

MARION WATER QUALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 14, 2017

Marion County Public Works in the North Santiam Room
5155 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, Oregon

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Zach Diehl, Mark Grenz, Doug Krahmer, Rick Massey, Bryan Porter, Andrew Schmidt, Brent Stevenson, Richard Walker

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Matt Knudsen, Keare Blaylock

PUBLIC: None

CALL TO ORDER: 5:00 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS: Matt informed the group of a change in policy of not holding a meeting if there is not a quorum. The department specialist will call to verify there will be enough people attending the meeting to achieve a quorum. The contact information list was passed out to update all current phone numbers from the members.

Bryan made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2016 meeting. Zach seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous. Bryan made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2016 meeting. Zach seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

Richard took over the chair responsibilities.

At the last meeting, Matt introduced Brian May as the Environmental Services Division Manager and due to changes in the Environmental Services; there has recently been a re-organization to the structure which created a need for an Environmental Services Supervisor position. This position has been assigned to Matt as a promotion.

Matt showed a PowerPoint presentation that showed the restructure. As the Program Supervisor, Matt will be taking over the Natural Resources division. This includes the current Environmental Specialist, Keare Blaylock and one other Environmental Specialist that will fill Matt's position. Matt will also be taking care of the Public Works Facilities and Service Districts (wastewater). Currently there are two Wastewater Operators and there is a posting to hire a Wastewater Operator 2 as soon as possible. Matt will also be in charge of the Stormwater Operations, which is mainly in East Salem. This program includes cleaning and maintenance of the system, but not capital projects.

Another division within the Environmental Services is the Parks department. Previously, there were only two temporary workers. This will be moved up to six temporary workers which will significantly improve the services in the parks.

This re-structuring will mean that the stormwater and water quality will be what will allow us to move in between the maintenance and the technical side of the process more easily. Formerly, the projects had been separated but now that Keare is working with asset management and GIS, this will help get the information directly to the maintenance staff.

Some of the projects were related to February being the single biggest precipitation month. This included several capital projects, including a sinkhole that was created due to a leak located in between two houses on the sidewalk.

Permit Updates: The permit process from DEQ has been administratively extended for the last five years and has been the primary reason for these meetings. However, in spite of receiving updates of what's coming our way, it still is unclear when the permit process will be renewed. DEQ did send out the phase II permit along with its new language for public comment and the feedback they received was mainly negative. DEQ decided to hold a couple of meetings to hear the grievances and because of that feedback; they decided on March 6, 2017 to go back and review the permit and create new language. In the meantime (March 8, 2017) the Northwest Environmental Defense Center (NEDC/NEA) filed a lawsuit against DEQ which basically says that this permit extension process was unacceptable since over 75% of the permits in Oregon are currently expired.

A video was shown to the group that explains the NEDC/NEA concerns that DEQ's delays (zombie or indefinitely extended) of issuing permits by DEQ have negatively affected urban growth and environmental concerns. The video talked about how the delays from DEQ not only affect environmental issues but also affect any long term planning since many companies don't know when DEQ will finally issue a permit, which would state what is and is not going to be allowed. Public Works has been waiting 5 years for DEQ to issue a new permit and Brooks Wastewater Treatment plant has been waiting 10 years for their permit to be re-issued.

One reason the delay is so high for DEQ is the shortage of staff members currently working on the permit process. Previously there were three people assigned to issue permits but it is down to only one person. Due to this delay this group is still in the waiting mode to address the total maximum daily load for the Stormwater Fee.

The need for quarterly meetings was discussed and it was determined that the meetings should continue on a quarterly basis but not on Tuesdays. It was suggested to move the meetings to Wednesdays or Thursdays and making the meetings shorter if there are no updates to report. Matt will keep the group informed of any changes.

Projects: Matt provided a brief update on two projects that are scheduled for this summer. The first one is located on 45th Ave NE near Chemeketa. This winter it was noticed that the banks were sliding in and fence lines were falling into the ditch. Marion County built up the banks and the concerns with high water, however due to the amount of rain we had this winter, it will have to be re-done. The most cost effective option considered would be to hire a contractor to do the job since they have the ability to be a little more agile and are able to get the job done more quickly. The costs associated to this will probably be around \$30,000 for a total of 300 linear feet.

Another project that is having flooding issues is located on 46th Ave NE. The flooding at this location has been a chronic problem and is now leaking into people's yards. High water signs have been put up several times this winter, but the problem stems from a pipe that has been tapped into in multiple areas. After using a camera to determine the cause of the flooding issue, it was decided that the best way to resolve this was to install three conflict manholes (Kenzie's specials), which essentially allows water to flow through a larger flow area.

Another problem area was located in a City of Salem property. We recently discovered a 4 foot deep sinkhole that resulted from some sort of rain drain that was located on one of the properties. We were able to work collaboratively with the City of Salem through the MORE agreement, which allows us to work with other governmental agencies, to resolve this issue since this is located in a more urban area.

Questions: A question was asked about whether we are doing any water measurements. We have not dealt with any water measurements but we are in the process of trying to go through our systems and get an accurate inventory of our assets. Once we get a really good understanding of what we have, we can go forward with more projects. Our hydraulic Engineer, Bob Pankratz has been working with an old model but he thinks he can get the system up and running after getting a couple of updates. He will need some more accurate and up to date data and training to be able to get this done.

Keare: Outreach and education

Keare showed a PowerPoint presentation that talked about the outreach that had been done. The focus has been to try to get more media and more partners involved in the process. So far, the partners are doing more projects and the internal training has been going well.

There has been continuing education and outreach done with radio and digital banners and billboards, as well as returning to Facebook ads in lieu of emails. We have been working on two different sides with the media contracting two different separate agencies to do the media in purchasing. The Spanish media currently has a new web page where we have done new radio ads, banner ads, digital billboard and email ads. All the ads are targeted to send the customer to the website. Currently there are 4 radio spots in Spanish and we are going to continue with this type of outreach. Total amount of impressions we have received has reached over 4 million impressions which is really good for a government agency.

Our partners are involved in various events. MWOOG (Mid Willamette Outreach Group) held the 6th Annual Erosion Control & Stormwater Summit that we held in tandem the NW Environmental training seminar and that was to offer the CESL (Construction Erosion Sediment Control Lead) certification. There were the same 100 people that attended the CESL certification last year but half left to attend the NW Environmental training as well. We are also going to offer another certification, pairing up with NW Environmental in June. This will help get more people certified on a more regular basis. We are also going to have a second annual Water Fair, which takes 4th and 5th graders to and from the event which promotes education about stormwater and water quality. There is also an event where we will participate in a demonstration of Rain Gardens at the State Fair. Green-acres will do all the landscaping for the site and it will be held in the floral building. There is expected to be a lot of foot traffic since it is in such a great spot this year. This has been a team effort by the partners to get this exhibit into the Fair Gardens.

As a group, we are working with Chemeketa Community College. They have a VSF (Vegative Stormwater Facility) Certification Course/workshop and a Phyto-technology course for lab work. The college is going to offer two courses. One course will be a 15 hour module or setup and will be for credit and the other will be a non-credit class. The items that will be offered will be how to set up, rain gardens, swails, planters and landscaping students can get credit for their certification course.

Clean river coalition is the statewide group which is helping to create the state wide branding regarding water quality. This group has been working on getting the same message out no matter where it is. For example, if you are in Bend or in Salem, you will hear/see the same message and wording. We are also working on a charter and strategic plan with this group and since there is a lot of momentum right now we are planning a third forum to discuss more of the state wide branding.

Projects we have been working on include partnering with the North Santiam for the Spring tree program and they ended up planting more than 4,000 trees in the area. Overall we have done 33 community events with about 2,500 people participating.

Internal training includes the field application for clean water. This is an erosion control training event which will be a ½ day training targeting municipal operation training. This will be focused on municipal activities and the training will start by doing urban B&P, such as catch basin, stock pile management, rock protection around grates, sweeping and cleaning. Then the training will move to a field site where there will be compost burns, compost blanketing, etc. There will be a representative from ACF West who will be bringing a bunch of different products to learn about and install. The crews can use it and see how it works in the field. This is intended to be more of a conversation and hands on instead of lecture type training.

Currently we have not finished the B&P leadership winter session yet, however we have been getting a lot more participation. Previously, we had been getting a lot of pictures on what not to do but we are now getting a lot of photos on both what to do and what not to do. There will be around 4 more winners who will win hats, shirts, etc. This program has promoted ownership of the work being done in the field.

We have seen an uptake in complaints (more complaints, more awareness) regarding construction erosion complaints, concrete issues, household oil spills, pipes discharges, RV sewer issue and pain issues. We are working on a video on concrete and paint to inform the public how to handle these items.

CLOSING REMARKS: None

MEETING ADJOURNED: 6:07 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Next meeting scheduled June 14, 2017 unless otherwise informed.

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