



**City of Alexandria Ad Hoc Stormwater Utility and Flood Mitigation Advisory Group Meeting Thursday,
August 12, 2021 | 7:00 p.m. | Virtual Meeting**

Meeting Minutes

Advisory Group Members Present: Councilman John Chapman, John Hill, Cheryl Leonard, Katherine Waynick, Dino Drudi, Charlotte Hall, Brian Sands, Christine Thuot, Howard “Skip” Maginniss

Advisory Group Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Yon Lambert, Director of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES); Terry Suehr, Director of Project Implementation (DPI); Bill Skrabak, T&ES Deputy Director, Infrastructure and Environmental Quality; Jesse Maines, T&ES Division Chief, Stormwater Management; Mark Gundersen, T&ES Division Chief, Public Works Services; Erin Bevis-Carter, T&ES Division Chief, Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure; Brian Rahal, T&ES; Jessica Lassetter, T&ES; Michaela Broyles, T&ES; Mitch Dillon, DPI; Alex Carroll, T&ES

The meeting began at 7:02 p.m.

1. Electronic Meeting Notice

Ms. Carroll began the meeting by reading the electronic meeting notice and did a recap of general housekeeping items.

2. Minutes of the June 10, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Drudi made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hall to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2021 Ad Hoc Stormwater Utility and Flood Mitigation Advisory Group meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Election of Advisory Group Chair

Mr. Sands made a motion, seconded by Mr. Drudi, to nominate Mr. Maginniss as Chair of the Advisory Group.

Discussion: Mr. Maginniss commented that if elected, it would be ideal if another Advisory Group member would consider serving as Chair for the following term. Mr. Drudi amended the motion to have Mr. Maginniss serve as Chair until the next fiscal year. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hill made a motion, seconded by Councilman Chapman, to nominate Ms. Waynick as Vice Chair of the Advisory Group. The motion carried unanimously.

4. City Budget Process

Mr. Lambert discussed the Fiscal Year 2023 budget process and indicated that input would be requested from the group relating to funding the Stormwater Management program during the next Advisory Group meeting. Mr. Lambert summarized deliverables the Advisory Group should



focus on during the first year, including a letter due to the Office of Management and Budget in October and a memo to City Council regarding budget recommendations to be considered.

5. Stormwater Primer

Mr. Maines presented an introduction to stormwater management in the City to provide a baseline of information for future Advisory Group meetings and discussion. Mr. Maines described/explained the following in detail:

- What stormwater management is
- The types of sewer systems the City manages
- Stormwater funding (including the Stormwater Utility Fee and what it pays for) and additional funding resources, such as federal and state grants
- Stormwater programs the City administers
- Development standards related to stormwater management
- Operations and maintenance
- Anticipated project timelines for large capacity projects and spot improvement projects
- The City of Alexandria Storm Sewer Capacity Analysis (CASSCA)

After presenting the primer, Mr. Maines set aside some time for members to ask questions pertaining to the information presented.

Discussion:

Mr. Drudi requested clarity regarding the CASSCA map legend, which shows high priority problem areas. He also asked what the total dollar amount was of the projects the City was already doing that later got moved under the Stormwater Utility Fee. Staff indicated they will follow-up with Mr. Drudi on this information. Lastly, Mr. Drudi asked for additional information regarding manholes. [The level of service for the initial SWU billed in the second half of FY 2018 in May 2018 was based on the FY 2017 CIP for projects. Also included in the LOS includes stormwater program items listed in the VA code as allowable items to fund. The second half fiscal year May 2018 revenues were approximately \$4.2 million, with FY 2019 annual revenue estimated at \$8.4 million.]

Mr. Hill asked about CASSCA, specifically if it fully identifies the capacity needed in each of the City's watersheds. Staff explained how CASSCA was meant to identify areas that did not have the capacity based on current design standards, that we're designing new systems to today – adding that it tells what the planning level of effort is needed to bring those problem areas up to the current standard. Staff also said it provides a good roadmap to follow in regard to projects to tackle in the next 10 years.

Ms. Thuot also inquired about the CASSCA report, asking if there was an additional study to review with similar modeling of the combined sewer system and what the timeline would be to put together a CSO report. Staff said there was not an existing study but indicated that it was something the City is doing in the future, adding that the report would take a couple years to complete.



Ms. Waynick asked if the Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant Program is open for any additions or revisions. She also wanted clarity regarding the maximum amount residents could receive if they apply for both the Backflow Preventer Assistance Program and Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant Program. Staff explained that the Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant Program can be expanded and confirmed the maximum amount residents could receive if applying for both programs (\$5,000 for the Flood grant and \$2,000 for the Backflow preventer for a total of \$7,000). Lastly, Ms. Waynick asked about the forecasted future sewer capacity needs based on hydraulic modeling and what is being done to ensure that capacity is being taken into consideration with new developments. Staff referenced the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan and explained that the modeling will continue to expand moving forward. Staff added that investigations have identified smaller spot improvement projects that will be completed in the future.

Mr. Sands inquired about the City's current design standard of storm sewers; asking what the existing standard is, when it was adopted, and when it was last evaluated. Staff explained that the current design standard is to meet the 10-year storm, noting that information regarding when it was first adopted was unavailable. Staff provided details about the City's intensity-duration-frequency (IDF) curves developed in the 1980s, and that these are more stringent than many other localities and was protective for estimated climate change scenarios when it was considered along with the CASSCA project; but new information is out and needs to be compared to new data.

6. Staff Updates

- Mr. Dillon provided status updates regarding the top three large capacity projects (E. Glebe & Commonwealth, Ashby & E. Glebe, and Hoofs Run Culvert Bypass) in the 10-year CIP, along with the approximate project deadlines that are based off anticipated project timelines.
- Mr. Maines provided an update on the neighborhood spot improvement projects, including three flash flooding spot improvement projects (Mt. Vernon cul-de-sac and inlets, Hume storm sewer bypass, & Hume and Commonwealth inlets and check valves) identified for ARPA funding. He also discussed the Federal earmark that is pending (Clifford, Fulton, and manning drainage and flooding improvements).
- Ms. Lassetter provided an update on Flood Action Alexandria-related communications, including the two eNewsletters published, social media engagement, and new content and materials that have been created to engage the community.
- Ms. Lassetter then presented an overview of the new Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant Program, including specific details and updates about the program. She encouraged group members to provide feedback to staff regarding the pilot program that could be implemented.
- Mr. Rahal provided an update on data collection and early warning, discussing the new rain and stream gauges installed along with new signage deployed, warning that a "Road May Flood." Mr. Rahal then shared a demo version of the new public-facing rain gauge portal website slated to launch late September 2021, adding that group members are encouraged to share feedback.
- Mr. Gunderson provided a maintenance update of the work completed from April 30 to July 1, 2021.



- Ms. Bevis-Carter presented updates regarding the Sanitary Sewer Asset Renewal Program and the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan

Discussion:

Mr. Drudi commented about the Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant Program waiver language and inquired about the amount of debris removed from Hooff's Run Culvert and the additional capacity obtained from the cleaning. Staff encouraged group members to review the waiver language and provided clarity on the amount of debris removed, adding that there will be more inspections done in the future at the Hoof's Run Culvert and touched on the Hoofs Run Culvert Bypass capacity project.

Ms. Thuot asked if the CSO area will be included on the public-facing rain gauge portal website to monitor, also inquiring about how the City monitors manhole covers that become displaced after they overflow. Staff explained that there are two rain gauges near the CSO area that can provide accurate data to monitor, noting that they will look at additional monitoring tools that could be incorporated. Regarding the manhole covers, staff explained how reports from the Alex311 system notify staff when manhole covers become displaced and that they will look at new ways to better secure the covers moving forward.

Mr. Maginniss inquired if there will be a way for members to monitor the progress of all the different projects that are underway. Staff indicated they will provide regular updates and progress reports.

7. Member Updates and Q&A

Ms. Waynick asked why there were not additional capacity projects (aside from the Hooffs Run Bypass project) presented to City Council when deciding how funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) would be allocated. Staff explained they decided to allocate funding received in the first tranche to go toward completing more immediate spot improvement projects, which would provide the quickest flood mitigation in the short term and noted that they are looking at additional funding to accelerate capacity projects.

Mr. Sands asked when the rain gauge portal would be released to the public. Staff noted it is slated to launch in late September.

Ms. Thuot inquired about the Flood Mitigation Pilot Grant Program. She asked about the associated permit fees required when applying and how the resident could be reimbursed for those fees. Staff indicated they would consider waiving those fees but would need to discuss internally.

8. Public Comment Period

Ms. Rose Esber first asked why condos were excluded from the Flood Mitigation Grant Program. She also inquired about what the percent in decrease of flooding has been achieved from removing debris from the Hoofs Run Culvert and asked if any flood mitigation will be done at the King Street Metro Station.



Mr. Skrabak said individual condo owners are eligible under the program but noted the condominium associations were not eligible during the pilot phase. He did indicate staff will look at expanding the program to include associations. Mr. Skrabak added that there is not an exact percentage in terms of what capacity was removed. Mr. Skrabak said staff can follow up with Ms. Esber in regards the flood mitigation work being done at King Street Metro Station.

Ms. Ann Liddle proposed to staff that a rain gauge be installed at the Pitt Gibbon area.

Ms. Jess Snyder asked if the rain gauge portal website will provide push notifications.

Mr. Rahal indicated that was a feature that staff will work on integrating.

Mr. Drudi inquired if there was a way to know the amount of debris that was removed from the Hoofs Run Culvert in cubic yards. Mr. Skrabak said staff will follow up with Mr. Drudi with approximate data and information.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

DRAFT