



Legislation Text

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Clerk 04/09/2024

A RESOLUTION expressing the regional water quality committee's interest in the sewer rate and capacity charge and requesting the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee continue performing a technical review of the annual sewer rate and capacity charge.

WHEREAS, the regional water quality committee is one of three regional committees formed by charter when voters approved the merger of the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle and King County, and

WHEREAS, the regional water quality committee addresses countywide policies and plans for wastewater treatment and sewer services, capital facilities plans, rate policies and facilities siting, and

WHEREAS, the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee is established in RCW 35.58.210, and

WHEREAS, the function of the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee as established in its charter is to advise the King County executive, the King County council, the regional water quality committee, and the King County council's standing committees on all matters relating to abatement of water pollution throughout King County's wastewater service area, and

WHEREAS, the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee is made up of representatives from cities and local sewer utilities that operate sewer systems within King County's wastewater service area. and provides a forum for discussing a wide range of issues related to regional wastewater treatment services, and

WHEREAS, the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee has a finance

subcommittee that provides valuable expert advisory review of the financial policies and assumptions used in determining King County's established sewer rates, capacity charge, operating budget and capital programs, and

WHEREAS, the development of the annual sewer rate and capacity charge is informed by long-term service agreements with participating entities, the adopted Regional Wastewater Services Plan, K.C.C 28.86.160C and other King County Code provisions, some of which have not been updated since 1999, and

WHEREAS, the wastewater treatment division has begun the process to update the Regional Wastewater Services Plan, and

WHEREAS, both the regional water quality committee and the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee have a strong interest in understanding the annual sewer rate proposal and long-term rate projections, and

WHEREAS, in 2023, the regional water quality committee developed Motions 16449 and 16410, which were passed by the King County council, to provide stakeholders, including the regional water quality committee, with better information on the long-term sewer rate trajectory and as part of each motion an advisory recommendation is requested from the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee, and

WHEREAS, the regional water quality committee has expressed an interest through the annual work plan for a resolution to support role clarity, collaboration and efficiency between the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee and the regional water quality committee in the annual rate review process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the King County Regional Water Quality Committee:

A. The regional water quality committee seeks to better understand how the development of the proposed annual sewer rate and capacity charge comport with the regional wastewater services plan, the King County Code, other county plans and policies ("adopted county policies") and long-term service agreements

with participating entities.

B. The regional water quality committee seeks to understand the relative rate burden of the proposed annual sewer rate for current and future rate payers and agencies, and the context of member agency contributions and usage since the inception of the contract. Additionally, through this review of the annual rate, the update to the regional wastewater services plan, and other adopted county policies, the committee will seek to identify those policies impacting the sewer rate and capacity charge that might benefit from interjurisdictional discussion held in the regional water quality committee and, where appropriate, identify desired policy objectives.

C. In order to provide timely information on the development of the annual sewer and capacity charge, the regional water quality committee requests an annual fall briefing from the wastewater treatment division on the emerging policy themes impacting the rate proposal under development.

D. The regional water quality committee requests the metropolitan water pollution advisory committee continue its technical review of the annual sewer rate and capacity charge and identify any policy issues for RWQC and Council consideration. The technical review in particular, could include reviewing and evaluating the financial assumptions used to determine the sewer rate, including debt assumptions and long-term capital planning. The regional water quality committee requests the metropolitan water pollution abatement advisory committee share its findings and recommendations with the executive, the regional wastewater quality committee, and the county council.

E. The regional water quality committee may choose, upon its policy review of the proposed annual sewer rate and capacity charge and the metropolitan pollution abatement advisory committee recommendations, to convey its policy recommendations on the proposed sewer rate and capacity charge to the King County council.