



## **2A Stormwater Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting Agenda**

**2-4 PM, August 19, 2021**

**Meeting Held Remotely**

The meeting was officially called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Terry Schooler.

In attendance: Erin Powers, Christina Aragon, Richard Mulledy, Jeff Besse, Brenda Roy, Tim Biolchini, Maren McDowell, Travis Easton, City Councilors Dave Donelson, and Tom Strand  
Board Members in attendance: Matt Johnson, Christine Lowenberg, David Havlick, Christine Lowenburg, Emily Magnuson, Shannon Anderson, Terry Schooler

Absent: Mayor John Suthers, Gary Nesbit

Minutes were approved from the two previous meetings after a motion by Terry Schooler and a second from Shannon Anderson.

Brenda Roy and Richard Mulledy provided the quarter two financial overview.

Of the operating budget, Roy reported that the Enterprise is on track with 44% of the year's funds remaining. Remaining budget is \$2.7 million, and they have no concerns regarding budget. Explanation provided for the drainage operations and maintenance budget; this related to the SLA (service level agreement) with the Operations and Maintenance Division. The budget is \$3.3M for 2021. To date, SWENT has expensed \$1.6M. The balance will be spent throughout the year.

After these discussions, the two councilmembers arrived, and introductions were made, as well as explanations provided for the roles filled by each board member. This was Councilmember Donelson's first SAC meeting.

The group provided a recap of the SAC budget for councilpersons including descriptions of line items (pipe operations, inspections, VAC operations, etc.) for the sake of background. Councilman Strand asked which item(s) uses most of the \$3.3M. Richard Mulledy answered, labor, followed up by materials costs. Public Works Director Travis Easton asked, for the sake of information, which operations utilize the most time. Mulledy provided an answer for which items utilize the least amount of time, to include pipe repair/replace, pond inspection.

Councilor Donelson forayed the conversation into community infrastructure concerns. He said that in some of the older neighborhoods there is a drainage entrance point and that entrance does not really flow anywhere. Tim Biolchini asked if he was referring to infiltration basins, which take water and infiltrate it into the soil. Infiltration basins must be cleaned out. More financials were discussed after this to include capital projects and their financial overview. The 2021 total budget is \$11.84M. As far as work on capital projects, most of this work begins in the fall after the summer rainy season. Many projects undertaken by the Enterprise are multi-year.

A billing update was then provided from July 2018-June 2021:

Brenda Roy provided the update and said the enterprise has historically operated at close to 97 percent collections across the board. As late accounts are collected upon, the enterprise does not use a collection agency, instead choosing to lien the properties and certifying the delinquent fees to the El Paso County Treasurer for collection. As a result, the Enterprise will end up at a 100 percent collection rate over time. Any instances where the enterprise collects more than was billed is due to pre-payments or going back and collecting past-due dollars.

Underway is the transfer of all accounts possible to Colorado Springs Utilities for future billing, which will increase efficiency. Currently 93 percent of the accounts are billed by CSU; this process had to be matured over a few years. Mulledy commented that a lot of the very large parcels are developed but without water service agreements and therefore cannot be

billed through CSU. All of the billing transfers have been a major directive of the Mayor, and we are very close to doing even more with CSU, said Mulledy.

Brenda Roy provided an update on delinquent accounts. The delinquent amount hovers between \$180k-200k, which is overall a low dollar amount. Currently 156 accounts are overdue with amounts over \$200. Brenda talked about the method for trying to reach out and the challenges associated with that.

Terry Schooler then brought up a maintenance item. He said, “you talked about the bulk of the fees going to personnel. But it seems strange to me that we just kind of wrote off the \$300,000 vacuum truck. Seems like we should be able to account for hours used on that. What about degradation? How do you account for it?”

Richard Mulledy responded: Stormwater does pay for the usage/hours/degradation. This is part of the service level agreement with the O&M group because they own the equipment. It is all accounted for and captured on the O&M side within the contract. The maintenance number does reflect equipment costs. Terry wanted to see the contract and Rich said they could speak later.

Tim Biolchini provided recap of the Enterprise’s status with the intergovernmental agreement with the City of Pueblo. Currently the Enterprise is 5.5 years into the IGA. Biolchini provided life cycle of projects. We are approaching the 7-8-year mark, even though the Enterprise has only been operating for 5.5 years, proving that it is very efficient. Each year the Pueblo IGA is renegotiated to account for new or needed priorities in effort to “shuffle the deck” and replace or move around a project. There are still 71 projects, but through these renegotiations, the enterprise has been able to complete some projects previously bottom of the list to address them now for cost savings purposes later, or for immediate safety needs.

Biolchini then spoke about recent projects and how they are holding up after summer storms. COS had a few large storms this summer. One was gauged a 25-year storm in the NW area of town. There was 10-year storm in the Palmer Park area. North Chelton right off Palmer Park- all of the water would wash through neighborhood. Project was to put water into a below ground system through inlets to take it down to Maizeland/Constitution. The neighborhood had historical flooding with little to no curb and gutter. Significant street portions were torn up; we coordinate with CSU to make sure they have access to do work there first if they want. We did it as a joint project with them and as a result only needed to repave once. SWENT also needed to move some major utilities. N Chelton was about \$1.5M; \$700,000 share from the City. Project dates were Feb-August to be fully complete and it ended nearly on schedule. Overall, the project held up well. There was some gravel/runoff and the contractor cleaned it all up. Good relationship with the neighbors.

An update was provided on the recent Bear Creek project. Creek degradation was moving toward 8<sup>th</sup> street and power lines and utilities were in danger. FEMA gave us a mitigation grant to pay for this project; a pedestrian tunnel and water conveyance tunnel were at the same level. For smaller storms, all the water goes through the first tunnel. The debris and brush would build up and the pedestrian tunnel was a constant mess. Now the water drops and will not backup into the pedestrian tunnel. Vegetation and homeless issues have been there in the past. Held up well during summer 2021 storms. Vegetation along that will grow back in time. FEMA said you cannot just rip rap the whole thing.

An update was provided on Monument Creek at Talemine: bank was starting to encroach on local buildings. The Enterprise applied for a grant three times. This project was an example where a project was further down on the IGA list and needed to be moved up due to imminent danger. The project was designed in-house using the same bio engineering methods as provided by FEMA. Rebuilt, re-shaped, and stabilized the cliff shaped embankment. Slope fully seeded. This project began last February and was just completed in

July. It was completed at half the anticipated cost. Removed a lot of vegetation and now have some pedestrian amenities in conjunction with Parks for residents to enjoy.

An update was provided on South Douglas at Holland Park: South Douglas Creek the City has been trying to get funded since 2013. The creek was getting worse after every storm. Repurposed the limited \$500,000 from FEMA toward the worst sections but there were still upstream sections needing attention. PPRTA had funds to replace the adjacent trail, and the Enterprise worked with Parks to get new trail with better alignment so trail will no longer be threatened. It opened up mid-August.

Councilor Strand asked: when we try to get FEMA grants does it help to get senators involved? Tim Biolchini said yes, for some, but not for the ones we are typically trying to secure.

A discussion then ensued about how FEMA awards grants, COS' relationship to the state, outside pressure for grants and projects, emergency management declarations, etc.

Tim then provided an update on completed project resilience:

- Sand Creek: drop structures; holding up great, no problems, no warranty items
- Galley and Murray: multiple new inlets, has been dry every rain since and no flooding
- Citadel: Santa Rosa and Chelton: significant modifications; no flooding since. It had previously flooded for 30 years.
- Cheyenne Blvd- relentless phone calls for years. We went out and looked for inexpensive ways to solve the problems. “Mitigation by a thousand cuts.” Several smaller emergency projects: there used to be a ditch along the road, and all flows went in the street and went into yards and connector streets. Re-established ditch. Rip rap to control flows. Channel under the road takes flows to Cheyenne creek. Started project in 2018/more in 2019. By 2020 we were receiving no phone calls in any rainstorms and it is holding up great.

Four major projects coming this fall; location and funding overviews provided. Provided challenges to project completions. Discussion of CLOMR and LOMR, because the flood map has changed. We experience a 6-9-month approval processes for every change with FEMA. We hope between the disaster declarations and the state's help these will continue to move along.

CRS Rating: FEMA approved our continuance with a rating of 5. Next year will be a full cycle submittal. City will need a PPI: Public Private Information committee. Agency members and private members. Floodplain manager. At next meeting there will be discussion of flood awareness and what the city does, and what we can do better for putting out communications to community members regarding flooding in the city.

Next item involved the Consent Decree compliance status. Currently the Enterprise is all in accordance. More will be discussed at a future meeting.

The last major item was an introduction to the Draft Green Infrastructure Manual review and comment period, as presented by Erin Powers. The draft manual will be sent to board and potential criteria changes will go along with the manual. The goal of the manual is to tailor green infrastructure criteria and guidance to Colorado Springs as it is a drier climate, not just provide general EPA guidance. Muller Engineering, the contractor, has attempted to tailor the criteria to the southern Colorado area.

Erin provided an overview of the chapters enclosed. Grass buffers and swales are the most effective ways to make already landscaped areas assist with green infrastructure.

Consultant team also looked at existing developments. Timing and criteria changes have not been finalized. She said a more detailed implementation schedule will be programmed.

David Havlick asked if any modeling has been done and wondered if these changes from the manual will result in meaningful reduction of stormwater as the City continues to grow?

Erin said the vast majority of sites will still be required to meet the minimum metrics. No hard numbers.

Havlick also asked what kinds of development are most likely to impact our stormwater. Erin said we have not looked specifically at what these different tweaks would result in from a global perspective.

Terry Schooler asked who the audience/user for this manual is, and Erin said it is a mixed audience to include planners and engineers.

Terry would like to see “softer” comments to describe the benefits to the community.

This is a guidance document and will not need to be approved by City Council. But modifications to the Drainage Criteria manual would become codified and enforceable that way.

Meeting was adjourned by Terry Schooler at 3:58 p.m.