

**THURSTON COUNTY
STORM AND SURFACE WATER ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

**June 02, 2022
Meeting Summary**

Representative	Representing	Present (P) Not Present (NP) Excused (E)
Jake Wager	At Large	NP
Phyllis Farrell	District 1	P
Paula Holroyde	District 3	E
Jaclynn Simmons (Chair)	District 2	P
Britt Nederhood	District 3	P
Carla Sabotta	At Large	P
Nancy Winters (Vice Chair)	At Large	P
David Hartley	District 1	E

Staff:

Larry Schaffner	Nate Ensley	Ryan Langan	Miriam Villacian	Cynthia Taylor
Sonja Cady	Stuart Whitford			

Guests:

Introductions/Process/Correspondence (Jaclynn Simmons, Chair)

Introductions were made.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present

Amendments to the Agenda

No amendments to the agenda were made.

Meeting Summary

Nancy moved to approve the meeting minutes for the March 17, 2022 meeting as written. All were in favor. Motion carried.

SPLASH/Utility Communications (Cynthia Taylor & Miriam Villacian)

Cynthia Taylor, the new Education and Outreach Specialist with the Community Planning and Economic Development Department (CPED), has assumed the production lead on SPLASH with Miriam Villacian. Cynthia provided the planning document to the SSWAB members prior to meeting, which includes suggested content for SPLASH 2022 that has already been reviewed by CPED and Public Works staff. The hope is to receive SSWAB's feedback on what content will be of most interest to readers. The main focus is *Stormwater and Surface 101* to paint a clear

picture of why stormwater runoff is important to everyday life in our County along with proper maintenance of our storm sewer systems.

Cynthia stated that SPLASH typically highlights about 6 performance metrics each year and asked SSWAB to help narrow down the ten suggested candidates listed in Table 1 of the handout. In addition, we also want up to five articles which could highlight projects, services, personal stories of a SSWAB Board member or County employee, and best management practices (BMPs). Article topic suggestions can be found on Table 2 of the handout. Miriam provided examples of projects to focus on, such as the Boston Harbor Project and work with homeowner associations (HOAs). Nate Ensley updated the group that the Stormwater Comprehensive Study will not be completed in 2022, so an article on this topic could likely be pushed out to 2023.

Articles

- Jaclynn suggested interviewing a SSWAB member for an article. This would also help highlight existing vacancies and recruitment efforts to fill those vacancies on SSWAB. Nancy and Miriam agreed.
- Phyllis suggested including graphics to show how ratepayer fees are allocated.
- Members agree that Stormwater 101 is an important topic to include.
- Nancy would like to see information included on how stormwater impacts the Puget Sound and water quality. This includes water monitoring and how the information gathered is used to help inform improves to stormwater management systems.
- Britt would like to include the number of County stormwater management assets scheduled for repair.

Metrics

- Nancy requested combining monitoring metrics, i.e., staff, students, and volunteer monitors and include definitions of monitoring.
- Jaclynn requested a comparison from year-to-year on responses to spills. Nancy would like to see a graphic of several years of monitoring data.
 - Miriam stated that comparing years is difficult because last two years have thrown things off (considering the pandemic's influences).
- Phyllis suggested color coding rain fall each year vs road closures, that's what she relates stormwater to and thinks it could be helpful to the public to see what happens when roads get flooded.
 - Cynthia- agreed that it is relevant and would like to tie metrics in with the articles- like best practice management could go with a stormwater graph.
 - Larry- depicting road flooding data could present a challenge since the County is still in the process of tracking and this data collecting data.
 - Ryan, with Public Works, shared that they have begun collecting data for 2022.
- Nancy asked if the "Pick Up your Dog Poo" stations is the number of stations or bags picked up? Nancy did not recommend highlighting this metric because having bags out there doesn't mean they are used and asked if staff can monitor how useful it is?
 - Miriam answered that surveys of people responsible for maintaining pet waste stations, while not super accurate since it doesn't measure before and after, found that survey respondents report about a 70% to 75% reduction in pet waste

observed. Staff plan to conduct this survey every other year. Miriam would like to see a percentage reduction metric paired with pet waste program articles or advertisements. Regardless, when information about the program is put in a media post or print, she always gets two or three calls at least every time from people wanting pet waste stations.

- Cynthia will be using this SSWAB conversation as a guide moving forward and will send an email to the SSWAB members with a link to a survey for requesting them to rank proposed SPLASH content ideas.
 - Phyllis would like to ensure that monitoring is clearly defined, what pollutants are being monitored and how?
 - Jaclynn requested staff send a poll to the members and follow up with the results.
 - Britt shared that the stormwater comprehensive study may be important within the utility, but less important to ratepayers.
 - Cynthia agreed that the stormwater comprehensive study topic should be saved for later consideration after more concrete information emerges from that effort.

Performance Metrics Update by Staff (Ryan Langan & Stuart Whitford)¹

Ryan Langan provided the 2021 numbers that SSWAB had requested on metrics and opened the floor to questions on the data presented.

- Nancy asked to clarify if this would be presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC), Jaclynn confirmed it will. Nancy also noted that the utility seems to be doing more since 2020 when she compared the numbers side-by-side. This should be pointed out, maybe two side-by-side columns with data from each year to compare
 - Jaclynn agreed that it would be a great way to update BoCC as well.

A. No Comments

B. Nancy asked are the untreated outfalls moving towards having water quality treatment. If so, can a note be made? She also suggested defining treatment standards to be more user friendly.

- Phyllis asked what do standards mean?
 - Ryan-the treatment requirements are in the County's Drainage Design & Erosion Control Manual in effect at the time of development.
- Nancy asked what each treatment does and suggested giving examples.
 - Ryan answered that they could provide different treatment options that are dependent on geographic locations within the County. Examples range from stormwater ponds, roadside swales, bioretention facilities, to proprietary treatment devices.
 - Larry added that water quality treatment standards come from the Department of Ecology (Ecology). Treatment standards exist for sediment removal, dissolved metals, oil and grease control, and nutrients which are associated with various treatment facility categories.
 - Nancy would like this type of information shared so it is clear to all.
- Phyllis asked what does *inspected* mean?

¹ Alphabetic letter references below correspond with the alphabetic letter references contained in the metrics handout.

- Ryan answered that *inspected* means looking at each asset's structural components and providing a condition score for those components along with a score associated with the operational and maintenance conditional status. Combining these two scores, results in an overall condition index for the asset.
- C. Nancy asked what happened to the deficiencies not corrected? How are they eventually corrected? She stated that it is critical for BoCC to know and she asked to provide a timeline or information on the corrections.
- Ryan answered that the metric data represent only the 2021 calendar year (i.e., a snapshot in time). Additional corrections could have been completed by now not reflect in the 2021 numbers.
 - Phyllis asked if there is there a map of outfalls
 - Ryan answered that it is not published. The decision was made by leadership for risk management, so people (i.e., bad actors) don't dump in those locations to intentionally cause harm.
 - Phyllis asked if there are records of illegal dumping or any enforcement?
 - Ryan answered that they have records of all complaints from staff, citizens, and Ecology. If warranted, the County can issue notices of violation.
 - Larry added that there is an escalating enforcement path ranging from education and technical assistance to correction action notices and continues to escalate from there.
 - Nancy suggested adding warning in SPLASH referencing the ordinance about illegal dumping.
- D. Ryan stated that there is no data for tracking the number of flood-related road closure for 2021 year because staff started tracking information this year. The January 6th storm event saw 132 locations that had water over the road, 16 slides on roads, and 43 road closures.
- E. Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC)
- Nancy asked did this program get five new full time equivalent (FTE) positions?
 - Stuart, the new Environmental Health program manager, answered that with the addition of Washington State Department of Health foundational public health funds, there are enough financial resources to support five staff who focus on PIC and one who focuses on onsite sewage (OSS) compliance.
 - Nancy what are the objectives of targeting houses for inspection on Black Lake watershed?
 - Stuart – Black Lake is surrounded by homes on septic systems. Staff would perform OSS records review, field inspections of OSS, provide educational materials to property owners, and investigate what kinds of waste are going into the lake. County monitoring programs collects useful data on algae blooms and water quality. The PIC program will help find sources of waste causing water quality impairments.
 - Nancy asked if there is any talk about providing sanitary sewer to the Black Lake area?
 - Stuart answered that he is not aware of any talk of sewerage at this time. The County can use dye tests to see if septic systems have an impact on lake.

- Nancy asked what the \$228,000 state health money will be used for?
 - Stuart responded that it will be used for responding to health concerns in shellfish areas. Ecology finds hot spots and forwards this information to the County for follow-up investigation. The County may be “giving money back” to state health because unuse funds expire in September.
- Phyllis would like to hear more about the PIC program and what they are doing at a future SSWAB meeting.
 - Stuart informed the group that the focus is on the marine shoreline surveys in Eld and Totten. Washington State Department of Health is responsible to conduct such surveys to protect shellfish growing areas, but they can only perform them once every 10-12 years. Staff are conducting our own marine shoreline surveys to be proactive in identifying any sources of bacterial contamination and ensuring timely correction. Staff have also established and started monitoring additional County streams that are failing the state water quality standard for E. coli bacteria. This monitoring allows staff to identify those stream segments that are most polluted and prioritize properties for voluntary inspection of onsite sewage systems and animal waste management practices.
- Phyllis asked when will the new hires be expected to be trained and ready for a 20-30-minute presentation?
 - Stuart thought they will be ready towards the fall or winter to provide a presentation on E. coli bacteria hot spots, source identified and corrected, and water quality improvement.
- Larry asked Stuart to share any ideas or visions he may have for securing more stable funding sources based upon his previous experiences.
 - Stuart shared his experience with Kitsap Public Health which has been a “Clean Water Kitsap” partner with Kitsap County, Kitsap Conservation District, and the Washington State Cooperative Extension since 1995. As a partner, Kitsap Public Health received annual allocations of stormwater utility funds to pay for stream and marine water monitoring as well as fecal bacteria PIC projects to identify sources and ensure their correction. This funding allowed building a PIC program of sufficient size and capability and effectiveness to protect and restore shellfish growing areas and reduce bacteria concentrations in county streams. He recognizes that it can be challenging to collect fees via property tax statements. PIC and OSS programs need stable funds to operate consistently. Our Thurston County programs have end-date staff positions that correspond with grant end dates which makes it difficult to recruit program staff. This topic can be discussed further at the next SSWAB meeting pertaining to this topic.
- Phyllis asked how growth predictions are made and calculate for program needs and set fees. She suggested sharing this in the next SPLASH issue.
- Britt asked if PIC grants provide incentive moneys for folks with failing septic systems to fix them?
 - Stuart answered that there are two grants that have OSS incentives for maintenance. There is money for minor repairs. There is also a statewide program that has low interest loans for septic repairs. Resources are available, but he would like to have more grant money available.

BoCC Briefing Preparation (Jaclynn Simmons, Chair)

Jaclynn shared that she is preparing a draft briefing for the Board of County Commissioners and is requesting updates and suggestions from SSWAB members.

- Nancy asked how much time they have to brief the BOCC
 - Larry answered that they are typically 30 minutes, the target is a 15-minute presentation and 15 minutes for discussion and interaction. The BoCC has typically reviewed the briefing materials, so it is best to present the main topics and key messages.
- Jaclynn would like to include the metrics from 2020 and 2021 to show the work being done and point out improvements.
- Nancy would like to focus on recommendations.
 - Jaclynn agreed the recommendations will be the main focus, with an overview on why they are making these recommendations and include performance metrics. The 3 listed recommendations on the draft don't have to be the 3 going to the BOCC.
 - Nancy asked if they needed to include the first recommendation, "Adopt or instruct the utility to utilize SSWAB's recommended performance metrics." Because they are doing so already.
 - Larry stated that a lot of the metrics had already been tracking and reporting to Ecology. He suggested acknowledging the new metric of road closures being tracked, also progress made by the County for the PIC program. Both were a work in progress last year. This year, there's a lot of progress that can be reported. The briefing could be less about new recommendations and more about providing a status update since the last recommendations.
- Jaclynn asked the members to let her know what they would like to include on the report to the Commissioners. Would they like to mention that the Utility has implemented metrics for flooding on roads in 2021 and will have more data by 2023?
 - Nancy would like to include side-by-side metrics from 2020 and 2021.
- Phyllis asked if different sites were being documented for road closures to compare year-to-year.
 - Nate answered – yes, this information will funnel directly into capital facilities program to address flooding issues.
- Nancy would like to include a narrative on the PIC program and mention that there is no stable funding once the grant is over.
- Phyllis would like to highlight the new work that the PIC program is doing as this has been an area of interest for many regarding water quality issues.
- Larry mentioned that he could request a 1-hour briefing as the BoCC seemed to enjoy conversation with SSWAB members and has had a rich dialogue with members. The BoCC has been supportive with funding the stormwater business comprehensives plan. The briefing will be requested to occur at the end of July or early August. He added that they need to check availability of SSWAB members, if more than a quorum plans on attending, then a special meeting notice will need to go out.
 - Jaclynn felt that a 30-minute briefing would be sufficient.
 - Phyllis would like to be involved.
 - Larry will work offline on scheduling the briefing with SSWAB chairs.

SSWAB General Discussion (SSWAB Members)

- General Updates- The members wished Carla well and thanked her for her time on the SSWA. Nancy added her thanks for the group's flexibility to move the May meeting to June.
- Updates on Action Items- none
- SSWAB's pending vacancies - Jaclynn has posted vacancies through multiple social media networks such as LinkedIn and sharing with friends. She will be reaching out to SPSCC (South Puget Sound Community College) soon and suggests everyone use their networks to help with recruitment to fill vacancies.
 - Nancy- suggests reaching out personally as not everyone is involved with an organization.
 - Larry- there will be 3 vacancies at the end of the month, Carla is moving, Paula's term is expiring, and there is already one vacancy. Need to recruit. Ryan is having inspectors bring vacancies up in the field to HOA's and businesses during inspections. Last meeting the Agenda Subcommittee discussed this and suggested the need to form a recruitment subcommittee.
 - Jaclynn- it might be difficult to form a subcommittee with so few members.
 - Larry suggested trying directing recruiting efforts master builders, chamber of commerce, civic organizations, and clubs.
 - Phyllis emphasized they are individuals representing people of the district not their organization's affiliation.
 - Nancy suggested advertising in SPLASH to show how SSWAB can help the community and is helping inform policies and implementation. Larry could be the contact person.
 - Phyllis got involved because of stormwater effects on Puget Sound. Can we share information from other organizations that are not County-related, but Stormwater-related?
 - Larry shared that the vacancies will be in District 2, District 3, and At Large
- SSWAB reports on outreach in community- none
- Topics for next meeting- none

Action Items

- Cynthia will share a survey link to Larry for distribution to SSWAB members to rank SPLASH-related content.
- Larry will update the performance metrics paper to include 2020 & 2021 data side-by-side as well as add additional clarification regarding stormwater treatment types.
- SSWAB members will send any additional suggestions to Jaclynn to assist her in refining the SSWAB briefing.
- Larry will work with the chairs and commissioners' office to schedule a time and date for the SSWAB brief. SSWAB members will notify Larry if they plan on attending the briefing.
- SSWAB's Agenda Subcommittee will consider including a PIC program agenda item for an upcoming fall or winter SSWAB meeting.
- SSWAB member will look for opportunities to get the word on the existing SSWAB vacancies.

The next meeting will be July 21, 2022.

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 pm