee Member Agreement, members are asked to attend four activities/events where they interact with the community, whether it's a meeting or event on their own or with SPU staff. Sheryl noted that at the beginning of 2016, CAC members discussed the organizations and neighborhoods they are connected to (or who they would like to be connected to). Sheryl said she hoped to increase the impact of the Committees by mapping that out, and seeing where the geographic and other gaps are. She wants to look at how to make an intentional effort / impact; not only what we do in this room, around the table, but in our

connections to our community. She asked Committee members to be thinking about that, and what events they are planning to attend in the coming year. Some examples of events include Farmers Markets, community festivals, RainWise workshops (the residential program to help reduce stormwater), and social justice films.

Madeline: I'd love to get your feelings on where we should prioritize, once we give you a list of projects. For example: Those projects that are part of the Consent Decree we are working on, Capital Projects (biggest of which is the Ship Canal Project), projects that are not regulatory-driven, such as culvert projects. Those normally are the ones we end up having to delay and defer every year.

We also need your comments on customer outreach – how to improve it, within the Drainage and Wastewater Branch and for the Department as a whole. We would like to give you an introduction to what those outreach programs are and then ask you what you might improve. For the combined outreach on the upcoming Wastewater System Plan and Water System Plan, I would love to have games and interactive exercises incorporated into the planning input process or anything you can think of.

It's very important to me to have your input on policies. I use your group as my indicator of how customers feel about programs/policies.

- **Committee member question:** Would it helpful to come with ideas and we'll hash it out in December? Or come with a list? Or should we be talking about it beforehand?
 - **Answer:** If we have stuff beforehand, send it to the group.
- **Committee member question:** If we start a thread, should we email to WSAC and CDWAC both?
 - **Answer:** Yes, since we're still meeting together we're going to go through this process together?
- **Committee member question:** Can you re-send out the 2016 workplan?
 - **Answer:** Workplan is online if you go to our page, but I can send it out again. You can also scroll through the agendas to remind yourself of the topics and content as well as your questions.
- **Committee member question:** Will SPU be coming with a list of things that they will be needing feedback on?
 - **Answer:** I think the items on the water system Plan are key touchpoints for us. For the remaining meetings, we can populate a list and bring it to you for review. We will have some DWW topics to prioritize as well.
- **Committee member comment:** It's been gratifying for me to see the sincere interest the staff has on the recommendations we get from the CACs. We should try to incorporate that as much as we can I the topics we choose.

5. Around the table

- Water LOB Liaison, Julie Burman, who is retiring, was thanked for her years of service to the Advisory Committees and to SPU.
 - **Committee member comment:** Julie is such a wonderful resource, and presents with such class and poise.

- **Committee member comment:** I second that. You've been a real joy to work with. I always look forward to seeing you at these meetings.
- **Julie shared some of her own thoughts:** SPU is a very analytical place to work. We really dive into the details. And it has been really gratifying to see staff bring their work to this group and get challenged and respond with increasing maturity. CACs are playing an increasingly more important role in the utility /. I want to acknowledge the work Sheryl has done to recruit great members and the integration with the Customer Review Panel (CRP) and the Strategic Business Plan (SBP) and Water Rate Design Committees. These CACs really have status in the utility now.

Adjourned 7:36 PM