



**Creeks, Drainage & Wastewater Advisory Committee (CDWAC)**  
**Water System Advisory Committee (WSAC)**  
**February 12, 2020 Meeting Notes**  
**Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue**  
**Room 4901**  
**5:30 pm – 7:30 pm**

CDWAC Members	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Colum Lang	Y	Andrew Lee	Deputy Director, DWW
Gary Olson	Y	Alex Chen	Division Director, Water Planning and Program Management
Maria McDaniel	Y	Kathleen Baca	Division Director, Environmental Justice & Service Equity
Thy Pham	Y	Ellen Stewart	Division Director, DWW Source Control and Pollution Prevention
Andrew Schiffer	Y	Chris Wilkerson	RV Wastewater Pilot Program Coordinator
Isabel Carrera Zamanillo	Y	Celia Kennedy	Drinking Water LOB Liaison
Jason Devaney	Y	Ingrid Goodwin	Communications Advisor to Drinking Water
Weng-Ching Cheung	Y	Marieke Rack	Communications Advisor to Drainage and Wastewater
<b>WSAC Members:</b>		Kris Faucett	Consultant, Cocker Fennessy
Steven Cole	N	<b>Guests:</b>	
Annie Saunders	Y	Catherine Endicott	Guest
Christina Heinlen	Y	Chris Portrey	Guest
Joel Carsley	Y		
Angella Mickowski	Y		
Rodney Schauf, Active Alum.	N		

**1. Regular Business**

- Celia Kennedy welcomed attendees.
- Andrew Schiffer delivered the safety talk and directed attendees to the restrooms.
- Isabel Carrera Zamanillo lead the introduction activity (“Favorite things to do on a rainy day”).

**2. Drinking Water Quality Report – Possible Themes and Early Input for This Year’s Report**

- Kris Faucett (Cocker Fennessy, consultants) led a discussion about the water quality report. Members were given copies of last year’s report. She started by providing a quick overview of the report’s mandate and history:

- a. The report has existed for 25+ years and is a requirement, certain language must be in the report.
  - b. This publication goes to everyone that lives in the City.
  - c. The report objective is to meet the requirements and provide transparency, build trust, and demonstrate leadership.
- Next she led a discussion with the group:
    - a. What do you think residents should know/what do you want to know about drinking water:
      - That Seattle’s water is safe to drink without filtering.
      - That SPU rigorously tests the water (The chart is impressive. Look at all the testing. Is there a way you can talk more about how this works?)
      - Size of the watershed relative to the size of the city.
      - The importance of the watershed; foresight of watershed protection.
      - Why water costs what it does. What is the breakdown? Tie in the value of conservation.
      - Climate resiliency – more detail about what this actually means. How is SPU protecting our water (the watershed) from climate change?
      - What are the things citizens can do to save water?
    - b. Are there things that you are intrigued by that should be included here?
      - Interactive aspects—like the whiz
      - Salmon at the watershed and the whole fisheries operations.
      - Include a map about access to water? Look at front and center page map. Who is really being impacted by infrastructure issues? Map of water quality issues.
      - Explain the taste testing panel.
      - Explain what the water actually is treated with. Our water is actually treated with fewer things because it doesn’t need it.
      - Say: Our water is safe.
    - c. What do you think needs work?
      - Say it could be better than bottled water. That section could be reduced to 3 main points.
      - Use a larger font.
      - Use plain language:
        - Don’t say “tap”, say “Turn off your water.”
        - Answer how HARD is our water? Connect this to appliances. Explain what “hardness” means.
      - Emergency preparedness – explain how customers can be prepared for an emergency.
      - FAQs from customers—answers to questions customers are actually asking.
      - What types of accessible formats will the report come in? Do you have graphics, etc. to make it more accessible? Will the report be translated into many other languages?
      - Include information on Rainwise.
      - Make the front cover multi-lingual.
      - Should affordability be addressed on the front page?
    - d. What should be the “feel” of the report? Inspirational? Scientific? Kid-friendly? What tone?
      - Professional scientific: but I need to know what it means.

- Absolutely NOT inspirational. Just tell me what it is. Otherwise I will feel skeptical—that you’re trying to sell me something.
- A little humor is okay.
- Need comments by the end of the month.

### 3. Reflection on January All-CAC meeting

- Annie Saunders and Celia provided an overview of last month’s meeting topics.
- Kathleen Baca noted that SPU needs agenda time over the next several months to cover trends and future needs for SPU’s community engagement. She would like to focus on our shared interest—how to best serve our customers and communities and deliberate about how SPU can best connect deeply to the community.
- Comments/questions during discussion:
  - a. A committee member would like a plan, by April or May, for what happens after June.
  - b. Concerns were noted about supplanting “normal work” time for SPU’s topics, especially in the context of joint meetings.
  - c. Concerns about the future of the committees.
  - d. Requested clarifications about:
    - i. WHO is deciding committees’ future (members or SPU)
    - ii. The role and objectives for the committees—what does SPU want?
    - iii. Committee structure
    - iv. How the committee can best serve SPU
  - e. Call to collaborate with SPU to determine how best to serve SPU’s needs.
  - f. Recommendation that a workshop would be appropriate to achieve these discussion goals. Monthly meetings are too infrequent and too short.

### 4. RV Wastewater Pilot

- Chris Wilkerson presented an overview of the RV Wastewater Pilot.
  - a. Questions about the pilot brought up by the committee:
    - i. What about the unreported spills? SPU has no data or estimates on the number of RV wastewater dumping incidents which go unreported or undetected.
    - ii. How many unique vehicles have been served? As of February 21<sup>st</sup>, the RV wastewater pilot has performed 34 pump out services for 28 unique vehicles.
    - iii. How do people know where they are supposed to dump RV wastewater? There is currently no wastewater dumping educational program operated by SPU. WSDOT posts a list of waste dump sites on their website. There are also many private websites which advertise the same information. In practice, RV residents in the City of Seattle are often not aware of proper dumping locations and techniques. My opinion is that investing in more education of proper dumping, at this time, will be ineffective due to the lack of local facilities.
    - iv. Is there any seasonality to spill incidents? Yes, but day to day variability is far higher than seasonal variability. Therefore, while spill reports are not randomly distributed, the pattern

is not very predictable or consistent enough to be actionable (such as by fluctuating the number of Spill Responders on duty or increasing educational efforts in the winter).

- v. How do you pick between operational RVs and non-operational RVs in terms of who you serve? So far, we have not turned away anyone who has requested the service. However, services are distributed through outreach workers, organizing events and through coordination with the Seattle Police Department during RV Remediation No-Parking/Cleanup events. In practice, this means that all our clients have been impoverished people who are the target of social services or living in an RV on the streets. However, we are concerned with the operability of the RV's septic system; we want to avoid causing a spill during a pump out by connecting to a leaking or failing system.
  - vi. How long does a tank last for 2 people? There is a lot of variability in how long a tank will last, including size of tank, access to other toilets, number of people using the service, amount of water used for washing and flushing. Anecdotally, most RV occupants say 2 weeks when I ask them.
- b. Comments related to the pilot:
- i. Consider how this can be an asset for housed RV owners.
  - ii. Consider how you can partner with Thornton Creek monitoring efforts.
  - iii. Consider how you can stay open to providing additional support for folks—beyond just wastewater.

## **5. Customer Review Panel (CRP) for SPU's Strategic Business Plan**

- Committee members (Thy Pham, Maria McDaniel) who are serving on the CRP provided a brief overview of the last meeting. Topics included:
  - a. SPU survey being conducted.
  - b. Opportunities to educate citizens on what SPU does.
  - c. Reviews of CIP projects.

## **6. Community Insights, Around the Table**

- Members highlighted these topics:
  - a. Tree give aways in the south end. If you want free trees let Andrew S. know.
  - b. Lunar New Year celebrations
  - c. Organizing for Seattle Watershed Alliance—a place for folks who care about Seattle's creeks to talk about issues and concerns. Send Gary an email if you want more information.
  - d. Invitation to attend a UW Student-led workshop on Race and Social Justice. Send an email to Weng-Ching if you want more information.
  - e. Opportunity to collaborate with Seattle City Club: Civic Boot Camp to focus on neighborhood issues. Contact Maria if you want more information.
  - f. Collaborating with Washington MESA to create a program on Race and Social Justice. Send Isabel an email if you want to be a mentor.
  - g. Fundraiser for Outdoors For All. Spree Fest—Race, drinks, music. It is a fun and important fundraiser. Contact Annie if you want more information.

## **7. Adjourn**