MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON WATER AND SEWER CONNECTIONS MINUTES

Commission on Water and Sewer Connections

Tuesday, August 18, 2020
9:30 a.m.

City Hall Basement Conference Room
201 South Cortez Street
Prescott, Arizona 86303
(928)777-1272

Minutes of the Commission on Water and Sewer Connections held **Tuesday, August 18, 2020, via Zoom.**

A. Call to Order –

Councilman Blair called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

B. Roll Call

Council Liaison

Councilman Steve Blair - Present

Members

Jane Orr - Present
Marc Van Wormer - Absent
Millie Owens - Present
Sherri Hanna - Present
Jim Hazelbaker – Arrived at 9:40
Mark Nietupski - Present
Sandy Griffis - Present

Staff Members Present

Craig Dotseth, Public Works Director
Jon Paladini, City Attorney
Mark Woodfill, Finance Director
Gwen Rowitsch, Administrative Support Services Manager
Carey Oberheim, Business Manager

C. Approval of Minutes from July 14, 2020 Meeting

Councilman Blair asked if members had any changes or objections to the minutes. The members did not remark, Councilman Blair declared the minutes approved.

D. Draft Sewer Policy Discussion

Craig Dotseth reviewed the Mission and Goals of the Commission.
Mission is to complete a comprehensive policy and implementation of a sewer service expansion program.

- Goal #1 – Improve watershed quality, increase recharge and provide improved services to our residents
- Goal #2 – Create a policy
- Goal #3 – Review and identify funding management

Mr. Dotseth reviewed questionnaire answers provided by the members

- Should a new home connect to existing sewer if a sewer main is adjacent to or abutting property when also connecting to City water?
    - Inside city limits – All agreed yes
    - Outside city limits – All agreed yes

- Should a new home be required to extend a sewer main if property not adjacent or abutting to a sewer main when also connecting to City water?
    - Inside City limits – 5 yes, 1 no
    - Outside City limit – 3 yes, 1 no

A maximum distance a homeowner would have to extend sewer main to tie in would be considered.

Mark Nietupski stated this is a reasonable approach when it comes to initial discussion for costs of extending a main.

Jane Orr asked how many lots are available within the City for new home build. Mr. Dotseth state we do not have a count for this at this time.

Sandy Griffis stated she would like to avoid seeming that the committee is mandating water and sewer connections. Councilman Blair stated this is a starting place for policy, it would still have to go through Council before implementation.

Jon Paladini remarked that allowing a septic system if the cost is less than connecting to sewer excluding Development Impact Fees could be a consideration of the policy but not a guarantee as the policy is created.

Jim Hazelbaker remarked that years ago the gas line was installed in the street, at that time residents could choose to hook up at their cost to get the private service to the main. Mr. Dotseth stated that this is an option to discuss when talking about financing at the next meeting with the primary goal being to reduce the number of septic systems in our City to protect our waterways.

- Are there any circumstances that would exempt a home from connecting to sewer when it is not adjacent or abutting the main
    - Inside City limits – 3 yes, 3 no
    - Outside City limits – 3 yes, 1 no

- Should a septic system be allowed if the cost of a septic system was less than connecting to City sewer, excluding Development Impact Fees
    - Inside City limits – 4 yes, 3 no
    - Outside City limits – 3 yes, 2 no

Mr. Dotseth stated incentives may be considered during the financing phase of the commission to encourage septic users to hook up to sewer. Councilman Blair reminded the Committee that consultants have determined that it is important to take houses off septic to increase recharge as well as reduce pollution of our waterways and reservoirs.

Mr. Nietupski remarked if we begin with the end in mind, what is the desired outcome when it comes to improving our watershed quality; obtaining more treated effluent for recharge use, etc. He stated the advancing of the City's

interests with respect to protecting Prescott's assets, our lakes, streams, amenities; could help in working out the other details like financing.

- Should an existing home be required to connect to sewer if an existing sewer main is adjacent to or abutting the property
  - Inside City limits – 2 yes, 4 no
  - Outside City limits – 3 yes, 3 no

Mr. Dotseth suggested utilizing the same scenarios for both of the "existing home" questions

1. When property is sold and ownership of the property is transferred.
2. When the sewer usage is increased (e.g. building addition)
3. When septic system fails.

All were in favor.

E. Financial Opportunity Research Discussion

- Goal #3 – Review and identity funding management
  - Federal funding sources
    - EPA Clean Water State Revolving Fund
    - ADEQ Water Quality Improvement Grant
    - Housing and urban development, community development block grant funds (CDBG)
    - Water infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA)
    - City participation
    - Improvement Districts
  - Private Grant Opportunities
    - Walton Foundation
    - Friends of the Verde Nature Conservancy
- Homework: research other funding opportunities

F. Alternative Time Proposed for September 15, 2020 Meeting

The September 15, 2020 meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m.

G. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Carey Oberheim

Carey Oberheim, Business Manager

Steve Blair, Chairman

Date: 9-15-2020