

Meeting: Engineering and Planning Subcommittee

Date: July 2, 2008

Attendees: Wes Jorgenson, City of Bellevue; Steve Moyer, Coal Creek Utility District; Dennis Cheung, City of Issaquah; Margaret Wiggins, Northshore Utility District; Scott Thomasson, City of Redmond; Art Wadekamper, Ronald Wastewater District; Karen Huber, King County; Peggy Leonard, King County; Suzanne Schweitzer, King County; Laura Wharton, King County; Tamie Kellogg, MWPAAC Facilitator

Committee Business:

- The committee requested that a meeting topic summary be provided to the committee in advance of each meeting date.
- Requested the Reclaimed Water Comprehensive Plan schedule a meeting to provide an update.
- The Reclaimed Water Feasibility Study letter of response is being finalized and sent out next week.
- If letters of response are needed from the committee, they requested that documents be shared with the committee one month prior for their review and comments.

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Project Update Summary:

- The Combined Sewer System is located in the City of Seattle. CSOs are a challenge because stormwater causes large fluctuations in volume.
- WTD anticipates full system control by 2030 - RWSP cost estimates, updated only for inflation, is ~\$400 million. Detailed cost estimates will be developed in the 2010 CSO Control Program Review
- The approved Regional Wastewater Services Plan includes 21 CSO control projects; this includes upgrades to the conveyance system, storage and treatment projects. All CSOs controlled to a one event per year by 2030.
- Planned projects include the Puget Sound Beaches (2010-2012); East Ship Canal (2015); Duwamish (2017-2027); and West Ship Canal (2029-2030).
- The county has made available a public “real time” overflow website. This was made possible by installation of new SCADA hardware/software for facility control and data management in 2004. This gives WTD the first opportunity to look at “real time” data outside of the plants. It converged in timing with Ecology feasibility study requirement in NPDES permit.
- Puget Sound beach projects are in pre-design and the county has been awarded state revolving loans for 3 of 4 projects. They will look at green and grey infrastructure alternatives.
- The CSO Plan update was submitted to Ecology on June 30, 2008. Hydraulic model update is due at the end of 2008. It's available electronically at <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/WTD/cso/library.htm#plans> and hardcopies can be provided on request (Valerie Garza or Karen Huber)

- Pilot treatment technologies are due to occur during rainy season 2008/09 and will include chemically enhanced primary with and without lamella places, this is set to be ready October 1, 2008.
- Consultant procurement for next review in fall 2008 with an update on project definitions, sizes and costs. This also includes a stand-alone task for any needed EPA audit response.
- Next program review is due 2010 and the next CSO Plan Update is due to Ecology in ~2013.

CSO Presentation Questions and Answers:

- Climate change? The report discusses the issue but does not yet detail specific impacts. The UW report depicts longer storm events, more frequent flexibility, and adaptability. Looking at sea levels – rising; aware of but can't yet target facility changes noted. We took UW's CIG an overlaid climate impacts (storm surges) and everyone agreed it was a valid approach on sea levels and storm surges. Also flooding onsite – more detailed topography could change due to sloping. More detailed Hydrologic analysis, internal scope and report out next year will inform CSO analysis.
- What are the upstream implications of storm intensity? There is not consensus on this issue. Only conjecture, WTD is staying out of "controversy".
- Funding, how much is stashed in reclaimed water that could fund CSO? No money is being held for reclaimed water and it wouldn't be funded until the Comprehensive Plan results are completed. There is no holding over of money.
- Stormwater – all money from sewer rate budget revenues? CSO control only spends for management of the stormwater in combined sewage from combined basins existing in 1960. City should not create new combined systems or increase stormwater from re-development.
- Has the Ballard siphon replacement solved the CSO problem and are there other project opportunities to solve these problems? We will always try to partner with other wastewater projects for CSO control opportunities. We also look at balance, what happens to one influences the next down the line.
- There used to be that the fee (CSO benefit charge) before Robinswood. How is funding handled relative to CSO charges, look at connection charges? We don't collect "CSO benefit charge" from Seattle anymore as agreed to at Robinswood Sewer rates and connection fees fund County CSO control projects as defined at Robinswood.
- How is Seattle handling CSOs? Their current plan involves fine tuning & repairing existing facilities, cleaning lines and building storage. Their plan is also updated with their NPDES permit renewal applications and so may change. We will see some increased flow from work on existing facilities and system maintenance, but they may not increase our overflows and facility sizes.
- Has to exacerbate our system with overflows? Storage should be built large enough to hold flow until there is room in our system, so should not increase overflows. If they did worsen our CSOs, they would answer to Ecology.

- Is that in writing? Letters saying that they can't impact. It's in their Ecology approved control plan.
- Will Seattle pay for our increased tax of stormwater? The agencies do not pay for each others' separate stormwater management programs. King County is responsible to manage stormwater in combined sewage from the system that existed in 1960.
- Summer versus winter flows has to impact stored facilities, is Seattle taking advantage of existing facilities? Shouldn't they pay? The 1992 amendment to the contract allows the county to be reimbursed for O&M related to new stormwater in flows. It is a minor cost increment for the base system, but we are discussing it for CSO facilities built to manage captured CSO from both agencies, such as Elliott West? Determining what the costs are is currently complicated by the difficult start up at Elliott West, but will be pursued as soon as they are definable?
- There were several comments regarding Seattle's flows and how they affect the system overall including the added costs for maintaining CSOs. Members urged the county to revisit the issue with Seattle to insure that they are paying their fair share for additional flows to the system.

The following questions are being referred to the Finance subcommittee.

- Regional Connection Charge:
 - How does CSO handle increases in growth?
 - What are the CSO formula costs?
- Original Agreement (City of Seattle):
 - There is an assumption by the committee that the agreement does not require the City of Seattle to pay costs associated with stormwater. Is this true?
- Stormwater / Overflows:
 - Letters from Ecology state they can't impact the system.
 - Will the City of Seattle pay for increased costs of stormwater?
 - Flows don't impact Seattle much; there's a small impact
 - Summer v. Winter flows has to impact stored facilities;
 - Is the City of Seattle taking advantage of existing facilities?
 - Shouldn't they be required to pay?
- Inflationary Costs:
 - Do CSO costs reflect true inflation costs?
 - 2006 Program Review costs reflects 3% inflation per year over RWSP costs

EPA Audit Summary:

- Audits are being conducted across the United States. King County and Seattle were notified of the audit in fall 2007. EPA investigated King County in January 2008 and Seattle in March 2008.
- The focus of the audit was on wet weather management and included the combined sewer overflow and sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) control programs.

- WTD expected to hear EPA findings in June but has been delayed till August.
- Other US agencies that have been audited have had resulting consent decrees with requirements that tighten schedules, increased effort and costs.
- 2010 Program Review scope will include tasks to respond to possible EPA requirements; tasks will be activated if needed.
- Of note, the audit is out of the EPA Enforcement and Justice Department not EPA Office of Water. Enforcement and Office of Water may disagree in compliance interpretations. The county could also disagree with their findings; we won't re-design CSO based only on the findings – negotiations will follow.
- Worst-Case scenario: King County is found in non-compliance of water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act.
- EPA Office of Water and Ecology could say we are doing a great job but EPA Enforcement may not think so.

EPA Audit Questions and Answers:

- Was there any information regarding the SSO system? King County did not provide any information on other agency systems.
- Is the county responsible for all SSOs and is EPA looking beyond the county? EPA is currently looking only at Seattle and County, but could look at other agencies (we haven't heard if they will).
- Does the county's authority mandate local jurisdiction compliance? No. The county is the regional service provider only; we only wanted to inform the local agencies that EPA told us they may contact them for compliance.
- Audit findings are expected in August, how do we find out what the findings were? Christie will likely send out information afterward, may issue a newspaper release; she would give a report at the MWPAAC meeting. We will evaluate findings first, then report our next steps.

Biosolids Project Update Summary:

- Pilot project launched October 1, 2007. Briefing and facility tour would be available for members to attend.
- Class B biosolids applications are used on private and public forests (27%), dryland wheat (55%), GroCo compost (3%) and canola and irrigated crops (15%).
- In 2000, King County purchased a fleet of 27+ trucks and trailers for \$5 million that resulted in annual net savings of \$360,000. This increased truck capacity by 15% to 33 wet tons. Trucks are operated and maintained by Skagit Transportation with WTD staff directing the distribution of biosolids.
- Fuel costs are increasing and the program is looking at expanding and developing western Washington applications to help mitigate expenses. They are also looking at alternative transportation options like rail.
- GroCo production is down and new compost recipes or alternatives are needed because of the rising cost and scarcity of sawdust due to the wood products slow-down.

- University of Washington, Washington State University and University of Arizona are all engaged in biosolids research and are on call for research questions.
- Opportunities being explored are: reclaim gravel mines in western Washington, expanding to other eastern Washington counties, expanding the canola to biodiesel program, and using biosolids as a fuel for renewable energy.
- July 3, 2008, King County will issue a Request for Information for Biosolids Management Services to solicit information on new uses and projects.

Biosolids Questions and Answers:

- Does Skagit Transportation (biosolids hauler) pay for the fuel? Answer: No, King County WTD pays for fuel directly. During our last contract negotiation, the hauler was including fuel in their proposed rate, but we thought their rate was too high, or “padded” to cover the uncertainty about future fuel prices. We believed we could save King County money by paying for the fuel directly, by taking that risk of increasing fuel price away from the contractor.