



# City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202

## Meeting Minutes

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

**ALD. ROBERT BAUMAN, CHAIR**

**Ald. Milele Coggs, Ald. Mark Borkowski, Ghassan Korban,**

**Martin Matson, Mark Nicolini, and Mariano Schifalacqua**

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Wednesday, May 25, 2016

9:00 AM

City Hall, Room 301-B

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*Meeting convened: 9:05 A.M.*

*Members: Ald. Mark Borkowski (chair), Martin Matson, Mark Nicolini and Ghassan Korban and Ald. Coggs (arrived at 9:08 A.M.)*

#### 1. Review and approval of the minutes of April 18 and April 22.

*Mr. Korban moved, seconded by Mr. Nicolini, for approval of the minutes. There were no objections.*

#### 2. Presentation of the Dept. of Public Works Sewers Condition Report.

*Mr. Zafar Yousuf discussed the City's sewer systems. He said the City has 2,461 miles of sewers. The system consists of sanitary sewers, storm sewers and combined sewers. He said 13% of the storm system, 32% of the combined system, and 6% of the sanitary system are over 90 years old.*

*Mr. Yousuf discussed the sewer replacement program and sewer exam frequency. He said that sewers which are more than 75 years old are examined every 15 years. Exam frequency increases to once every 5 years when sewers are over 100 years old. Typically sewers that are fewer than 25 years old are not examined unless there is a complaint. Mr. Yousuf said the department averages between 120 and 155 miles of sewer exams each year. He said sewer exams are done both internally and by contract. Mr. Yousuf said that the department has a target of 30 miles of sewer replacement per year. The miles of sewer replaced varies each year based primarily on the type of project (replacement vs lining) and on the diameter of the sewer. Mr. Nicolini requested a map showing the location of basement backups that have occurred during the last 3 - 5 years. Mr. Tim Thur said the department tracks basement backups, but that the cause of backups cannot always be determined. He also said that basement backups are greatly influenced by storm type and intensity and that the geographical distribution of backups is not the best metric for evaluating sewer condition. Mr. Korban requested a list of the most challenging meter sheds based on historic data.*

*Mr. Jaber discussed water quality. He said the department maintains 83 by-pass pumping stations and 7 lift stations. He said that all 90 locations are inspected at least once per month. He said that by-pass pumps are wet tested annually. Mr. Nicolini asked if the pumps were protected against power failures. Mr. Jaber said that each pump has a control cabinet with safeguards. He said the control cabinet is*

*included in the monthly inspection.*

*Mr. Jaber discussed the City's storm water permit. He said the City is implementing many best practices to reduce pollutants in storm water runoff. He said the department has installed approximately 120 bio-retention facilities since 2008. The department has also done limited installations of permeable pavement in alleys, parking lanes and sidewalks. The department estimates that the capacity of these facilities is 2.3 million gallons and that they remove between 70% and 80 of the total suspended solids from storm water runoff. He said that projects done in conjunction with paving projects are more cost effective than stand alone projects. Mr. Jaber described the "storm water tree" project that is being planned for Kinnickinnic Avenue. He said that Silva cells will be installed and filled with an engineered planting medium that will support the trees and filter storm water.*

*Mr. Jaber discussed the Compliance Maintenance Annual Report (CMAR). He said the CMAR is a sanitary system performance report required by the Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR). The City receives a grade based on the financial support the system receives and various operational and maintenance metrics. Mr. Jaber said the City received an "A" in both sections in 2015. A 10 year summary of CMAR statistics was given to the committee. Mr. Jaber said the CMAR must be approved by the Common Council before it can be submitted to the DNR.*

*Ald. Borkowski asked why work is not performed continuously on sewer projects. Mr. Thur said that many of the sewer contracts have multiple locations. He said the contracts are written to give the contractor a specific number of work days to complete all of the projects on the contract. He said contractors have different crews to do certain types of work such as pavement removal, excavation and pipe installation. The crews move from location to location on a contract at different rates so work may not appear to be continuous on each individual project. He said the Construction section monitors progress and he encouraged residents to call the department if they had concerns.*

### **3. Presentation of the Forestry Condition Report.**

*Mr. David Sivyver discussed the condition of the City's street trees and boulevards. He said there are 194,000 street trees and about 295 distinct species. 89% of the City's street trees are in fair or better condition. Mr. Sivyver said that Dutch elm disease was discovered in Milwaukee in 1956 and that the City's tree canopy is still recovering from the loss of 106,000 elm trees. He said that although the total amount of canopy is now about the same, there has been a shift in the distribution. He said a greater percentage of the canopy is on private property.*

*Mr. Sivyver discussed the City's boulevards. He said the department maintains about 120 miles of landscaped boulevards. He described the transition of the boulevards from annual plantings to larger beds with more perennials to the construction of bio-retention facilities. He said typical maintenance includes litter pickup, mulching, winter repair, and irrigation maintenance. He said mowing is done on a weekly cycle early in the summer. In mid-late summer the cycle is about 10 days.*

*Mr. Sivyver discussed the department's response to the emerald ash borer (EAB) infestation. He said the department has taken a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach. He said the department has identified approximately 580,000 ash trees in the City. Approximately 31,000 of them are in the City right of way. The department identified 15,300 residential properties that have ash trees. Property owners were notified and given information about treatment, removal and replacement options. He said EAB was confirmed in the City in 2012. A survey done in the winter of 2015-2016 found that 18% of the ¼ sections throughout the City have signs of EAB activity. Approximately 800 trees on 400 properties were identified.*

*Mr. Sivyver discussed the projected mortality of ash trees. He said data from the experience of other cities has been used to project ash tree losses. Mr. Sivyver said*

*that on average, the department cites 416 properties annually for all types of hazardous trees. He said the research data projects that 765 properties will be cited for EAB in 2016. Projections for 2017, 2018, and 2019 are 2,300, 3,800, and 5,400 properties, respectively. Annual citations are expected to decrease to 765 in 2021. He said the mortality in Milwaukee may be somewhat less than projected due to the suppression effect of the street tree inoculation program. He added that the department will need to increase inspection and monitoring capacity.*

*Mr. Sivyer discussed the hazard tree process. He said that when a hazardous tree is identified on private property, the owner is noticed that the hazard must be abated within 30 days. If the hazard is not removed, the department will hire a contractor to do the abatement and bill the owner. Property owners have the option of paying the bill as a special assessment over a period of years. Ald. Borkowski asked if the City provided replacement trees to property owners. Mr. Sivyer said no. He said the department directs property owners to other resources that may be available to assist with tree replacement, including Greening Milwaukee and other grant funded programs.*

*Mr. Sivyer said that location of parcels with ash trees is available as a layer on Map Milwaukee. It can be accessed through the Milwaukee portal or from the DPW website. He said red dots on the map indicate where action has been taken. Mr. Sivyer said the department's inoculation program has been 100% effective. He discussed other control methods such as biologic controls, but said they are not as effective as inoculation or not well suited to an urban environment. He said an evaluation using computer models to quantify the storm water, energy conservation and air quality benefits of the canopy indicate that the EAB treatment strategy yields approximately \$3 in benefits for every dollar invested.*

*Mr. Sivyer discussed the urban wood utilization program. He said that instead of landfilling wood, it is being shipped to two sawmills, Kettle Moraine Hardwoods in Slinger and Bay View Lumber. He said that sawing urban wood is much more challenging because urban wood is typically not as straight and it has more defects. Approximately 30% of urban wood contains metal. Mr. Sivyer said the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council has developed architectural standards for urban wood so it can now be specified for building projects.*

*Mr. Sivyer discussed the challenges of maintaining an appropriate pruning and planting cycle with the department's current staffing levels.*

*Meeting adjourned: 10:30 A.M.*

*This meeting can be viewed in its entirety through the City's Legislative Research Center at <http://milwaukee.legistar.com/calendar>.*