



2A Stormwater Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting Minutes

2:00 PM, August 16th, 2018

Pikes Peak Room, City Hall, 107 N. Nevada

- Call to Order and Introductions

All committee members were present. Mayor John Suthers spoke and thanked the committee for their work, gave a short overview of the work the Stormwater Enterprise has done thus far, and said the process has gone smoothly overall.

Richard Mulledy echoed those comments from the Mayor, and thanked the group for their participation. Group introductions were made and Mulledy discussed the agenda and the notebooks received by the committee. Discussions for the meeting would entail progress made by the Enterprise, target achievements, and billing methodology. Mulledy then expressed his desire to obtain the committee's thoughts on the processes set forth by the Stormwater Enterprise.

Senior Attorney Rebecca Greenberg stated that ethics training for the committee will be forthcoming in the fall, at which time the code of ethics and responsibilities of committee members will be covered.

- Vote to select Chair and Vice Chair

The committee voted unanimously to appoint Terry Schooler as Chair and Emily Magnuson as Vice Chair.

- SWENT Staff Reports
 - Overview of SWENT setup and progress

There has been a tremendous amount of effort over the last several months.

- Customer service

The customer service team has been implemented and set up successfully. Four technicians were hired, one of whom is the team lead. The call center was built from the ground up. They developed a system which tracks everything from number of calls to call times. Every call is tracked and every point of communication is tracked. They developed a detailed coordination with Colorado Springs Utilities for handling calls. A GIS-based system for parcel data management which tracks touch points, billing issues, documents, and resolutions, has been developed and implemented.

- Number of calls and categories

Total calls to this point numbered 397.

Categories of calls included:

1. Callers concerned it was a scam because they received bills directly from CLA and they thought the bills would be coming from Utilities
2. Asking how to pay- as many would like to pay online
3. How were fees calculated/not agreeing with fees

Call numbers have been steadily declining as time has progressed. It is estimated that fewer than 10 percent of the calls have been commercial (they have been primarily residential).

Several customers have expressed frustration on the \$3 charge on credit cards for online payments, especially when the fee is over half the bill. Mulledy said they will discuss options for this going forward.

- Expected revenues (see below)
- Total billings for first month

Clifton Larson Alan (CLA) has been hired for outside billing. Coordination of billing with Colorado Springs Utilities has been completed including internal testing, coordinated customer services, and monthly billing standard operating procedures. The billing for July went out successfully, and based on July's fee totals, the anticipated figure for the year will be \$15,795,172. However, the July numbers are not entirely accurate for the yearly forecasted fee amounts, as Utilities was sending partial bills based on their billing schedule. This will not be an issue in the future. There has been less than one percent non-payment so far.

- Expenditures for the quarter and year-to-date

Mulledy explained where the Enterprise is so far in their yearly budget, and gave an explanation of the dollars spent and dollars remaining. He discussed budgets of the Stormwater program as well as their Drainage Operations and Maintenance work, along with Stormwater Capital Improvements.

- Business Rules and Practices

Each committee member received a copy of the business rules and practices, which detail how the Enterprise determined to bill each group.

- Three primary rules:

1. All those with active water service agreements with CSU will be charged \$5 month
2. All individually platted single family residential parcels or units without an active residential water service agreement with Colorado Springs Utilities, but identified as a residential use according to the El Paso County Assessors records or verified through site investigation, will be charged \$5 per month
3. All individually platted residential duplex, triplex, and quadplex parcels or units, with or without an active residential water service agreement with CSU, will be charged \$5 per month
 - Discussion of how bills are calculated
 - Single family

There are 135,590 parcels with an active residential water service agreement with Colorado Springs Utilities with \$638,814 of est. revenues

- Approximate number of residential units billed directly by the City (Not on CSU water bill) and reasoning

There are a significant amount of individually platted residential parcels. Those are platted properties that are owned by an individual. But sometimes an HOA pays the water bill. In those cases the water service is commercial. CSU has said they will not bill those individuals because they do not have individual water service contracts. 6,938 residential units do not get billed for residential water. If these properties were not to be billed, that would lead to a loss in revenue of over \$641K annually, and it would also be inequitable.

There was an explanation of why CSU bills the way they do and why they are not doing this particular billing. Discussion of going to Utilities to see if this could be alleviated. Mayor said send bill to the 6,938 people explaining why they are not getting a bill as part of their utility bill. Could also be a discussion of their payment options. It was suggested that the Enterprise representatives reach out to Colorado Springs Utilities and see what the options are.

There are 135,590 properties with active residential water service.

- Duplex, triplex, quadplex
 - Policy for billing per unit and reasoning

All master metered residential individual parcels with 5 residential units or more will be charged \$30 per acre per month.

- Common/HOA-owned areas
- Policy for billing and reasoning

Common areas which are improved or developed will be billed at the non-residential rate of \$30 per acre. This includes parcels owned by HOAs, Metro Districts, and areas platted as “condo plats.”

Estimated 1,031 parcels with \$368,430 of annual revenues

- Condo plat and common area

There was a discussion of the fairness when someone pays their individual fee but also pays a portion of common areas. Pine Creek HOA Subdivision was given as an example.

Bill Calculations; condominium plats: the Enterprise does not have an HOA to bill, leaving each owner owning an equal share of the common area, i.e. common areas are fractionally owned by each owner. The Enterprise is going to pull the plat, a fraction of common area is owned, via plat, by each separately platted unit. Billable area includes landscaping, sidewalk and trails, grassed areas, play areas, and basketball courts

Platted commercial units, “commercial condos” like a dentist’s office or office for a group, will not be a \$5 bill, but perhaps more like \$3 per month.

- Process for appeal

Committee members have an example of an appeals request in their notebooks. So far there have been 13 appeals relating to 15 parcels. Appeals thus far have been primarily citizens who own properties of less than five acres, but with some undeveloped area, and the citizen wants that undeveloped area removed from the billed amount. One appeal based on hardship had been received. If the bill is through CSU, COPE applies and could help. Committee members suggested setting aside tiny portion of funds to help those unable to pay. There was a discussion of what to do with hardship applications and nonpayment.

- Media status update, briefings and presentations

Several committee members expressed a desire to see more of the projects on Facebook, including personal stories from citizens benefiting from the work. The Mayor encouraged descriptions of the projects along with pictures to be posted. The committee was informed that there is already an interactive map on the SWE website that gives information about each project. It was suggested that “This Stormwater Project Affects X# houses and X# of people” to each posting.

- Future Topics/Additions to Agenda
- (Closed Executive Session) Review top 15 stormwater bills
[Executive session for the purpose of consideration and discussion of records which are protected from disclosure under state statute, pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(g), as adopted by the City Charter. In this case customer billing information is protected under C.R.S. 24-72-204(3)(a)(IX).]
- Adjournment

Next meeting: November 15th