



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

**March 8, 2017 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
<b>WSAC</b>			
Rodney Schauf	Y	Sheryl Shapiro (by phone)	CDWAC Liaison and CAC Program Manager
Melissa Levo	Y	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Teresa Stern	Y	Joan Kersnar	SPU Drinking Water Planning Manager, Water LOB Liaison
Paul Reed	Y	Brian Medford	SPU Strategic Business Plan Lead
Michael Godfried	Y	Melina Thung	Office of Utility Services Deputy Director
Joel Carsley	Y	Michael Davis	Director, Environmental Justice and Service Equity
Steven Cole	Y	Ben Marre	Planning & Program Management Division Director, Drainage and Wastewater LOB
Michael Williams	Y	Alex Chen	Water Planning & Program Management, Water LOB
<b>CDWAC</b>			
Ben Billick	Y	<b>Guests</b>	
Christina Ciampa	Y	Ky Lewis	Guest
Schyler Hect	N	Wendy Walker	Guest
Patrick Jablonski	Y	Kat Dej-Panah	Guest
Colum Lang	Y		
Seth McKinney	N		
Gary Olson	N		
Devin O'Reilly	P		
Evan Osborne	Y		
Mariella White	N		

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Committee members requested an update on the West Point Treatment Plant failure, following completion of the root-cause analysis.

- Volunteers available to attend the 3/22 CRP meeting were solicited. If members can attend, please email Rodney and Sheryl and we will follow-up with a calendar invite.
- Committee Members who would like to share their experiences with the SBP outreach events and have not done so already were encouraged to email them to Sheryl. She will pass them onto to Michael Davis, Director, Environmental Justice and Service Equity

## 1. Regular Business

- WSAC Chair, Rodney Schauf, opened the meeting at 5:36 PM and reminded attendees to sign-in.
- Committee Members, SPU staff, and guests introduced themselves.
- Meeting notes from January were approved.
- Natasha indicated emergency exits, exit procedures, and bathrooms.
- Natasha provided a brief member update, welcoming back Michael Williams.

## 2. King County's West Point Treatment Plant Event: Ben Marre, DWW Division Director, Planning & Program Management

Ben provided an overview of the West Point Treatment Plant failure on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2017. The West Point Treatment Plant, near Discovery Park, is owned and managed by King County (not Seattle Public Utilities). It manages 90% of Seattle's wastewater, and has the ability to treat up to 440 million gallons per day. Ben reviewed the West Point Treatment Plant process, and noted some of the preliminary results of the failure analysis.

- **Committee member question:** Where is the sewage going now, while the repairs are going on?
  - **Answer:** It's going into Puget Sound and the plant is operating at a limited capacity. At the time of the incident, all was being discharged to a deep-water outflow offshore.
- **Committee member question:** During an event like that, what percentage of the water being discharged is sewage versus stormwater?
  - **Answer:** About 10% is sewage.
- **Committee member question:** How many days was it dumping into the Sound?
  - **Answer:** Several days, before they got primary treatment online. There was a news conference yesterday where they estimated April for getting back to complete treatment.
- **Committee member question:** So, they are doing chlorination and dechlorination. Does that remove the bulk of the biohazard?
  - **Answer:** To a minimal degree.
  - **Community member comment:** The article I read says they're usually operating at 95% effectiveness, and are currently operating at about 45% effectiveness.
- **Committee member question:** When you say that they are looking at root-cause analysis, I want a little more background and what's the plan going forward. There's usually not one cause, there's usually several failures. The other thing is that the failure had a ricochet effect; wondering if there's a way to isolate that moving forward?
  - **Answer:** The pump failure was the first failure, but there were subsequent failures. There's redundancy built into the power system for the plant, so clearly that wasn't the issue. But I think this will change the way we look at design of facilities in the City. There is no backup option for this facility.
- **Committee member question:** Are you saying the redundancy power failed also?

- **Answer:** I don't know. I'm saying they do have a redundant system, but not sure if that failed too.
- **Committee member question:** So, the City has expanded its capacity to store stormwater. I'm sure that capacity was filled very quickly during that day. Historically, have the CSOs dumped excess water into Lake Washington?
  - **Answer:** Absolutely, in large storm events. We have 86 outfalls throughout the City. About ½ overflow each year, and our goal is to decrease that number. An outfall is a relief point in the sewer system that keeps the excess sewage from spilling onto the streets or homes and instead spills it into the Sound. By 2025 we have a plan to achieve that.
- **Committee member question:** Does this impact Seattle's CSO requirements?
  - **Answer:** It does. We're going very carefully through our overflow data to see if there are any impacts from this change. Our regulator at Ecology has asked us to flag overflows that could be related to this change. I can't explain how unprecedented this is, and how far beyond this is from anything we have seen.
- **Committee member question:** 30-45 days from now, it would be good to ask you back and discuss the answers to the root cause analysis.

### 3. Strategic Business Plan (SBP):

- a. **SPU Finance/Budget Overview for 2018-2023 SBP:** Melina Thung, Office of Utility Services Deputy Director

Melina Thung introduced herself and explained that tonight's presentation would be a condensed version of the presentation given to the Customer Review Panel (CRP) about one month ago. She said they would be inviting members of the CAC to join the next CRP meeting on 3/22 to share CAC input on the topics in this presentation today.

The purpose of the presentation is to provide a look at SPU's rate path options for 2018-2023.

The following topics were covered:

- Financial overview
  - Review the rate path options and main components
  - Understand the baseline and financial assumptions
  - Action plan overview.
  - Savings overview
  - Options to reduce the rate path
- **Committee member question:** Do these rates include City Light?
    - **Answer:** No. Drainage, Wastewater, and Solid Waste
  - **Committee member question:** Did the 2009 rate spike have to do with the economic crisis?
    - **Answer:** That was part of it, but that was also when we re-issued the Solid Waste contracts. There was a big spike, and Solid Waste was the driver in 2009.
  - **Committee member question:** Can you explain what you mean by baseline?
    - **Answer:** Baseline: Defined as "what does the rate path need to be to meet status quo + any new regulatory requirements."

- **Committee member question:** I misunderstood the taxes portion. Why does SPU pay taxes to the City?
  - **Answer:** The taxes we pay go into the General Fund (general funded services, such as police, fire department, etc.) We're a source of revenue, so taxes we pay go to support services in various other City departments.
  - **Committee member question:** So, the City is taxing itself?
    - **Answer:** Yes.
- **Committee member question:** (Related to the West Point Treatment Plant Failure) Does the lack of treatment during this time constitute a breach of contract with King County? Just wondering how that could impact our (SPU's) rates and funds.
  - **Answer:** Technically, it is not. Because the contractor states that they will take our wastewater, and they are doing that. In the end though, we will pay for fines or actions, because through our contract we are paying for their services and are impacted by the rates they set for those services.
  - **CAC Comment:** As I understand it, they're self-insured. So, that should be covered?
  - **Answer:** We really don't know at this point.
- **Committee member question:** With what happened at West Point, could this push SPU's baseline percent up?
  - **Answer:** Where it might affect us is in the O&M large contracts inflation. If they have to pay massive fines, some of those fees will trickle down to us. And as our contractors increase their rates, we have to increase ours.

b. **Overview SBP Action Items:** Ben Marre, Planning & Program Management Division Director, Drainage and Wastewater LOB. Alex Chen Water Planning & Program Management, Water LOB

c.

Alex opened by explaining that they would be looking for Committee members to collect their thoughts on these Action Plans, in order to bring them to the 3/22 CRP meeting.

Co-Chair Rodney Schauf noted that at the end of today's meeting, he would be collecting names of volunteers for representing CDWAC/WSAC at the 3/22 CRP meeting.

See separate document with CAC Input.

d. **SBP Community Meetings Debrief: Michael Davis, Director, Environmental Justice and Service Equity Division; CAC Members**

Michael reviewed the SBP public engagement methodology and provided a draft overview of the SBP outreach efforts. He said he will be coming back to give more detail on the results of the outreach in the future. Michael acknowledged CAC members who attended, served and helped facilitate the SBP Community Outreach meetings. There was not time to solicit CAC feedback on their experiences with the SBP outreach, so Committee Members were encouraged to send their input to Sheryl to be passed along.

- **Committee member comment:** Regarding the business feedback portion of this outreach: Was the community meeting held at Seattle Chamber established completely through the Seattle Chamber?
  - **Answer:** No, we did have some business owners attend community meetings as well so we got feedback there.

#### 4. 2017 CDWAC-WSAC Preview

Did not cover due to time constraints.

#### 5. Around the table

- No items were shared.
- Rodney solicited volunteers to attend the 3/22 CRP Meeting. Volunteers were to email Rodney and Sheryl.
  - Patrick is interested.

**Adjourned 7:36 PM**