



**Water System Advisory Committee (WSAC)**  
**April 11, 2018 Meeting Notes**  
**Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue**  
**Room 4901**  
**5:30 pm – 7:30 pm**

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Joel Carsley	Y	Sheryl Shapiro	CAC Program Manager
Steven Cole	Y	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Paul Reed	Y	Kathy Curry	Water System Policy Liaison
Rodney Schauf	Y	Julie Vorhes	Separate Charges Project Manager
Teresa Stern	N	Francine Johnson	Separate Charges Project Analyst
Michael Godfried	N	Ellen Pepin-Cato	SPU Communications Strategic Advisor
Kat Dej-Panah	Y	<b>Guest</b>	
Wendy Walker	Y	Annie Saunders	Guest
Ky Lewis	Y	Patricia Munyalo	Guest

### Action Items

- A reminder will be sent regarding the Cedar River Watershed Tour survey. We will include the link to a recent article written by SPU staff regarding Seattle drinking water quality.

### 1. Regular Business

- WSAC Chair Rodney Schauf opened the meeting at 5:35 PM.
- Meeting notes from March were reviewed and approved.
- Sheryl indicated emergency exits and exit procedures.

### 2. CAC Program Updates

- **All-CAC Meetings.** CAC Members should have received a save-the-date calendar invite for May 16. Sheryl is still confirming staff availability of speakers, and asked members to stay tuned for the final details.
- **Summer Field Trip Planning:** Kathy reminded members to complete the SurveyMonkey that was distributed for June dates to tour the Cedar River Watershed and Education Center. The deadline has been extended to 4/20. This tour will be open to CDWAC and WSAC members only; however, the watershed does offer public tours.

### 3. 2017 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report – Part II

Ellen Pepin-Cato, SPU Communications, returned to discuss the latest updates on the 2017 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. Ellen provided a brief overview of the Water Quality Report and distributed an outline. A blank notes section was included for members to provide feedback, due by

Wednesday 4/18/2018. Ellen walked members through the report outline, of which feedback is captured below by spread. At the end of the meeting, the design concept was passed around.

Center Spread (“5 reasons why your drinking water is the best”):

- **CAC Member:** What do we rank as far as quality of water, compared to other Municipalities? If you’re going to say we have the best water, you need a qualifier.
- **CAC Member:** I like 4-5 of the top reasons, but I’m struggling with #4 “Everyone does their part.” I think it’s a great sentiment and something we want to get across to people who use our water. But there is a lot of talk about reliability. I’ve heard it’s very reliable. That hits home for me; it puts me at ease.
  - **CAC Member:** I agree that reason #4 would fit better with the community-centered part.
  - **CAC Member:** Yeah, I agree. It’s not a reason the water is best.
  - **CAC Member:** If this was a list of things people are doing to make it better it would work.
- **CAC Member:** “5 reasons you will love this water”
- **CAC Member:** “5 reasons it is better than bottled”
- **Staff response:** “5 reasons why we love our water / why our community loves our water”

Spread 3:

- **CAC Member:** If I’m an average person that reads “we pre-treat with ozone,” I’d think, wait a minute... isn’t that bad? Ozone and climate change?
  - **CAC Member:** Does the term translate well?
  - **CAC Member:** You talked about a picture of ultraviolet. I use ozone and UV to treat water on my commercial property. Ozone is a little more exposed, you can see it in a visible tube. May present a better picture and text than a UV.
    - Committee member explained how ozone is used to disinfect water.
  - **CAC Member:** Have we talked about this in the previous years of this report?
  - **CAC Member:** I would caution against using either of those terms; it’s too technical. Introducing ozone or ultraviolet, you go down that rabbit hole.
    - **Staff response:** Would it be ok in a call-out box?
    - **CAC Member:** I would personally not include it. You could say “treatments that improve taste and smell.”
  - **CAC Member:** If the goal is to have them be familiar with the technology, then it’s ok. But I don’t think that’s the goal here.
  - **CAC Member:** Start this section with “its better than bottled” and use that to frame this.
  - **CAC Member:** The people who drink bottled water, that’s one of their reasons: that it tastes better.
  - **CAC Member:** Is there any merit to using the pH to talk about the taste and/or quality? I think the pH of our water is in the perfect zone, and I do believe that impacts taste.
    - **Staff response:** Could have a pH scale image that shows the taste differences.

Spread 4

- **CAC Member:** Thinking about the contrast between population vs water usage decrease and you immediately jump to water conservation being important. There's an inconsistency, bumping those two together.
  - **Staff response:** Would it make more sense to flip that order?
  - **CAC Member:** We are conservation focused, and because that we're able to handle population growth better.
    - **CAC Member:** That's a much more logical flow.
    - **CAC Member:** And that water conservation helps (with) our population growth.
- **CAC Member:** We're going to see some significant price increases to consumers in 2019/2020 and that's justified by the need for infrastructure replacement, in large part. All we say about that is that the infrastructure is complex and needs to be planned/managed. Is that enough? In my neighborhood, there have been some water leaks and the pipes were found to be 90-100 years old.
  - **CAC Member:** Maybe frame it: We know we have this aging system and here is what we're doing to fix it. Something to acknowledge that we're replacing those pipes on a regular basis

#### Spread 5

- **CAC Member:** (regarding the note about Reason #4 not fitting well in the center spread) I made a similar note. Bullet #2 would be a good place to quote reason #4, about reliability. Perhaps you could mention the very low number of water main breaks we have?

#### Regarding the term "community-centered"

- **CAC Member:** Is there anything that could be included that provides a way to call, if they have questions about their water or problems. Feel like it's a good opportunity for a connection.
- **CAC Member:** It's a great opportunity to connect with the community.
- **Staff response:** Include a suggestion to Join WSAC!
- **CAC Member:** I really like the first point; it's egalitarian and everyone gets that.
- **CAC Member:** "See something, say something" if you see water violations: report that. Water main break reporting.
- **CAC Member:** If there's a way to include some of the messages about Community-centered, about reporting/calling where there is hesitation to do so, in the translated piece, I think that could be very effective.
- **CAC Member:** This would be a good place to talk about where the support comes from for the infrastructure that goes into buildings (such as schools, etc.): is there a resource to help people find out the state of the pipes in public buildings? Water testing resources?
  - **Staff response:** Good point, and something I will ask about.
  - **CAC Member:** I was just at Rainier High School and the students themselves said they could not drink out of their water fountains. This would be a good point to touch on.
- **CAC Member:** [3<sup>rd</sup> bullet] "We want our community members to help us, teach us, partner with us" (suggested revision)

#### Discussion on potential images for an infographic charting population growth versus water usage

- **CAC Member:** Simple imagery would be useful: Like a measuring cup. To add to that, some kind of image for faucets turned off. The first question I think of when I think about this chart: How does that work? How can water usage decrease while population is increasing? Perhaps you could represent with a fixed leaky faucet.
  - **CAC Member:** If you put more wording into that, you can explain how those water savings are happening.
  - **CAC Member:** I've always liked the chart that Alex brings when he does the update on the water supply. It's a bar chart.

Anything missing?

- **CAC Member:** Lead/Copper monitoring. It's important for people from other water systems to know that. We should go into more detail on why lead/copper is bad for your body.
- **CAC Member:** If you need more content to highlight safe/reliable about our water system, you could mention the Morse Lake pump plant. Also, it would be good to mention seismic renovations of reservoirs – that we're investing money in the event of an emergency.

#### 4. Separate Charges for Water Service

Julie Vorhes, Separate Charges Project Manager, introduced Seattle Public Utilities' separate charges project, which includes pricing assessments for water tap installations, water connection fees and other water-related services. Julie provided an overview of the project, and asked Committee members to provide input on SPU's outreach materials, outreach strategy, and to suggest additional questions that could be added to a draft FAQ document. Julie was joined by Francine Johnson, Separate Charges Project Analyst, and Katie McVicker, Sr. Public Relations Specialist and project liaison.

*Background information:* The Seattle City Council directed SPU to update specific separate charges in 2018 because the current charges do not reflect the actual costs for SPU to provide these services. To update separate charges, SPU will need to adopt a director's rule. Comments on planned outreach and FAQ materials:

- **CAC Member:** You said SPU has listservs that they are planning to distribute this through? Because there are hundreds of small contractors beyond the Master Builders Association to contact.
  - **Staff response:** SPU has a listserv, as well as a Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection.
- **CAC Member:** When was the last review of the charges?
  - **Staff response:** The current charges were established in 2013.
  - **CAC Member:** That might be helpful to include; that it's over 5 years old. It's relatable, everything else has changed.
  - **CAC Member:** (Add that to Point 9) What is that recurring schedule?
- **CAC Member:** Question on how these prices will be set. Some are easy to execute, such as shut off/on, but it seems many of these projects can cost varying amounts based on how difficult it is to execute. Is it charged on a time and materials, or set price?
  - **Staff response:** There is a mixture; site-specific, standard charges, and time and materials. They will be able to lookup the current charging methodology and what the charge fees are.

- **CAC Member:** In your PPTX, you mentioned this is going to be affecting developers mostly and not necessarily home utilities. On the FAQ, it could be helpful to know who would be most affected by this.
  - **Staff response:** There are two groups in this update that could be affected. Developers, but also existing customers, such as the water meter read fee or if you needed a larger tap for a remodel house the customer would be impacted as well.
- **CAC Member:** As a member of SPU’s Customer Review Panel, thank you for all the work you’re doing. It was a very contentious issue. We found the region had some of the lowest tap charges in the area, and the ratepayers in the community were subsidizing this work. We are truing up the actual expenses and making it more typical of the rest of the nation and will eventually be a payback to the ratepayer.
- **For any additional comments or questions, CAC Members were encouraged to email Julie and her team.**

## 5. Laying the groundwork for Water System Plan (WSP) comment discussion

At last month’s meeting we heard from Joan Kersnar, Drinking Water Planning Manager, on the Public Review Draft of SPU’s 2019 Water System Plan. The Public Review Draft was released on Monday, March 12, with comments due June 1, 2018. A document discussion guide was provided.

Kathy Curry, WSAC Liaison, led a discussion on how WSAC members might want to proceed on providing comment. Kathy emphasized how Committee Members input has shown to be very valuable in the past. Kathy noted that we could set aside time at the May meeting to discuss as a group, and asked committee members to share ideas for work that could be done before our next meeting to prepare. She also solicited volunteers to begin the discussion over email.

- **CAC Member:** We could consider not necessarily giving comment on the Plan, but giving comment on some of the included/related topics to Council at a later point.
- **CAC Member:** I, for one, really like the idea of diving into a certain aspect of the plan. I find if I get to dive into a small piece of something, it incentivizes me to know it really well and it makes a document that is large a lot less daunting.
- **CAC Member:** As I look at the guide, I think there are areas where folks on the Committee would be interested in doing a deeper dive on. Could do 10 min presentations each, and create some kind of letter or formulate a presentation for later in the year. We found with the CRP that we didn’t have to have consensus, there were a couple people who dissented on a couple of topics and the wording reflected that. Don’t have to have consensus to present a list of recommendations to City Council.
- **CAC Member:** So, we would discuss which topics we’re interested in, why, and what we’re read. Come with the “Cliff Notes” for the rest of the group, so the group can decide if there is passion to discuss any further.
- **CAC Member:** Still would have time, in May, to formulate a letter if we wanted.
- **CAC Member:** I’ll also advocate to smaller groups, which can get together outside of the meeting.

- **CAC Member:** It's one thing to sit around a room and talk about things, but its super educational to bring it before City Council, or to give a presentation. You really have to commit to having a position.

**Next Steps:** Kathy will send an email with the list of some of the Water System Plan topics that the group has had presentations on in the last year; WSAC members should respond and indicate which of these or other WSP topics they would like to come prepared to talk about at the May meeting. Members will not be expected to present at that meeting, but if they are drawn to a topic area they should be ready to discuss. Kathy will share that list of individuals and their areas of interest in advance of the May meeting.

## 6. Community Insights, Around the Table

- **A CAC Member shared** about an event they co-hosted featuring a professor from University of Florida, who spoke on urban biodiversity and development and specifically, ways developers can consider preserving wildlife habitat. The event was a collaborative between Tilth and Seattle Audubon.
- **A CAC Member recommend** visiting the Rainier Urban Farm & Wetland; now have a classroom.
- **A CAC Member shared** about various Earth Day evenings, including the Duwamish Alive Earth Day event and a collaboration between Seattle Audubon and Trees for Seattle for Earth Day. They also spoke about the Wildlife in the City week, ending April 21, at Discovery Park. **Member will send information to Sheryl to distribute.**
- **A CAC member shared** about a possible water line break experience they are having on their street in Madison Valley. They shared their concerns about SDOT / SPU collaboration.
- **A CAC member shared** about events taking place in Martinsville, Kentucky related to drinking water quality. They said they are thinking of donating a water filter machine to one of the schools and re-emphasized that we often take for granted our great water locally.
- **CAC Member:** I'm getting a Masters in Public Administration, and am particularly interested in water management. I am working on a Capstone project, with 3 other students, under the Mountain to Sound Greenway. There is land along I-90 that if approved by Congress, would become a National Heritage Area and will need a land management plan. Providing an outline for developing that.
- **A staff member shared** that on April 27, Amazon is hosting an Earth Day celebration from 10AM-2PM. SPU will have a presence there.
- **A staff member shared** that [Yom Ha Shoah](#) (Holocaust Memorial Day) this year falls on Thursday, April 12 (begins at sunset April 11). Several people I know are survivors or descendants of survivors of the Holocaust. And, in many ways, the entire Jewish people are survivors of this trauma and has impact on all peoples.

**Adjourned 7:31 PM**