



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

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TRANSMITTAL LETTER FOR BOARD MEETING OF NOVEMBER 2, 2017

COMMITTEE ON MONITORING AND RESEARCH

Mr. David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Authorization to extend the term of the Memorandum of Understanding with Aarhus Vand A/S of Denmark for Engaging in a Knowledge Exchange Program

Dear Sir:

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

On October 16, 2014, the Board of Commissioners authorized the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (District) to enter into an MOU between the District and Aarhus Vand. Aarhus Vand is an independent regional water and wastewater enterprise located in southern Denmark that is wholly owned by the municipality of Aarhus. On November 1, 2014 the MOU was executed. The MOU has a termination date of three years from date of execution, placing the expiration date as October 31, 2017. The MOU has provisions for extension of the MOU with the approval of both parties.

The District and Aarhus Vand share many common goals, such as effective water management, sustainable operations, efficient customer service, technical proficiency, and environmental stewardship. The MOU has provided the basis for a knowledge exchange program, which has served as a forum for District technical staff and Danish experts 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.

Over the past three years, a number of activities have taken place under the auspices of the MOU to the mutual benefit of both parties. Past and on-going activities include:

1. Transfer of technical information on each entity's on-going research towards mainstream short-cut nitrogen removal, biological phosphorus removal, and phosphorus recovery.
2. Transfer of information on each entities efforts towards energy neutrality and renewable energy production.
3. Process optimization analysis performed by Danish experts on the Hanover Park WRP, and a workshop presentation to District staff.
4. A treatment plant operator from the M&O Department spent two months working as a staff member at the Aarhus Vand wastewater treatment plants, where she learned about the host utility's operational model, technical approaches, and organizational culture.
5. Three District employees traveled to Denmark for a one-week fact-finding tour of Aarhus Vand's operations and approaches to biological phosphorus removal, sidestream anammox treatment, and stormwater management.

6. Two Danish exchange students from a technical university spent one month as interns at the District water reclamation plants learning about resource recovery, energy neutrality, and the District's wastewater treatment operations.
7. Members of the Aarhus Vand Board of Commissioners and their CEO met with District Commissioners and the Executive Director during WEFTEC 2015 to exchange knowledge about utility financing and leadership.
8. Members of the District's Operations Challenge team mentored the members of the Aarhus Vand Operations Challenge team prior to the competition held at WEFTEC 2017.

Extension of the term of the MOU will permit both entities to continue to take advantage of the working relationship that has been established between the District and Aarhus Vand staff. In addition to the above noted activities, other topic areas of mutual interest that may be addressed under the extended term include biological phosphorus removal, energy neutrality and energy efficiency, hydrothermal technology, managing the effects of climate change and extreme weather, and sustainable utility management.

A copy of the existing Memorandum of Understanding and Amendment No. 1 to the MOU extending the term for another three years are attached. 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 extension will be three years from the date of execution.

Based on the foregoing, the Monitoring and Research Department recommends that the Chairman of the Committee on Monitoring and Research, the Executive Director, and the Clerk be authorized to execute on behalf of the District said Amendment No. 1 with Aarhus Vand A/S of Denmark.

Requested, Edward W. Podczerwinski, Director of Monitoring and Research, EWP:TK:jvs

Recommended, David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Respectfully Submitted, Kari K. Steele, Chairman Committee on Monitoring and Research

Disposition of this agenda item will be documented in the official Regular Board Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners for November 2, 2017

Attachments