

**CITY OF BELLEVUE  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday  
February 20, 2014  
6:30 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-113  
Bellevue City Hall  
Bellevue, Washington

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Chair Helland, Vice Chair Swenson; Commissioners Cowan, Mach, Morin, Wang

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Howe

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Asst. Director Paul Bucich, NPDES Coordinator Phyllis Varner, Stream Team Program Administrator Laurie Devereaux, Utility Water Resources Planning Manager Pam Maloney, Design Services Manager Regan Sidie, Construction Services Manager Scott Taylor, Sr. Engineering Technician Dave Perry

**MINUTES TAKER:** Laurie Hugdahl

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Helland at 6:30 p.m.

**2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion made by Commissioner Morin, seconded by Commissioner Mach, to approve the agenda.**

Commissioner Wang commented that item 5(3) on the agenda should indicate that action will be taken regarding the NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) item. He also noted that agenda item 2 should refer to item 9, not item 8.

**Motion passed unanimously to approve the agenda as amended (6-0).**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

January 16, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Wang requested that all acronyms be spelled out, specifically B-IBI (Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity) on page 9 and DSD (Development Services Department) on page 13.

**The minutes as amended were passed unanimously (6-0).**

## **5. REPORTS AND SUMMARIES**

- Conservation & Outreach Events & Volunteer Opportunity

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

- ESC (Environmental Services Commission) Calendar/Council Calendar

Mr. Bucich explained that because of the timing of some items, staff will be requesting a second meeting in April later tonight. He also pointed out that there are a lot of Consent items on the Council Calendar due to the time of year with renewal of contracts and putting out new projects for bids. Chair Helland asked about the about the Local Hazardous Waste Management Program Grant on the Council Calendar. Laurie Devereaux commented that this was just an update on a grant that Utilities has used for outreach.

- Discussion & Recommendation – 2014 NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Stormwater Mgmt. Program Plan – Phyllis Varner, NPDES Coordinator

Phyllis Varner stated she was present to ask the Commission to make a recommendation to City Council on submittal of the NPDES 2014 Stormwater Management Plan to the Washington State Department of Ecology. As presented at the January 16 ESC meeting, in 2014 The City plans to continue implementation of the first permit's ongoing program requirements and begin the phased implementation of new permit requirements such as the Low Impact Development principles project. A memorandum containing the Commission's recommendation upon submittal of the NPDES Program Plan to Ecology, as well as public comment received on the Plan, will be attached to a management brief to City Council on March 3. Ms. Varner distributed a draft of the Commission's Memorandum to Council. She stated that City Council will be asked to take action on March 17 and authorize the City Manager to sign the NPDES Annual Report and submit it to Ecology by the March 31 deadline.

Chair Helland asked if the comment would be attached to this. Ms. Varner said that the comment is included and was simply that the unidentified person supports low impact development.

**Motion made by Commissioner Wang, seconded by Commissioner Morin, to recommend that the Council approve the NPDES 2014 Stormwater Management Program Plan with the draft Memorandum as presented. Motion passed unanimously (6-0).**

- Stream Team Update – Laurie Devereaux, Program Administrator

Laurie Devereaux stated that there are no major changes this year. She reviewed some of the highlights from last year and some things she is looking forward to in the upcoming year. The same basic elements of the program still exist. There is a restoration project every year for Earth Day. There are also several monitoring projects: Salmon Watchers in the fall, Peamouth Patrol in the spring, and special volunteers help to collect some fish and bugs in the summer. The estimated generic value of volunteer time this year is over \$10,000.

Salmon Watchers is the biggest monitoring project with the most volunteer hours. Volunteers went out on their own over 800 times to the streams to make observations this year. Midway through the season, the Muckleshoot Tribe offered the City some surplus Coho from the hatchery. The City was pleased to accept over 1800 live, adult spawners and planted them in three different locations.

Chair Helland asked when staff would know how successful this is. Ms. Devereaux said staff hopes there continues to be a surplus so the City can plant more fish for a few years. She thought the soonest anyone would know if there is a return from this planting is four to five years.

Commissioner Wang asked about the culvert at Coal Creek Parkway and asked if these salmon would benefit from that. Ms. Devereaux replied that their offspring would appreciate it. Commissioner Wang commented that this could be a good viewing area in the fall. Ms. Devereaux concurred.

Commissioner Morin referred to concerns some people have related to farm-raised fish, and asked if hatchery fish are considered farm-raised. Ms. Devereaux stated that they are not and reviewed the difference. She acknowledged that there are controversies and issues with hatchery salmon, but Bellevue does not currently have a native run of Coho. Most of the ones seen are strays from the hatchery. There is hope that these salmon would bring the Coho back to the area.

Chair Helland asked about the monitoring program for the Coho. Ms. Devereaux explained that there would be spawning surveys in the fall, and salmon watchers will be watching upstream and downstream of those professional surveys and on days when the surveyors aren't there.

Ms. Devereaux continued to discuss the value of volunteers in terms of data collection, leverage of resources, number of citizen contacts, impact on family and friends, property owner relationships, and NPDES requirements. Chair Helland asked if the City publishes the volunteer data. Ms. Devereaux said it is posted online. Additionally, the macro invertebrate data goes onto a Puget Sound Benthos website. Mr. Bucich added that the City collaborates on a regional basis for a lot of the volunteer outreach activities.

Commissioner Wang commented that one of the stream photos with volunteers showed very little water. Ms. Devereaux commented that the photo was from the end of summer when the volunteers were looking for macro invertebrates. There was discussion about the reason staff looks for numbers of macroinvertebrates. Macroinvertebrates are an indicator of human impact. The City gets a score on each of the sites where collection is done based on the animals that are present. At the end of the summer, staff chooses a handful of sites to make these collections. There is data going back to 1998 for some of Bellevue's streams. Commissioner Cowan asked what the scores since 1998 are indicating. Ms. Devereaux said that the scores haven't had a dramatic change, but there is definitely a lot of human impact, especially the Kelsey Creek system which was the first developed.

Mr. Bucich commented that one of the biggest challenges with the B-IBI (Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity) score is that it tells you that something is impacting your stream, but it doesn't tell you what the impact is. He noted that if one did a comparison between Bellevue's B-IBI scores and Redmond's and other developed area's B-IBI scores, you would see that Bellevue is right up there with the rest of them. Human interactions with the landscape and development activities are directly impacting the health of our aquatic ecosystem. Commissioner Cowan asked what the overall rating for Bellevue's streams is. Ms. Devereaux replied that it is poor to fair, but mostly poor.

Chair Helland said he recalled seeing a graphic some time ago showing the scores of the various streams. He asked if staff could provide that again. Ms. Devereaux replied that the next score will be coming out soon so there should be a new set of data for last summer coming out soon. Mr. Bucich said that Kit Paulsen could come and review that.

Chair Helland asked how stream conditions could be improved in an urban environment. Ms. Devereaux commented that she didn't have the information available for this meeting, but it was a mix of factors such as restoration, water quality, Low Impact Development, as well as many others. Mr. Bucich commented that a lot of what Stormwater/Utilities tries to do is in an attempt to get to that answer.

Ms. Devereaux continued to explain that some of the volunteers receive a lot of extra training. For example, salmon watchers attend a two-hour workshop. Volunteers that help with electrofishing learn a lot more about the streams and carefully handling the fish in order to have the least impact on the animals. She noted that if you actually calculated the time at a higher rate that the City would hire a higher trained consultant or staff, the value of volunteer time is dramatically higher than the \$10,000 which was originally stated.

Ms. Devereaux commented that another new volunteer program started last spring was checking vehicles for leaks. This was a regional program through Puget Sound Starts Here called “Don’t Drip and Drive.” The goal is to raise awareness about vehicle leaks. Staff found that when people know their vehicles leak, a lot of them will fix the leaks. She remarked that in the region, the leakiest place tested was at Western Washington University so Bellevue College will be tested soon.

Ms. Devereaux explained that the purpose of public outreach and education is to raise awareness, but also to change behaviors. Some ways this is done is through talks at elementary and high school classes, science fairs and with parks master naturalists and botanical garden docents. Through these programs staff reached 2751 residents in 82 events and classes. Additionally there is regular outreach that happens throughout the year such as Dog Poop mailers and handouts.

Ms. Devereaux explained that the Kelsey Creek Viewing Area was greatly improved through the last year. Interpretive signs are posted along the railings at the viewing area. Additionally, a high school student doing his senior project this year is going to try to do a geocache in that area. This will bring an entire new audience down to Kelsey Creek.

Coming up in 2014 the Peamouth will show up sometime at the end of April or early May. There are two KCD (King Conservation District) grants still for residential outreach. Ms. Devereaux will be working on a new display for public events as well as well as two more signs for the trestle. In April the leak check will be done at Bellevue College.

Questions:

Commissioner Swenson asked about having Ms. Devereaux speak at one of the meetings in the community where he lives. Ms. Devereaux replied she would be happy to do that.

- CIP (Capital Investment Program) 2013 Accomplishments – Regan Sidie, Design Services Manager & Scott Taylor, Construction Services Manager

Mr. Taylor and Mr. Sidie gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting accomplishments of the 2013 Utilities Capital Investment Program projects including the following:

- Kelsey Creek Fish Passage/Stream Restoration – This involved Kelsey Creek channel and habitat improvements in the lower reach. Some improvements were also done to improve fish passage. Revegetation took place in the fall. Plant survival will be monitored as part of the permit conditions.
- Sunset Creek/Richards Creek Flood Control (Phase 2) – The channel cross-section was increased. Large woody debris and spawning mix were added. Grade control structures and a flood control berm were constructed.
- Coal Creek Parkway Culvert Replacement – 40% of the culvert was completed last summer, but the project is still underway. The soldier piles were installed about 35 feet deep in the soil. Mr. Taylor reviewed how this was accomplished. The west half of the culvert is constructed. The east half, a pedestrian undercrossing, and some stairs still needs to be finished.

Commissioner Wang asked what measures the City is taking to keep the channel flowing for the fish. Mr. Sidie explained that there is a low flow channel so that during lower flows it will stay confined and won't spread out too wide. As flows increase and levels rise, the full width of the channel is available. Mr. Bucich added that this will behave more like a natural channel, and fish will be able to work their way through. This will be a much better fish passage situation.

- Flush Station No. 5 Rehabilitation – The flush station is used on the lake lines to bring lake water into the flat sanitary sewer that runs along the lakeshore to flush the solids out of the system. The existing flush station was disassembled, and conduits were installed using horizontal drilling which avoided disturbing landscaping. A new full-size hatch was added to the station so crews can have the hatch completely open to replace open to either replace equipment or to not work in a confined space.

Chair Helland asked what the intake structure looks like. Mr. Taylor explained that it is an 8-inch ductile iron pipe that runs out into the lake. Chair Helland asked about the flow capacity. Mr. Sidie said it could go a couple hundred gallons per minute, and is limited by the hydraulic capacity of the line. Mr. Taylor commented that there is an overflow so it can't be pressurized any higher.

- Sanitary Sewer Repairs 2012, Phase 1 – This program is done annually in order to identify deficiencies in the sanitary sewer system and make individual repairs before having to do a complete replacement or rehab. In 2013 26 repairs were done. Typical repairs included crushed or broken pipes.
- Utility Relocations SR 520 Expansion Project – Some sanitary sewer was replaced. New water mains were installed across the new overpasses. Storm work was also done around the new ramps at Bellevue Way and NE 8<sup>th</sup>. Stormwater vaults were installed to help remove pollutants from storm water runoff.
- AC Water Main Replacement 2013, Phase 1 – This is an ongoing program to replace small diameter mains. The City is replacing about 3.4 miles per year. By 2018 it will be up to 5 miles per year for a very long time in order to renew the infrastructure.
- Newport Water Pump Station Rehabilitation – Some old equipment was replaced with new vertical turbine pumps as part of the new pump assembly that went in with motors and control valves. Motor controls, telemetry, and onsite backup power were also added.

Commissioner Wang noted that the memo lists Asphalt and Pavement Restoration. He asked if Utilities actually does pavement. Mr. Taylor explained that sometimes Utilities has to pave because of work done on a water or sewer line. If the pavement was in good condition, it must be restored with a overlay. Staff tries to package that work with the Transportation Department's overlay because of the benefits of economy of scale, but there are smaller patches that Transportation won't do.

Commissioner Cowan asked about water main breaks in the West Sammamish area. Mr. Sidie pointed out that those were service line leaks. Commissioner Cowan asked if that line got replaced. Mr. Taylor replied that about 500 feet of water main was replaced, but not all of it. That water main is 12-inch diameter asbestos cement which has another 50 years' worth of life left in it. Mr. Bucich commented that there was an investigation initially on the 12-inch line, but the assessment doesn't fully encapsulate the risk of the impact of construction activity on the infrastructure. Commissioner Cowan asked if the concerns are related to the saddles, not the pipes for the 12-inch. Mr. Taylor confirmed this. Chair Helland asked if staff would be looking at requirements for construction so contractors aren't so hard on the lines. Mr. Bucich commented that it was good question to ask if the City wants to put limits on the contractors on the type of equipment which can be used and if those limits would actually drive up costs in a different way or produce an inferior product. He acknowledged that this is a balancing act.

Commissioner Wang pointed out that the bid amount often comes in under the engineer's estimate. In addition to that the final amount is often lower than the bid amount. He asked how this can happen. Mr. Sidie noted that there are contingencies built in. There are also some economies of scale issues. Mr. Taylor added that the contracts are structured as unit price contracts so all the components are segregated. If you don't use all of the materials, you end up coming in under minimum. This is the benefit of a unit price contract versus a lump sum contract. Commissioner Wang commended staff for their work on this.

Commissioner Cowan asked about the trends for project pricing. Mr. Sidie said that prices have been fairly flat for the city's projects. Commissioner Cowan asked if the City is on budget with the Coal Creek Parkway project. Mr. Taylor replied the project is pretty much on target. The contractor ran into a boulder in one of the shafts that required a little extra money to remove; however, there was a contingency in the contract to deal with those types of situations.

- CIP Update – Pam Maloney, Water Resources Planning Manager and Dave Perry, Engineering Technician.

Ms. Maloney commented that updating the Utilities CIP is a critical part of the budget update for the Utilities Department and part of the overall city budget update that happens every two years. The CIP Update will look at adjustments to the adopted 7-year plan (the remaining five years) and will develop a plan for the two years added at the end (2020 and 2021). Ms. Maloney assured the ESC that staff will be looking for efficiencies and savings opportunities to help offset any recommended increases. She reviewed a tentative budget schedule.

Ms. Maloney discussed the compressed schedule and proposed that the ESC hold an additional meeting at the beginning of April to allow more time to discuss proposed CIP projects. On April 17 there would be a presentation of the whole preliminary CIP with the budget recommendations and the ESC would be asked for their recommendation for Council. Staff would hold an open house before one of the April meetings and invite the public to come talk about changes to the CIP. Mr. Bucich discussed the timeline further and suggested the first April meeting for the Open House to allow the most opportunity for public input. The ESC's budget recommendation for the CIP will be included in the overall Utility budget recommendation to City Council later this year. Staff will request ESC concurrence with specific CIP recommendations at the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Following discussion on this topic, Mr. Bucich suggested that staff hold an open house on April 3 before the extra ESC meeting. The hearing would be noticed two weeks prior to that, and staff would incorporate the comments

into a document to be taken up at the regular meeting on April 17. Ms. Maloney asked the ESC to let her know if that date would work. There was consensus to proceed with an extra meeting on April 3 unless otherwise notified.

Ms. Maloney stated she would now review the existing CIP Plan, the criteria for projects that can be included in the CIP, and how those projects are evaluated for merit against each other. In March the ESC will discuss proposed changes to the existing CIP. She explained that staff is looking at a new approach for developing budgets for ongoing programs rather than leveling the funding from year-to-year. Part of the reason for this is that the Utilities Department reports on the CIP performance including whether the budget was spent. In cases where projects aren't done every year, the performance based on expenditure doesn't look like Utilities is getting the job done. We hope to develop budgets for ongoing programs that reflect more accurately what Utilities expects expenditures to be. There was discussion about how the excess funds from each year are currently handled and how this impacts Utilities metrics.

Commissioner Morin commented that ratepayers might have concerns about Utilities consistently coming in under budget and wonder why their rates weren't lowered, but acknowledged that the reason for this is that each of the jobs is estimated based on the total cost of the total project over x number of years. Ms. Maloney concurred and noted that in the years that Utilities really did come in under budget, the savings were used to reduce the size of rate increases. Staff tries to be totally transparent with local program costs.

Chair Helland referred to Project Prioritization Guidelines on page 8-29 and commented that the verbiage related to regional benefits is confusing. Ms. Maloney explained what was intended here and indicated. She would clarify the language.

Commissioner Wang said he noticed in the paper that the City of Issaquah is taking over some of the sewer and water system. He asked for more information about this. Mr. Bucich commented that he was going to bring this up under the Director's Report.

Ms. Maloney proceeded to review the Adopted CIP as contained in the ESC's binders. She then commented on the value of the ESC's early input as representatives of the public.

Commissioner Mach referred to Ms. Maloney's comment that notices are published in the paper and said he wondered how many people actually read the paper any more. Ms. Maloney explained that the City is legally required to put a notice in the paper, but notices are also posted in many other places including all of the neighborhood associations and anyone who has asked to

be notified about the project. Commissioner Mach commented that the mailing he received was not very eye-catching. He recommended making this more attractive and engaging. Mr. Bucich explained that the City tries very hard to involve the public, but there really just isn't much interest in water and sewer lines unless a project directly involves or impacts someone.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Mach noted that PSE (Puget Sound Energy) is doing an Energize Eastside project. The City has a representative, Nicholas Matz, on the advisory board. When someone asked him what the City represents on the board his response was basically to make sure there's enough capacity to serve the City. Commissioner Mach stated that this project involves putting in a transmission line over a major portion of the City. He thinks the City needs to be concerned about more than just capacity and expressed concern that nothing other than overhead lines was considered. Ms. Maloney stated that staff meets with ESC representatives from multiple departments and sits in on half-day or all-day workshops with PSE twice a year. She noted that PSE is as involved with asset management as Bellevue is as well as building for growth and capacity. The City has Comprehensive Plan policies saying we want not only capacity, but also reliability, and PSE has performance metrics for how reliable power has to be here. She stated that there was discussion at great length about the whole issue of underground versus overhead. She offered to have Nicholas Matz come give a briefing to the ESC.

## **7. COMMISSIONS REPORT OUT**

Chair Helland stated that he is on the Downtown Livability Committee. He invited the rest of the commissioners to look at the materials and minutes which are on the City website to learn more. Mr. Bucich commented that the City is seeing more and more people wanting to live downtown. From a Utility perspective this is challenging with the restrictions on when work can be done due to traffic and business as well as people living downtown who want to have peace and quiet at nighttime and on the weekends. He encouraged the ESC's input on this issue.

## **8. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE REPORT**

Mr. Bucich stated that Council has agreed on an assumption agreement with the City of Issaquah for the South Cove/Greenwood Point area since Issaquah is now ready to take that area over. He gave an update on the process and the impacts it could have on the City. Council has agreed to sign an assumption study to evaluate this issue. Commissioner Wang asked if Issaquah would be able to serve the area with higher pressure. Mr. Bucich explained that part of the assumption would be that Issaquah would take over one of the reservoirs. Chair Helland asked how the assets are valued. Mr. Bucich replied that the assets are owned by the

residents of that community; the City would not get any cash from the transfer. One issue related to this is that Issaquah would like Bellevue to give them the commensurate cumulative amount of money for the R&R fund for this area. Chair Helland said he would be interested in seeing the assumptions. Mr. Bucich indicated he would provide that and summarized that there is a long, complicated fiscal evaluation that needs to be completed before the ultimate outcome for Bellevue will be known.

Mr. Bucich then remarked that he, Nav Ota, Joe Harbour, and Lucy Liu had a great opportunity to spend a couple hours with new Councilmember Lynne Robinson yesterday. It was a very positive interaction, and she may be visiting the ESC at some point. He noted that Councilmember Jennifer Robertson will be the new liaison.

**9. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.