



Utilities Committee

Terms of Reference

The Utilities Committee is the standing committee of the Metro Vancouver Board which provides advice and recommendations to the Board on water and liquid waste management programs.

Metro Vancouver is directly responsible for the regional systems for storage, treatment and distribution of water fit for drinking as described in the updated Drinking Water Management Plan adopted by the Board in 2011.

Metro Vancouver is also directly responsible for the regional systems for collection, conveyance, treatment and disposal of wastewater and for stormwater over a more limited geographical extent. These activities are carried out under the provisions of the Integrated Liquid Waste and Resource Management Plan which was adopted by the Board and approved by the Province in 2011.

The Utilities Committee's scope of work is focussed on how the implementation of these plans, including regional policies, projects and programs can contribute to the liveability and sustainability of the region.

The Utilities Committee is the forum to which staff report on water and liquid waste management programs, projects and policies. The Committee's responsibilities are:

- To review and monitor the annual work program for programs assigned to the committee and make recommendations to the Board, as necessary, on any changes in program scope and priorities;
- To consider staff reports on policies, projects and programs and make recommendations to the Board on the appropriate actions;
- To hear and consider public delegations on matters within the scope of the committee's purview and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the Board arising out of such delegations;
- To pursue matters referred to the committee by the Board and report back to the Board expeditiously, as required.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the committee may provide advice, guidance or direction to staff as to the scope and priority of work to be carried out, including new tasks to be undertaken. However, where such direction represents a sufficiently significant change in the previously approved work program, or a significant expenditure of funds, or runs contrary to the advice of professional staff, the committee shall refer the matter to the Board, with appropriate recommendations, for decision by the Board.

The Committee Chair, or in the absence of the Committee Chair, the Committee Vice-Chair will usually be the chief spokesperson on matters of public interest within the Committee's purview. Some issues may be of such public profile that it will be appropriate for the Board Chair or Vice-Chair to be the chief spokesperson; on technical matters or where the status is still at the staff proposal level, the Commissioner or senior staff may be the appropriate chief spokesperson. Where necessary and practical, the Board Chair, the Committee Chair and the Commissioner (or vice-chairs and deputy) will confer to determine the most appropriate course of action.

The Commissioner will assign a departmental manager to be 'committee manager' to the Committee. The committee manager will be responsible for coordinating agendas and be the principle point of contact for committee members.

Committee Meetings

The Utilities Committee meets monthly, except for August and December and has special meetings as required. A quorum of 50% plus one of the committee membership is required to conduct committee business.

Relationship with Other Board Committees

Matters of overall budget and financing of the programs are the purview of the Finance Committee. Expenditures within the approved budget remain the purview of the Utilities Committee, but items which entail significant changes to the approved budget should be referred to the Finance Committee for their recommendation to the Board as well as the recommendation of the Utilities Committee.

Matters involving Metro Vancouver's strategic relationships with other governments, agencies and communities are under the purview of the Intergovernmental and Administration Committee. While the Utilities Committee will receive reports and discuss issues under its purview, the Committee Chair will keep the Intergovernmental and Administration Committee apprised of any intergovernmental implications arising from such reports and discussions.

Matters considered by the Utilities Committee may have implications for issues considered by other committees, in particular the Environment and Parks Committee, the Zero Waste Committee, and the Regional Planning and Agriculture Committee. Similarly matters considered by other committees may have relevance for the Utilities Committee.

The committee manager will attempt to keep the committee apprised of significant reports with inter-committee implications.

Committee Membership

The Chair, Vice Chair, and members are appointed annually by the Chair of the Metro Vancouver Board of Directors.