



# CITY OF PORTLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant

5001 N Columbia Boulevard, Portland, Oregon 97203 ■ Mingus Mapps, Commissioner ■ Michael Jordan, Director

## **Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant (CBWTP) Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Minutes – July 21, 2021**

### **Attendance:**

Community Members: Alescia Blakely, James Ellis, Michael Greenblatt, Cara Poor  
Staff Members: Steve Behrnt, Debbie Caselton, Niel Curley, Robert George,  
Michele Juon, Christa Overby  
Guests/Presenters: James Hutton, BES WG Administration

### **Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements**

Steve Behrnt, BES Operations & Maintenance Group (O&MG) Manager, welcomed the CAC members and thanked them for taking time to attend the meeting. He shared that CAC meetings have been in place for 27 years and is excited that the committee is being reinvigorated after a year and a half pause due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

He also shared an overview of the O&MG to show the big picture of what we do at the treatment plant, meanwhile highlighting a strong commitment to sustainability. In addition to conveying and cleaning 30 billion gallons a year of water, capturing 14,000 dry tons from wastewater and processing them into a soil amendment, and cleaning of digester gas for renewable energy, he also shared a couple of plans for the treatment plant. In 2023 we will accept food waste from Metro to save on landfill space and add fuel to produce more RNG. Furthermore, by 2030 we should be well underway in developing water reuse, using treated effluent for our 6 million gallons of water per day needed at CBWTP.

### **Meeting Overview and Ground Rules**

Michele Juon, O&MG Administrative Supervisor, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and shared that the global pandemic coincided with recruitment efforts for new CAC members. We are still actively recruiting for three more people to join the committee and encouraged those interested to reach out to her. She shared a link to the CAC website, which is located at <https://www.portland.gov/bes/recovering-resources/cac>. There one finds multiple links to other sources of information, such as an overview of the Wastewater Treatment Process and the Secondary Treatment Expansion Program (STEP). In addition to these, a link sharing details on the committee, including its goals and brief biographies for each of the members was also provided. This page is found at <https://www.portland.gov/bes/recovering-resources/cac/cbwtp-cac>, which is where one can find contact information for Michele Juon, who is the Advisory Committee Coordinator.

She also shared that in years past, meetings were an hour and a half in length, and they were conducted on a quarterly basis in January, April, July, and October. Because the meeting in the Summer was always the most difficult for members to attend, Michele and Debbie Caselton proposed that future meetings be held in October, January,

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and May and asked for thoughts about that idea. James Ellis suggested creating a Doodle poll so that members who are not present at the meeting could provide feedback. Debbie said she would create one and send it to the CAC after the meeting.

Michele also shared suggested ground rules for meetings. A number of these encouraged being prepared and ready to contribute to the committee, listening and thinking with mindfulness, and follow up on decisions made. A full listing of suggested ground rules can be found at <https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/proposed-ground-rules-072121.pdf>.

### **Introduction to the Secondary Treatment Expansion Program (STEP)**

Debbie Caselton, Community Outreach, shared an overview of STEP, which is mandated by DEQ, with completion by December 2024. The program is based on the addition of two large secondary clarifiers, which will be visible from the Columbia Slough Trail. STEP will cause a domino effect impacting other areas of the treatment plant. For instance, aging work areas and composters will be demolished, with a new multiuse building being added as well. She also shared that the public may see heavy equipment coming into the treatment plant from time to time. Most changes will be on site of the plant campus.

STEP is made up of many critical projects that are adjacent from each other, interconnected, and on the same timeline. It uses the Construction Manager/General Contractor (GM/GC) approach which optimizes design and efficiency. This means that the designer, contractor, and Environmental Services all collaborate through both design and construction phases. There are at least 58 subcontractors working with STEP, and O&MG is currently exceeding their DMWESB goals for the project. For more information about STEP, please see the <https://www.portland.gov/bes/step/about-step> website.

### **Upcoming Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 1:00 PM. Rob George, O&MG Operations Manager, will lead CAC members on in an in-person tour of CBWTP.