

# Municipal Wastewater Permit Fees Advisory Committee

## Ground Rules & Decision-Making

### Proposed Team Ground Rules:

#### *Preparation and Coordination*

- Arrive to meetings on time and prepared.
- If you missed a meeting, take responsibility to find out what you missed.
- Let staff know if you are unable to attend a meeting.

#### *How we treat each other and work together*

- Support each other, inside meetings and with others outside.
- Be honest and respectful.
- Keep an open mind - listen to the opinions of others.
- Maintain objectivity at all times.
- Seek common ground and understanding (not problems and conflict).
- Strive to reach consensus - "I can live with it" and will support it outside the room. If consensus cannot be reached, the team may use majority vote.

#### *Communication*

- Stay on topic and don't use this as a forum for side issues.
- Keep discussions brief and to the point.
- Do not interrupt others.
- Free yourself from distractions (e.g., phones, email).
- Avoid side conversations that distract others.
- Encourage "Yes - and" instead of "Yes - but" statements.
- Share all relevant information - no idea is a bad idea.
- Use specific examples and agree on what important words mean.
- Explain your reasoning and intent.
- Ask for clarity when needed.

### Decision-Making Process

Our goal is thoughtful, informed decisions that have general consensus.

- Decision making will be preceded by thoughtful discussion and analysis, so everyone is informed to make a decision.
- Complex decisions will not be made on the same day the question is raised. The committee will follow a cadence of presenting information and compiling questions first, then clarifying and refining that information, and then providing time between meetings before a question is resolved with a decision. This will generally be a cycle of two or more meetings.

### *General Consensus*

- The advisory committee will operate on a gradient of agreement. We'll seek consensus in the decision-making process, and discussions will be facilitated and managed to reach as much agreement as possible. Levels of agreement are:
  1. Enthusiastic Support – I really like it
  2. Lukewarm Support – I can live with it; it is an improvement
  3. Meager Support – I have concerns, but can go along with it
  4. Objection – I do not support the idea or proposal
- General consensus means general accord of collective opinion; it does not require a unanimous opinion. Ideally, most members have Enthusiastic or Lukewarm Support, and no members Object.
- In the event that full consensus cannot be achieved, the committee members shall attempt in good faith to resolve the matter. If a member has Meager Support for or Objects to a proposal, the group will strive to understand and if possible address the concerns and improve the proposal.
- As we have a short timeframe and must produce recommendations, if concerns cannot be incorporated into a final proposal, General Consensus shall be construed as having 11 or more of our 14 members Support a proposal to some degree.

### *Recommendations*

- The group's recommendations shall include all decisions, concerns, and objections.
- Should decisions not culminate in consensus of some level, the various proposals and levels of support shall be noted.
- The committee's recommendations will go into the larger and broader fee rule-making process. Should this group's recommendations change as a result of public comment, Ecology will inform the committee of the change and the rationale.