



**Creeks, Drainage, and Wastewater Advisory Committee (CDWAC)**

**February 21, 2018 Meeting Notes**

**Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Avenue**

**Room 4901**

**5:30 pm – 7:30 pm**

Committee Members	Present?	SPU Staff & Guests	Role
Ben Billick	N	Sheryl Shapiro	CAC Program Manager
Christina Ciampa	P	Natasha Walker	CAC Program Coordinator
Colum Lang	Y	Judi Gladstone	Division Director, Strategy and Governmental Affairs, DWW
Gary Olson	Y	Kate Rhoads	SPU Municipal Stormwater Specialist
Mariela White	N		
Michael Williams	Y		
Maria McDaniel	Y		
Thy Pham	Y		
Schyler Hect	N		
Andrew Schiffer	Y		

**Action Items**

- CDWAC members were invited to join the March 12 WSAC meeting, where Joan Kersnar will be presenting on the Water System Plan (WSP). Sheryl will send a link to the current WSP, and will gather more information to see if it's of interest to the Committee to read and get involved in. <http://www.seattle.gov/util/documents/plans/water/watersystemplan/>
- Sheryl / Kate will follow up with the member interested in connecting with the Source Control Program team and list of BMPs. [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web\\_informational/p2358279.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p2358279.pdf)
- Kate will share links to the Washington State Department of Ecology sites that describe the stormwater monitoring program process. <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Reporting-requirements/Stormwater-monitoring/Stormwater-Action-Monitoring>
- In addition, Kate shared the following links:
  - Stormwater Management Program site, where SWMP and Annual Reports are posted: <http://www.seattle.gov/util/Documents/Plans/StormwaterManagementPlan/index.htm>
  - Municipal Stormwater Permit webpage: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Stormwater-general-permits/Municipal-stormwater-general-permits/Municipal-Stormwater-Phase-I-Permit>
- Sheryl to add pump stations to the CDWAC workplan field trip list.
- A CAC Member will share the link for public comment on the Battery Street Tunnel project.
- Sheryl to follow-up at March meeting on status of tie in co-chair election.

## 1. Regular Business

- CDWAC Co-Chair Gary Olson opened the meeting at 5:36 PM and reminded folks to sign-in.
- This is Gary's last meeting as Co-chair.
- Committee Members, SPU staff, and guests introduced themselves. Members shared what watersheds they live in; CDWAC discussed a future mapping activity around this.
- Meeting notes from January were approved. It was confirmed that the December meeting notes were reviewed and approved in January.
- Sheryl indicated emergency exits, exit procedures, and bathrooms.

## 2. CAC Program Updates

### Membership & Recruitment

CDWAC is currently at 10 members and is chartered for 12 members. Schyler's last meeting will be in March, opening one additional seat. Sheryl is conducting on-going recruitment. She noted that she is especially looking for someone within the industrial and small business sector.

### 2018 Officers Election

Sheryl shared the nominee statements. Ballots were distributed, and electronic ballots were counted. The results were as follows:

- Colum Lang – Voted in as Co-Chair
- Mariela White – Tied for Co-Chair
- Michael Williams – Tied for Co-Chair

Sheryl will talk with Mariela and Michael to determine how to best split responsibility. She will report back at the March meeting.

### Water System Plan Update

Sheryl provided a brief update on the 2019 WSP Public Review Draft, which is slated for March 12. The Water System Advisory Committee (WSAC) will be providing a comment letter; CDWAC has been invited to provide comments, either as individuals, pooled as a Committee, or incorporated into the WSAC letter. She gave members a heads up that we would be sharing the link to the plan on/around the public review draft release, and that the link will provide history on the Water System Plan. In particular, she said CDWAC members may be interested in the water conservation goals, and Water Contingency Plan.

Judi Gladstone added that this plan is required by Washington State Department of Health, and that all the elements of the plan are dictated by that body. She said CDWAC members may be interested in the one Drainage and Wastewater Line of Business nexus: reclaimed water.

- **CAC Member:** Do we allow reclaimed water?
  - **Staff response:** No, but we're required to consider it if we're looking for a new source, which we currently are not.
- **CAC Member:** Remind me, what's the due date for the comments?
  - **Staff response:** The public review draft will be released March 12. There is a 60-day comment period. SPU Drinking Water Planning Manager, Joan Kersnar, will be providing an overview of the draft at the March 14 WSAC meeting. CDWAC members are invited to attend.

- **CAC Member:** If we wanted to comment as a group, you would need to have time on the CDWAC agenda in March.
  - **Staff response:** Correct, or you could come to the March WSAC meeting. If CDWAC members expressed enough interest, Joan may be able to present at CDWAC’s March or April meeting.
- **CAC Member:** We’ve spent a lot of time with the water group for the last year; I think it could be a good opportunity to roll it up.
  - Sheryl will send a link to the current plan, and will gather more information to see if it’s of interest to the Committee to read and get involved in.

### 3. Overview of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Management Program

Sheryl began by offering context, explaining that this presentation is intended to provide foundational knowledge regarding the kinds of regulatory requirements that influence SPU work. The presentation will also serve CDWAC members as they explore SPU’s DWW education and outreach programs later in the year.

Kate Rhoads, SPU Municipal Stormwater Specialist, provided an overview of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program, one of SPU’s chief regulatory drivers. Kate gave a brief overview of the permit relative to other drainage and wastewater regulatory requirements, how it relates to various City departments, and the history and types of drainage and wastewater systems in the City. Kate addressed sections 5 (S5) “Stormwater Management Program,” and briefly section 8 (S8) “Monitoring”, from the permit. Kate reviewed the 10 elements of S5. Kate then provided an overview of the feedback timeline / opportunities related to the NPDES permit

- **CAC Member:** [See slide 5 on organizational chart] How are the SPU Finance & Administrative Services Branch related to the NPDES?
  - **Staff response:** Finance & Administrative Services is the Branch that handles all the property management, including City buildings and property managed by the City. Fleets are also included.
- **CAC Member:** There is no treatment for the discharge?
  - **Staff response:** No, most of the drains were built before there were regulatory requirements for treatment.
- **CAC Member:** How about the situation where you have an overflow? Is that under the NPDES permit?
  - **Staff response:** No, that’s under the Wastewater, CSO (Combined Sewer Overflow) permit. Not under the NPDES permit. This is for the systems that have only stormwater.
- **CAC Member:** Are Best Management Practice (BMPs) requirements updated every time the permit is updated?
  - **Staff response:** Sometimes. Some of these things, such as our source control requirement, don’t specify BMPs. But others, such as “controlling runoff,” require using

BMPs that are equivalent to the Washington State Department of Ecology BMPs, which are updated on a regular basis.

- **CAC Member:** [Regarding element 4] Do you get a lot of comments on these programs?
  - **Staff response:** Not a lot. We have a dedicated email address to take those comments; most of them are not related to the plan. But we do want comments.
  - **CAC Member:** How would one know to go to the website; how do you reach out?
  - **CAC Member:** Can you give us a sense for how many comments you have received in the past?
    - **Staff response:** Under 5?
  - **CAC Member:** Since you're bringing this up, could we suggest a lot of thought be given for how to give feedback on this?
  - **CAC Member:** Is [an announcement about the plan] ever part of the utility bill? I've never heard about this before. I always get concerned when there's a public involvement period, but no one knows about it.
  - **CAC Member:** Is the City interested in making sure this is seen?
    - **Staff response:** We would like comments and input; we are not trying to hide it. But I do recognize that we aren't putting in effort to advertise it.
  - **CAC Member:** Is there a budget for [promoting] it?
    - **Staff response:** The permit requires that we post an annual report and updated stormwater management program online each year. And there's a method to provide comments, but we don't advertise it.
  - **CAC Member:** How long is the permit process?
    - **Staff response:** There is no set time, because we can update it when we need to, or hold it until the next period. We can post a revised plan with changes at any point. But the permit is pretty set; some sections are required.
  - **Staff question:** Some sections, such as education and outreach, give more opportunity to provide comments because those sections are not as pre-scripted. Are we not going after comments because there's not much opportunity to make changes? Are there other areas of the SWIMP where comments could actually make some changes?
    - **Staff response:** If someone wanted to make a comment that we should go above and beyond permit requirement, it's something we would consider. There are minimum requirements on the permit, but sometimes there's flexibility in how it's implemented and the option to go above and beyond.
- **CAC Member:** Each industrial business has to get their own permit?
  - **Staff response:** Parcels that discharge into our system are regulated under the Code, but they are not under the City's stormwater permit.
  - **CAC Member:** There is a construction materials recycling materials company that is re-opening soon and they're talking about controlling the dust problem by using mist and water to control dust, but it seems like it would become a water quality problem. Would SPU have to approve their plan before they're allowed to do that?

- **Staff response:** No, because it's not a construction project; however, our source control team would work with them on BMPs, and they would be required to follow the BMPs in the City of Seattle's manual.
    - Sheryl/Kate to follow up with member on source control contact and BMPs.
  - **CAC Member:** Individual businesses are not required to have a permit to discharge? What is the inspector looking for when they go out?
    - **Staff response:** It could be visual inspection. They are mostly talking to them and providing education on BMPs. There are some cases where they would take a sample. If they don't take action, SPU does have the ability for progressive enforcement through our code.
  - **CAC Member:** When I think of businesses, I think of car washes, manufacturing.
    - **Staff response:** It could be anyone who has trash outside, drive-throughs, etc. The outreach focuses on business activities that take place outside.
    - **Staff question:** How about dry cleaners?
      - **Staff response:** No, that's handled by Local Hazardous Waste Management Program.
- **CAC Member:** They're building several new homes near Renton Avenue in South Seattle. We know this basin gathers water, and I feel sorry for the future homeowners.
- **CAC Member:** [regarding Swale on Yale] Is that located by Amazon?
  - **Staff response:** Not quite; they're by REI.
- **CAC Member:** [Regarding S5.C8, Illicit Connection, Discharge, Detection and Elimination] On Thornton Creek, on Little Brook, an apartment complex was misplumbed and was discharging directly into the creek.
- **CAC Member:** [Regarding S8 Monitoring] Why are none of the monitoring sites in the City of Seattle?
  - **Staff response:** The way it started out, they randomly selected a bunch of sites in the region. The top sites, if it was a place they could monitor, they kept it.
  - **CAC Member:** That doesn't seem right. The Washington State Department of Ecology makes that decision?
    - **Staff response:** No, it was developed by the Stormwater Action Monitoring (SAM) group. SAM is a collaborative, Western Washington regional stormwater monitoring program that is funded by more than 90 cities and counties, the ports of Seattle and Tacoma, and the Washington State Department of Transportation.
  - **CAC:** The purpose is to assess the success of the permit requirements?
    - **Staff response:** The purpose is to assess the status and trends, to see if the water quality is improving over time. The sites were not selected based on their proximity to stormwater. It's just looking at whether there is a trend of improving water quality in receiving waters which may or may not be attributed to the permit.
  - **CAC Member:** Do the sites change every few years?

- **Staff response:** No. And the monitoring just started with the last permit. The next permit the plan is just to continue with the existing sites. The monitoring is funded based on the population size of permittees. In other words, City of Seattle pays the most but gets no direct benefit since there are no City of Seattle sites.
    - **CAC Member:** Maybe we could have some say in [the locations of the monitoring sites].
  - **CAC Member:** With regard to the data over the last two years that's coming from those random sites, is that data available to the public? I am interested to see what they're monitoring for and what they're finding.
    - **Staff response:** There are some Washington State Department of Ecology sites that describe the program process. Kate will get those links to send out.

#### 4. Updated Version of 2018 CDWAC Topics

Input from CDWAC in January was incorporated, including the addition of topics.

- **CAC Member:** If there are two "X"s in two quarters, does that mean that the topic could be in either quarter, or multiple meetings?
  - **Staff response:** Multiple meetings.
- **CAC Member:** Regarding the public engagement section; we should keep pushing to have this discussion earlier in the year so that we're ready to conduct outreach when we hit the summer months and there's lots of community activities.
  - **Staff response:** This conversation could be overlapped with the All-CAC focused on "Community Partnerships."
- **Sheryl** explained that Workplan Item #12 is a new topic on Pump Stations, discussing cost trade-offs. Judi added that this topic is an opportunity for communication planning as much as programmatic input. CDWAC could provide feedback on how to communicate this to the public, *as well as* CDWAC's thoughts on trade-offs and value of noise control relative to the costs/trade-offs. There may be a field trip possibility as well.
  - Sheryl to add pump stations to the field trip list.
- **CAC Member:** When are All-CAC Meeting dates set?
  - **Staff response:** In the next couple months/quarters. Sheryl will try to send out doodle poll to assess availability.
- **CAC Member:** Is the South Park field trip a different variation from last year?
  - **Staff response:** A CAC member suggested it. Is there still interest?
    - **Consensus:** It was an interesting field trip, but we did visit it recently.

#### 5. CAC Recruitment Flyer

Sheryl briefly shared the draft revised recruitment flyer. She noted that we would be sharing the flyer electronically with CDWAC after the meeting. Sheryl invited members to provide feedback on the flyer, asking them to focus on the front-page statement, "Helping to shape a community-centered utility." Sheryl shared a discussion that took place at the February WSAC meeting and posed the question "When you hear a "Community-centered utility," what does that mean?" CDWAC members responded:

- **CAC Member:** It implies that the community's voice is rich in the decision-making process. That it's quite a robust engagement.
- **CAC Member:** [By putting the statement on the flyer] does it mean the CACs are the voice of the community? It could mean that this Committee can act as the voice of the community, but also that the Utility invites direct engagement from the community, not necessarily through this Committee.
- **CAC Member:** Seems similar to a tagline for a customer service center company. Companies have been talking about being "customer-centered" for a while. It sounds like a slogan, it's a line. For a company that's not part of a community, that's a paradigm that makes sense. But for a public agency, it is a collection of customers. It's less an agency that serves the customer, and just an organized version of the community.
- **CAC Member:** "Community-centered" to me means the Utility puts the community as the center of the system. So that it means it goes above the financial end potentially, the regulations, and looks first at the welfare of the community. This is making the Utility community centered.
  - **CAC Member:** That's how I heard it as well. That the community priorities come first. That they come above everything else. Which, honestly, hearing that cold from my utility company I say "really?" I want to see a list of how they put the community first.
- **CAC Member:** My first thought: Really, that's why my rates are so high?
  - **CAC Member:** along those lines, I've been getting asked, why are our rates being raised?
  - **Staff response:** Do you feel that you are able to answer that?
    - **CAC Member:** Partially.
- **CAC Member:** What I think SPU wants it to mean is that the community feels a part of the Utility; that we're working together in the process. That's the message I get from some of the things I've heard serving on this Committee.
- **CAC Member:** Could [the flyer say] "Helping to *inform* a community-centered utility."
- **CAC Member:** How do you bring the different communities together, and define them as one?
- **CAC Member:** "A community involved utility" – trying to say the communities are involved in the process.
- **CAC Member:** So, did this tagline come about as part of the Strategic Business Plan? It seems ironic that it came from the General Manager.
- **CAC Member:** At the end of the day, it's branding. I think it's important to just to avoid misinterpretation, to be clear about what it means.

Judi asked members to further elaborate on their comments about "community-centered" meaning that community comes above finances and regulations. She asked Committee members if this sets the bar for the Utility. Committee members responded:

- **CAC Member:** There's only one center. So, if community is the center, all the focuses come around this center. I think it's a great statement, from the perspective of the community, but to me you can only have one center.
- **Staff response:** So, if the utility came along and said we're utility centered, but if they turned down a community benefit, would it feel ingenuine saying that we are community centered?

- **CAC Member:** One of the reasons that statement is very empty to me, is because I don't know who the community is. There has been a big outcry from residents in Georgetown over a local business. The utility has to support the business, but the community is against that business. And that business is providing an important service that is important to the City. So, who is the "community" that SPU is serving in this case? It's empty to me.
- **Staff response:** At the All-CAC, it would be important to bring the six flags to the "community-centered utility."

## 6. Community Insights, Around the Table

- **A CAC Member shared** that they would be absent June, July and August.
- **A CAC Member shared** that they had been excited to see a street sweeper on his residential street, especially knowing that his street had not been included in the original combined sewer overflow plan. Other members shared that they had always enjoyed seeing street sweepers in their neighborhoods, especially as children.
- **A CAC Member shared** about their presentation at the Puget Sound Green Infrastructure Summit. They also shared about their learnings on the Ship Canal Water Quality Project and Battery Street Tunnel from that event. Committee members discussed the alternative options for the Battery Street Tunnel, and the Committee member said they would share the link for public comment.
- **A CAC Member shared** about their new job, and the development of best practices for their team.
- **A CAC Member shared** about their passion project working on/with the See, Click, Fix mobile application, which allows SeaTac citizens to see issues logged in their neighborhood. Curious to see if it is connected to Seattle's Find It, Fix It application.
- **A CAC member shared** about the celebration for a citizen science group that completed one year of monitoring on Thornton Creek. In 2018, they will be conducting stormwater sampling for other constituencies, and flash testing at points where they found high E-Coli. They also added another school to their list.
- **A staff member shared about the** Green Duwamish Summit. If anyone is interested, SPU might be able to send CDWAC members.
- **A staff member shared about the** Seattle Race Conference on Saturday, March 10. Also, this Saturday at Seattle University is the Search for Meaning Book festival. Some spirituality, some political topics. \$15 to attend.
- **A CAC member shared** that this Saturday is the 1<sup>st</sup> of free Tree Giveaways at the South Park Library from 10AM-2PM, for Duwamish/ outh Beacon Hill/ Rainier residents.

**Adjourned 7:39 PM**