



Environmental Services Commission Minutes

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Center for Urban Waters – 325 E D Street, Commencement Bay Conference Room
Zoom Meeting

May 9, 2024

Chair Beaumier called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Bruce Martin, Chad Sutter, Mindi Keller, Matthew Benedict, Karen DiNicola, Jeff Paradise, David Dailey (arrived at 4:17 p.m.), Bobbak Talebi*, and Esther Beaumier*.

Commission Members Absent: Erich Sachs, Alex Harman, Grant Middleton, and Marty Campbell.

Chair Beaumier welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the lack of a quorum. Informal discussion ensued regarding the following:

Public Comment

The public comment period is reserved for items on the current agenda only. Comments will be limited to the amount of time announced by the chair, presiding officer, or staff liaison, no more than five minutes per person per meeting.

No Public Comment was received.

Assets Management & Capital Projects Overview

Teresa Dressler, Principal Engineer, Asset Management, discussed the basics of asset management: looking at what we own, the likelihood of failure, the consequences of failure, the risks, and how we pay for it. She then reviewed the City's current inventory of wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste assets. She discussed how the likelihood of failure of assets are evaluated including the consequences and risks of failure.

Commissioner Dailey arrived at approximately 4:17 p.m. The presence of a quorum was noted.

Teresa Peterson, Principal Engineer, Asset Management, spoke about project ranking tools, and the integrated set of processes used to minimize life-cycle costs of infrastructure assets at an acceptable level of risk while meeting performance requirements. She stated assets within wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste serve a vital role in the City's ability to support healthy neighborhoods and a thriving Puget Sound. She noted that applying these processes help to manage the utilities in a cost effective and responsible way.

Discussion followed regarding the following topics:

1. Conveyance & Trunk systems
 - a. Commissioner DiNicola asked the difference between a conveyance and a trunk system.
 - b. Staff stated generally it has to do with tributaries and volume of flow. Conveyance pipes pick up locate systems/properties. Trunks pick up multiple conveyance systems, interceptors pick up multiple trunks.
2. Project Prioritization
 - a. Commissioner DiNicola asked about how many of the projects are important.
 - b. Staff answered that all of them are.

Shauna Hansen, Principal Engineer, also spoke about project ranking tools, criteria for evaluating stormwater facilities and goals of the stormwater facility prioritization tool. She reviewed a map top watershed neighborhood and discussed the stormwater priority action list for 2024-2025. She noted in the near-term they will focus on existing stormwater management program activities in priority watershed areas, and in the long-term, they will seek funding to build additional regional stormwater facilities in priority basins that can build capacity for developers to pay into the fee-in-lieu program allowing Tacoma to focus water quality and flow control facilities in the highest priority neighborhoods.

Kristy Beardemphl, Engineering Manager, Capital Project Delivery, discussed how capital projects are broken down for our three utilities and highlighted recently completed projects and significant projects that are just underway. She reviewed the six-year total costs for capital projects for stormwater wastewater, and solid waste noting the numbers are just estimates at this time and will be evaluated and revised as they work on the Six-Year Plan later in the budget process.

Craig Francis, Senior Technology Manager, Asset Management, concluded the presentation speaking about long-range funding of capital projects, stating they hope to have enough data for a dedicated rate increase to address long-term funding needs. Time value of money, and gradual increases. New infrastructure - grants and system development charges and other funding options. He then showed models for long range funding for wastewater collection systems, and the strategy for annual spend increases.

Discussion followed regarding the following topics:

1. Model Rates
 - a. Commissioner Sutter asked if they modeled out the rates at the front-end verses the back end.
 - b. Staff stated it is best to plan for smaller increases over a period of time than rather than a larger increase at one time in the future.
2. Long-Range Funding Models:
 - a. Commissioner DiNicola asked about the long-range funding model and if that was the 100-year plan and is future data.
 - b. Staff stated that the long-range funding model is a replacement of the 100-year plan that was previously shown and it is meant to address replacing our existing assets over a long period of time.
3. Rate Increases
 - a. Commissioner DiNicola asked what happens to the people who can't afford an increase now.
 - b. Staff stated that the City has some of the most progressive assistance programs available to customers. The City cannot have differential charges due to state

law, but the City can provide help to low-income customers. It was noted that all five City utilities have their own assistance programs.

Commissioner Other Items of Interest

Director Mike Slevin shared he will be retiring July 1st and has enjoyed his time with the City.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.