



City of Oregon City

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Staff Report

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To: City Commission

Agenda #: 2a.

From: Public Works Director John Lewis

File Type: Report

SUBJECT:

Oregon City's Participation in the Regional Wastewater Treatment Capacity Advisory Committee

RECOMMENDED ACTION (Motion):

No motion required; staff will update the Commission on recent actions related to the Regional Wastewater Treatment Capacity Advisory Committee (RWTCAC) and request direction.

BACKGROUND:

In 2008, the Community Partners Task Force which included Oregon City was formed at the direction of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). The intent of the BCC was that the committee was to explore the creation of some form of wastewater partnership arrangement between service providers from the North Clackamas County area. The goal at the time was to capture the "inherent benefits of the economies of scale as it relates to treatment plant operations and future capital investments necessary to meet the service demands of the planned urban growth."

Out of this came the controversial decision in 2008 to allow the Clackamas County Service District #1 (CCSD#1) to use the Tri-City Service District (TCSD) wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) site for a liquids handling solution. The Oregon City Commission did not support this decision; however, in 2009 the BCC chair, acting on behalf of CCSD#1, TCSD, and BCC, signed this controversial IGA on behalf of all three organizations, authorizing the construction of the Phase I Tri-City WWTP Expansion Project. The Phase I project and the 2008 agreement has become the foundation for regional co-investment at the Tri-City WWTP.

In 2010, the BCC formed a new advisory group called the Regional Wastewater Treatment Capacity Advisory Committee (RWTCAC) whose intended purpose was to:

- a. Review, discuss and make recommendations on proposed operational and multi-district capital improvements to the region's wastewater treatment system, programs, and capacity;
- b. Review and make recommendations regarding expenditures of funds relating to the same; and
- c. Perform other projects as assigned by the Board, as such may be suggested by the Director of Water Environment Services ("WES") or requested by the Committee and approved by the BCC or as otherwise provided for in these bylaws.

The RWTCAC was originally comprised of Clackamas County jurisdictions including the cities of Damascus, Gladstone, Happy Valley, Milwaukie, Oregon City, West Linn, and portions of unincorporated Clackamas County. A representative from Johnson City was recently added in 2016 to the list of represented cities. Karin Power currently serves as the chairperson of the Committee.

The RWTCAC is charged with oversight of the Tri-City Service District and Clackamas County Service District No. 1 and they created the RWTCAC under the presumption that these jurisdictions could work together with the intent and goal of finding solutions for dependable, quality, cost effective wastewater treatment service to current and future residents and businesses within both districts. Generally, the recent focus has been on expansion of the solids handling capacity of the Tri-City Wastewater Treatment Plant. BCC members who have participated in meetings have indicated they would like to see the RWTCAC continue to advise on the long term WWTP needs of the region.

Recent RWTCAC meeting discussions have been moving in a direction contrary to Oregon City's policy direction and priority to change the governance of the Tri-City Service District to include board members who reside within the District. Examples of contrary agenda items include:

- TCSD and CCSD#1 Regional wastewater treatment plant solids handling capacity concerns and planned expenditures
- Solids handling technology considerations
- Amendments to the RWTCAC Bylaws

City staff will share some of the recent RWTCAC meeting discussions and resulting decisions and go over related insights and considerations of the City Commission. The ultimate goal of this effort is to seek confirmation from the City Commission on future participation in RWTCAC and the planned next steps.