



# Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street  
Chicago, IL 60611

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 14-1178, **Version:** 1

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### **TRANSMITTAL LETTER FOR BOARD MEETING OF OCTOBER 16, 2014**

#### COMMITTEE ON ENGINEERING

Mr. David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Authorization to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Aarhus Vand A/S of Denmark for Engaging in a Knowledge Exchange Program

Dear Sir:

Authority is requested to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Aarhus Vand A/S of Denmark (Aarhus Vand) for engaging in a knowledge exchange program.

Aarhus Vand (also known as "Aarhus Water") is an independent regional water and wastewater enterprise located in southern Denmark that is wholly owned by the municipality of Aarhus. The mission of Aarhus Vand is to supply drinking water and provide wastewater treatment of the highest quality in terms of health and the environment, while taking into account reliable supplies, nature and efficient operation, in a manner that is transparent to consumers. Aarhus Vand's area of expertise covers all aspects of water and wastewater management, including distribution of drinking water to 285,000 customers through 950 miles of supply lines and 10 waterworks, and the treatment of waste water from 300,000 customers through 10 wastewater treatment plants and 1,400 miles of sewage pipes within the Aarhus area district. Aarhus Vand employs approximately 240 people, and maintains the highest certifications within all aspects of their involvement, and works continually on developing holistic solutions while being committed to sustainability in relation to the overall water cycle.

Since the District and Aarhus Vand share many points of common interest within the water sector in general, and the wastewater treatment area specifically, the Consular General of Denmark approached the District with the idea of creating a knowledge exchange program to share knowledge, exchange experiences, and engage in thoughtful discourse about the water sector and the wastewater treatment area for the mutual benefit of each entity. The main areas of common interest that were identified at this time are as follows: wastewater treatment technology, energy management/energy neutrality, stormwater management, wastewater operations, managing the effects of climate change and extreme weather, process control monitoring and instrumentation, and sustainable utility management. Other areas may be added in the future as identified.

A number of joint activities have been identified that may be undertaken by the District and Aarhus Vand for the purpose of developing a working relationship between the parties, such as performance benchmarking, sharing experiences overcoming obstacles towards with energy neutrality, establishment of technical working groups, and cooperation on research projects. Aarhus Vand has stationed a wastewater specialist in the Chicago consulate offices so that he may be close to the District's facilities, and meet periodically with District staff. In addition, the Danish Consulate and Aarhus Vand have offered to arrange for job exchange visits by District personnel to the three main wastewater treatment facilities in Denmark for the purposes of gaining knowledge in multiple topic areas through immersion in the working environment.

All costs will be the responsibility of the respective parties, and each party will maintain insurance coverage for

its own personnel at all times. Expenditures by the District greater than \$10,000.00 will require approval of the District's Board of Commissioners. The term of the MOU will be two years from the date of execution, with the ability to extend and modify the MOU with the mutual agreement of both parties.

Based on the foregoing, the Engineering Department recommends that the District be authorized to enter into a MOU with Aarhus Vand A/S of Denmark for engaging in a knowledge exchange program, and that the Chairman of the Committee on Engineering, the Executive Director, and the Clerk be authorized to execute said intergovernmental agreement on behalf of the District, upon approval by the Directors of the Engineering Department as to technical matters and by the General Counsel as to form and legality.

Requested, Catherine A. O'Connor, Director of Engineering, TK

Recommended, David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Respectfully Submitted, Frank Avila, Chairman Committee on Engineering

Disposition of this agenda item will be documented in the official Regular Board Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners for October 16, 2014