



Detroit Water and Sewerage Department

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Legislation Text

File #: 16-0134, **Version:** 1

The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to **adopt Policy No. 2016-308 for the implementation of the Drainage Charge Program**, and also authorizes the Director to take such other actions as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

Agenda of September 7, 2016

Item No. 16-0134

Amount: N/A

TO: The Honorable
Board of Water Commissioners
City of Detroit, Michigan

FROM: Gary Brown, Director
Water and Sewerage Department

RE: **Policy for Drainage Charge Program Implementation**

MOTION

Upon recommendation of Gary Brown, Director, the Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to **adopt Policy No. 2016-308 for the implementation of the Drainage Charge Program**, and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

BACKGROUND

From 2013 through 2015, the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (“DWSD”) spent considerable time and effort to identify and evaluate the impervious surface area for all parcels within the City of Detroit, coupled with an investigation of the customers that are, and should be, receiving a drainage service charge from DWSD.

Based on the investigation, an extensive update of impervious acreage data in the DWSD billing system and a revision to the drainage charge rate methodology was deemed necessary. Most urban areas within the United States which have a combined sewer system have created or converted to a drainage service charge based solely on impervious surface area by parcel. DWSD decided to revise its drainage service charge to one where all residential and non-residential customers are billed a single rate multiplied by the impervious acreage of their property.

Because DWSD has now collected and evaluated data from a 2015 flyover and created GIS maps identifying the totality of the impervious surface area within the City, precise impervious acreage can be determined by parcel. This information will allow DWSD to implement a single drainage rate based on impervious acreage.

Because DWSD has approximately 240,000 customers, it was necessary to phase the implementation of the drainage service charge revisions. Phasing would allow DWSD to implement the revised drainage charge

while minimizing technological challenges, increasing customer outreach and notification, and decreasing the burden on existing staff to handle customer questions and disputes. Additionally, phased implementation will allow DWSD to accelerate the process of converting properties to an imperviousness based rate, rather than deferring implementation to a later start date when all data is complete and all property owners have been notified.

Therefore, the Board of Water Commissioners is respectfully requested to adopt Policy No. 2016-308 which will allow the implementation of the Drainage Charge Program.