

## TRADES ADVISORY COUNCIL (TAC)

### MINUTES

January 23, 2008

Present were Gail McQuiston, Mary Ellen Jackson, Marilyn Tidwell, Rick Jones, Jim Paulus, Gary Ragland, Richard Smith, Ralph Gregory, Hal Balthrop, Cyrus Toosi, Mike Morris, Lance Hornbuckle, Eba Hobbs, Ilke Hanloser, and Jack Steakley.

#### **Review of Minutes**

Minutes were approved as written.

#### **Community Meeting Review and Feedback**

No feedback was given but everyone agreed that stormwater continued to be the main focus of the majority of the public.

#### **Sewer Meters**

The process for sewer flow meters will continue to be reviewed. Future installation of sewer flow meters will require an electronic device that will allow MWS to download data. MWS currently has thirty (30) sewer flow meters in the field. The cost for installing a sewer flow meter ranges from \$7,000 to \$50,000. MWS Industrial Compliance Division (Hugh Garrison) will process any requests for information or consideration. Sewer flow meters can only be used for commercial purposes and there are specific criteria that must be met before approval. MWS will include information about the sewer flow meter in the new revised handbook for commercial accounts.

#### **AMR Project**

Gary reported that MWS is considering the flex net system that will allow usage readings be sent through signals to a tower. This system would be used for the intercity area. Readings are completed automatically every four (4) hours. Data can be collected and reviewed. The MXU will be different but the meters would remain the same.

#### **Customer Handbooks**

Permits Office is currently revising the Customer Handbooks. Please review the handbooks and forward any suggestions or comments to Mary Ellen. The draft will be presented to TAC prior to printing.

#### **Customer Surveys**

The Permits Office conducted customer surveys to gather feedback concerning the effectiveness of the office and field processes in the months of October and part of November 2007. Due to the recent technical and mechanical issues with the Customer Service phone system all survey projects have been placed on hold. There is an emergency purchase order in progress for a new phone system and once it is in place, we will proceed with the customer surveys.

#### **Sewer Letters**

As a result of an internal audit conducted by the Department of Finance, the Permits Office was given a list of approximately 6,000 addresses that were being billed for water and not sewer. By reviewing each account and related information concerning location of sewer mains, 800 customers were identified as having sewer availability based on the information/mapping software systems. These customers were notified of the change in status and advised sewer billing would begin January 1, 2008. In response to

numerous calls and concerns, an availability appeals process was implemented. Over eighty customers requested additional consideration. These will be reviewed by a committee that will meet in February. Billing for these customers will not begin until a determination has been made and the customer notified. Specific areas also included in this situation are Springfield Highway and Nolensville.

### **New Materials Committee Update**

All approved materials will be consolidated into one list. This list will be posted on MWS website in February 2008. A process has been created for vendors to submit requests to have additional materials considered for approval. This will be included in the agenda items for the next TAC meeting.

### **Irrigation - Backflow**

If the backflow has been disconnected as part of winterizing, MWS will document that the device is inactive. Backflow tests for irrigation are scheduled through August/September and are billed to the customer.

### **Language for Permit**

The following needs to be added to the water and sewer tap permits and also needs to be included in the handbooks: "By issuance of a permit, MWS will collect appropriate fees, schedule and perform physical tap and subsequently inspect extension of service line to property to be served. Permittee is responsible for securing any and all additional permits from other entities, including but not limited to, Metro Public Works and/or the Tennessee Department of Transportation for any related work including excavation, lane closures and required restoration."

### **Language for Backflow Test Form**

The current test forms are being used and will be discarded when System Services implements the mobile dispatch system. New notification will include the following: "Due to the nature of testing backflow preventers and in accordance with universally accepted testing protocol as set by the University of Southern California (as followed by MWS), the testing of backflow devices stops at the first point of failure of the five part test. We recommend that you coordinate any corrective action through a State of Tennessee certified backflow tester so that any other backflow defects may be corrected prior to MWS retest for compliance."

Members suggested in the interim, current testers print the results on the forms for the customers. If the results can not be read, contact Barbara McKissack, 862-4600 Option 5.

Suggestions for considering 3<sup>rd</sup> party testing were brought to the table. Hal advised that after the pending sanitary survey is completed, MWS may review other cities policies.

### **Flow Test Requirements**

This will be placed back on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **Meeting Schedule for 2008**

It was the consensus of the group to continue to meeting monthly. If there are no agenda items for any given month, the meeting will be canceled and everyone will be notified. Next meeting will be Wednesday, February 20, 2008.

It was requested to add the Cut and Cap Policy to the next meeting's agenda.