

MWPAAC Advisory Subcommittee on Sewage Disposal Agreements

Summary of February 6, 2014 Meeting

The subcommittee continued its discussion regarding how to structure a smaller negotiating team and its coordination back to the subcommittee and the full MWPAAC. The smaller team agency representation should be balanced by using criteria to select members. Criteria to consider and balance could include type of agency (cities, districts), size and geography. Other important issues to consider are willingness and ability to consistently commit the time necessary for the effort – potentially meetings several times a month for at least the rest of 2014; as well as negotiating and communication skills. There is an understanding that negotiators would pull in other technical and legal expertise as needed. There was general acceptance that common regional issues would be the focus of the negotiations. Individual issues or issues that are unique to a specific contract agency will be evaluated as they arise to see how those issues may impact the larger group. There was discussion about the timing of this negotiation, and it was noted that King County is open to considering modifications of key elements of the contract, including a governance structure, making it worthwhile for contract agencies to enter into discussions at this time.

Several subcommittee members noted that the contract negotiations are not a MWPAAC function, but are really an individual agency function. MWPAAC provides a forum for expertise on issues, coordination and information sharing. There are many agencies with King County contracts that do not regularly attend MWPAAC. To that end, Seattle and King County proposed a way to kick-start the process and put together the negotiating team in a way that would enable those who do not attend MWPAAC to be involved. The effort would begin with a kick-off meeting with elected officials to ensure buy-in and understanding of the process. That would be followed by a staff meeting to begin the process and identify the small negotiating team. All contract agencies would be invited to attend. King County and Seattle will work on getting those meetings set up. In the meantime, the subcommittee will review the list of issues developed last year as well as the list developed by Seattle and King County to ensure that all appropriate regional issues have been captured for discussion.