

MARION COUNTY
MARION WATER QUALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MWQAC MEETING

July 24, 2019
5:30 PM

Willamette Conference Room
5155 Silverton Rd NE
Salem, OR 97305

PRESENT: **Members:** Rick Massey, Andrew Schmidt, Brent Stevenson, Mark Grenz, Brenda Sanchez, Rebecca McCoun
 Staff: Matt Knudsen, Kaileigh Westermann-Lewis, Rachel Hiller, Stephanie Rosentrater

ABSENT: Richard Walker, Zach Diehl

Action – Approval of Minutes

The April 25, 2019 minutes had a minor error, in which some Committee members were listed as staff. Mark motioned to approve the April 25, 2019 meeting minutes with appropriate amendments. Brenda seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous. The April 25, 2019 minutes are approved, pending amendments.

FY2019-20 Budget

The budget includes six full-time equivalent employees, which is the same as last year. FY2019-20 will see a \$290,000 operating budget, which is a little bit of a decrease, due to changes in outreach and education. This year, the Stormwater fund will purchase a one-ton, flatbed tip truck for hauling equipment and for being able to bring inmate crews onto work sites more easily. There are three capital projects that were budgeted for, which were discussed in detail at the last meeting. Next summer (2020) will see more culvert replacements and a bank stabilization project.

East Salem Community Impact Survey & Outreach Plan

Kaileigh explained that with a change in staff and the adoption of the new NPDES permit, Water Quality is looking at revamping their outreach and education plan. With a fairly small budget and less staff than predicted, the goal is to come up with more strategic approaches for effective communication.

One of these approaches was to learn more about the behaviors of residents in the stormwater management area and how those behaviors might impact water quality. Cherriots wanted similar information from the East Salem residents. Marion County and Cherriots teamed up to create a survey for single family residences in the East Salem area that focused on water quality, transportation, and parks usage. The response rate hasn't been great, but it's higher than we have received in the past. 82% of people that took the survey said that their primary mode of transportation was driving a vehicle alone. When asked where their water goes once it goes down the storm drain, the majority knew that it went to rivers and streams, but 29% thought it was treated first. This provides a great focus for future outreach and education efforts. It's important for people to know that it is not treated. In the next section, the survey asked how likely (very or somewhat) or unlikely (very or somewhat) people would be to change their behaviors to better protect water quality. When asked how likely they would be to water their lawn only once per week in the summer, 30% responded very likely. 21% said they were very likely and 30% somewhat likely to pay more for environmentally friendly fertilizer. When asked if survey-takers would be willing to attend a volunteer litter clean up event, most said no. This is surprising

because Marion County's litter clean up events in East Salem are fairly popular. 50% reported that they were likely to install a rain garden if they were taught how to do so. This is encouraging because it is one of the best things that can be done for water quality. Only 25% said that they would be willing to park on grass or gravel when washing their car, but 62% stated that they would be willing to take their car to the car wash. The survey asked if residents would be willing to reduce the size of their lawn by planting a native plant garden. 39% responded that they would be very likely to do this. Overall, Kaileigh was surprised by the amount of positive response received when asking people to do things like spend more money or reduce the size of their garden for the sake of water quality. This survey gave a great framework for future outreach efforts.

Outreach & Outreach Planning Activity

Kaileigh wanted to know what the Committee views as the top concerns for outreach and education in regards to water quality. The NPDES permit requires the County to reach three audiences: construction site operators, the general public, and elected officials and land use planners.

Construction

Impacts on water quality: sediment, staging areas, truck travel on and offsite

Solutions:

- Education for all contractors, regardless of how long they've been in the business.
 - Currently, most education comes through enforcement and the Erosion Control Summit, which happens once a year but could be improved and happen more often. All independent contractors are required to take continuing education, but it's pretty open to what you can do.
- The Erosion Control Summit could be turned into a module for continued education credits. Kaileigh expressed interest in following up with Mark about how to go about adding the module
- Spanish modules
- Landscape construction outreach

General Public

Impacts on water quality: poor lawn care practices and car washing

Solutions:

- Focus on one component of water quality, rather than many (i.e. just car washing practices)
- Car washing coupons
- Social media

Elected Officials and Land Use Planners

Outreach Ideas:

- Create annual report and measure progress to present to the Commissioners
- Outreach to city councilors to show them County's efforts. They ARE part of the County and contribute to water quality
- Assist smaller cities more

Permit Rollout

The permit took effect on March 1, 2019. Since then, we've been working on the updates to the Stormwater Management Plan. The County has been diving into current practices and evaluating what it is that the permit is asking for with what we're doing currently. Kaileigh has been working with LDEP and Engineering regarding the County's current standards and ordinances for construction erosion and post construction. She sees a need to update ordinances and develop new, consistent standards.

Mercury TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) Update

Brent sat on the advisory committee that developed the new TMDL for Mercury. By court order, the new TMDL has to be approved by EPA by November of this year. The plan includes new measures to control sediment as a surrogate for mercury. The DEQ has indicated that special districts and other facilities (water, water control, irrigation, and drainage districts) will be listed as additional permit holders/responsible parties. Implementation of the new measures will likely be long term. Education and planning component will be required of the districts. Mapping of infrastructure will be required, which includes the interaction of roads, roadside drains, etc. it seems to be that those requirements would be for every city and every county-wide jurisdiction.

Matt stated that on July 3, DEQ posted Mercury TMDL Water Quality Management Plan, which outlines the new requirements. This clarified how the counties would be impacted. Staff had a conversation with the DEQ agent, who confirmed that the NPDES permit is sufficient for controlling sediment as a surrogate for mercury, so no further actions need to be taken in permitted areas. However, counties will have to expand the minimum control measures laid out in the TMDLs to the whole jurisdiction, not just the NPDES permitted areas. The biggest impacts to Marion County will be illicit discharge, construction erosion, and post construction. Currently, outside the Stormwater Management Area (SWMA) for illicit discharge, we notify DEQ when something spills and enters a ditch or waterway and DEQ comes to investigate. With the new plan, we would be in charge of investigation and enforcement throughout the entire county. For construction sites, the County has no erosion and sediment control requirements outside of the SWMA. After the new TMDL requirements are official, the County would have to require sediment control plans and the ability to enforce at half an acre or more, countywide. For post construction run-off, sites adding or replacing one quarter of an acre or more of impervious surface, they have the same standards as the Phase II permits which means they will have to install a stormwater control and meet retention standards. This is going to stretch our resources out and make our efforts less concentrated. Most of the plans we have are for urban stormwater, if we expand our efforts to countywide, we'll have to adapt our minimum control measures to rural stormwater, which will look different. Time was allowed for questions and answers.

Closing Remarks

Matt wants to know if the Committee thinks the next meeting would be a good time to go through the bylaws. The Committee agreed to this. Kaileigh will come in to discuss the Stormwater Management Plan, as there will be a good draft by then. We will send out a Doodle Poll to figure out a good date for the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.