



King County

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MEETING NOTES

CEDAR RIVER COUNCIL

February 23, 2016 – 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Maplewood Greens Golf Course
4050 Maple Valley Hwy., Renton, WA 98058

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

1st Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Presentation: Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Cedar River Upper Watershed Operations for Water Supply, Flood Protection, & Salmon Recovery – Paul Faulds, SPU Water Resources Manager

Mr. Faulds answered questions submitted to SPU regarding water levels/supply in the Cedar and Tolt rivers. The Cedar provides 2/3 of Seattle's water supply; the Tolt 1/3. His major focus was the drought declared in 2015 due to historically low (<50% of normal) winter snowpack and a hot/dry spring and summer. This led to measures such as refilling reservoirs early, and voluntary public curbing of water use. Concerns eased thanks to major rainfall in late August/October, and that use levels are overall decreasing despite the region's population increase, due to conservation. Several forecast models do indicate stronger likelihood of future droughts without further use curtailment. Mr. Faulds also discussed accelerated construction of a new pump plant at Morse Lake and reviewed other flood control facilities on the Cedar, as well as SPU's efforts to balance multiple objectives (water supply, fish, flood management, hydropower, etc.).

Mr. Faulds was asked to provide written answers to the questions to distribute among the Council. Follow-up queries from the Council included the 50-year firm water yield outlook, potential climate change impact on population, and whether the drought affected fish populations. These issues are being reviewed.

Sub-Committee Updates

- Leadership Nominating Committee: The LNC met February 9 to discuss a process for nominating a Chair and Vice Chair, and to recommend the Chair's term of office and responsibilities. The recommended term was no more than four (4) consecutive years. Nathan Brown reviewed a list of proposed Chair duties; the Council agreed work is needed to finalize the language for a March vote. A concern was voiced that, as an advisory (not legislative) body, the Council should keep procedures somewhat informal to build trust. At tonight's meeting, interim chair Max Prinsen was elected as Chair (Frank Urabeck motioned, Tom Allyn seconded). Mr. Allyn volunteered and was elected as Vice Chair (Mr. Urabeck motioned, Craig Sears seconded). The term of office is February 2016 to February 2018. It was suggested any missed ideas for Chair roles be brought next meeting.
- New Member Recruitment Committee: This committee is charged with recommending changes to Council membership categories, terms of office, total members, and recruiting members; target



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completion date is June. They are leaning toward recommending no term limits. Jeff Neuner and Mr. Urabeck nominated Melinda Woodard and Norm Skjelbreia to fill open Council slots. Ms. Woodard works at Cedar River Montessori School and has a Masters in aquatic ecology; Mr. Skjelbreia is retired from Seattle US Army Corps of Engineers with a background in flood control. Ms. Woodard hopes to assist in raising public awareness of the Council. Another nominee, Charles Rutherford, is a Cedar River naturalist and president of the Cascade Bike Club. Mr. Urabeck motioned to vote in the nominees as members; Ryan McIrvin seconded and the vote passed. Mr. Prinsen said he would work with Mr. Brown to create an “onboarding” packet for all Council members. Mr. Brown suggested the Council tour the river this year.

- Website: Mr. Brown advised that this was in progress and hoped for a rough content draft by March. Mr. Prinsen suggested printing informational cards for Council members to give out at events.

Other Updates and Announcements

- WRIA 8 Committee: Mr. Mirro said several good presentations from WRIA 8’s January summit are now available online; summit will be discussed at March’s Council meeting. Ron Straka added there was discussion of an update to the salmon recovery plan, of what needs to be done in the future. Mr. Urabeck suggested someone from WRIA 8 present to the Council; Mr. Brown said this will occur in March. Christa Heller, who serves on a WRIA 8 subcommittee, volunteered to refer any questions.
- Cedar River Corridor Advisory Board: Mr. Neuner stated this group hasn’t met in a while. Mr. Allyn explained it was on hold/regrouping, as they had tried to take on too much too fast.
- SPU Drought Advisory Committee: Mr. Allyn reported this committee finished its work in November 2015. Several points were noted: the strong citizen response to conserve water; that voluntary measures should’ve been requested sooner, as this could’ve yielded even better results; and recognizing the need for focus on outdoor vs. indoor conservation. Another point was the radical switch from water conservation to flood control in a matter of days. Mr. Brown will take this committee off the agenda, as its business is now completed.
- Mr. Sears updated on a court case concerning the state Department of Ecology’s new stormwater manual, which is being challenged by several groups. A recent appeals court ruling, which determined it to be land use regulation and therefore subject to Washington state law, is now being appealed. Mr. Straka said City of Renton is also monitoring this issue. Mr. Mirro reported the King Conservation District sees concerns from farmers who find it more difficult to be in compliance on water quality best management practices due to the stormwater regulations.

Future Meeting Topics: March 2016

- King County Project Updates: *Riverbend Restoration Project & Elliot Bridge Reach* – Mr. Allyn asked to share his photos of the Elliot Bridge Reach project. Mr. Brown will distribute them next meeting.
- WRIA 8 Update: This will be addressed next meeting.

2nd Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Next Meeting

March 22, 2016, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, Maplewood Greens Golf Course, Renton