

LWVCC Annual Meeting Report 5-18-2021 Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

Overview

- ✓ The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District was created 130 years ago, and serves 129 communities.
- ✓ Its primary responsibility is the treatment of waste water within its legislated boundary and management of stormwater [flood control] for all of Cook County.
- ✓ It is governed by a Board of 9 Commissioners elected district-wide with 6-year staggered terms. An Executive Director, chosen by the Board, manages the day-to-day operations. The racially diverse board is comprised of 7 woman and 2 men.
- ✓ The 2021 operating budget is \$1.2 billion (\$53 million over 2020).
- ✓ FTE's are budgeted at 1,941 employees – a decrease of 12. www.mwrdd.org

Highlights – 2020-21

- On average, treated more than a billion gallons of waste water per day.
- Provided flood control projects to a number of communities across the District and approved Intergovernmental Agreements with diverse communities for permeable paver replacements for alleys, parking lots, etc.
- Used over 60 goats and sheep to sustainably contain invasive plant species.
- Started a new apprenticeship program as part of its diversity goals.
- With a successful city school's *space to grow program*, the board authorized a report on the feasibility of partnering with suburban school districts on green infrastructure projects. The report is due May 31, 2021.
- Approved a regional credit-trading pilot study for stormwater retention and volume control. To date, developers have not taken advantage.
- Refined not-for-profit lobbyist registration and fee requirements in its 2020 Ethics Ordinance.
- Ready to approve a board-driven Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 that states: "*equity is not an issue area but a framework for equity across all responsibility areas.*" Expect 2021 and 2022 board meetings to drive this goal forward.
- Started virtual tours of waste treatment plants for the public. Very popular.

LWVCC - Observe, Educate, Advocate

- ❖ Ten committed Leaguers covered 22 bi-weekly board meetings and submitted reports for the LWVCC website and for board members.
- ❖ Observed several study sessions covering biogas and land usage, as well as other issues.
- ❖ Conducted a virtual meeting with Commissioner Davis as part of our ongoing commissioner interview project.
- ❖ Sent suggestions for handling roll-call votes during Covid-19 virtual meetings that were welcomed by several commissioners and ultimately led to a streamlined but still legal voting system.

- ❖ Supported Commissioner Davis' request for a two-week public notice when ordinance changes are to be added to the Board agenda.
- ❖ Monitored and reported on the MWRD Inspector General's quarterly reports.
- ❖ Began discussions on League members taking a deeper dive into the MWRD's Stormwater Management responsibilities, progress to date, best practice comparisons, etc. Looking at September-October 2021 to begin project.

Diane Edmundson, MWRD Observer Coordinator & member of the Budget & Structure Interest Group

Notes:

MWRD produces a "high value" fertilizer from its Stickney plant's recovered nutrients – known as Crystal Green.

Expired and unused medications can be taken to the MWRD plant sites, to local police departments, and other locations offered by Communities.