



COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER ISSUES MEETING

REGULAR SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 2021, 9:30 AM

201 S Cortez Street
Prescott, AZ 86303
Council Chambers

Steve Blair, Councilman - Chairman

Phil Goode, Councilman – Member

Steve Sischka, Councilman - Member

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PRESCOTT COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER ISSUES HELD ON JANUARY 12, 2021, IN THE 201 S CORTEZ STREET PRESCOTT, AZ 86303 COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

The following Agenda will be considered by the Prescott Council Subcommittee on Water Issues at Regular Subcommittee Meeting pursuant to the Prescott City Charter, Article II, Section 13. Notice of the meeting is given pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes, Section 38-431.02. One or more members of the Council may be attending the meeting through the use of a technological device.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Blair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

**Chairman Steve Blair
Member Steve Sischka
Member Goode**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment will be accepted following each agenda item and limited to three (3) minutes. Please complete a comment card and return it to the City Clerk, speakers will be called in the order received.

Chairman Blair and Water Resources Project Manager Leslie Graser Introduced Arizona Water Awareness Month as well as various websites that promote water awareness, and the urban water cycle exhibit at the City of Prescott Public Library.

Member Sischka asked if rain is received this summer there may be more natural watering of the golf courses.

Ms. Graser replied that the golf courses will probably still use reclaimed supplies but a lesser amount.

This item was for discussion only, no formal action was taken.

C. Focus Topic – Issue Brief on Groundwater and the Assured Water Program dated March 5, 2021

Ms. Graser provided a presentation to the Subcommittee regarding the item that was previously tabled and updates since that time. Post 25 AMA has been working almost two years looking at issues in terms of what the state will be doing after 2025. The document has six areas of opportunity to improve upon the groundwater management and focus topic at this time is Groundwater in the Assured Water Supply Program.

Ms. Graser read the Issue Statement and the Background and informed the committee that the city is in active work process right now to modify their Decision and Order of Assured Water Supply. The city is a designated water provider, and there are two requirements for demonstrating an assured water supply designation: 1) the water for the proposed Certificate or Designation is physically available for 100 years 2) the use of the water is consistent with the management goal of the AMA. Language that the Subcommittee should become familiar with: 1) current demand - water we are pumping right now 2) committed demand – what is set aside for already platted subdivisions 3) projected demand – future water use.

Member Sischka asked how deep the wells in Chino Valley are, and at what level the pumps are set.

Public Works Administration Support Services Manager Gwen Rowitsch responded stating that as a general rule the pumps are set 50-100 ft lower than the static levels of the well, for example the Chino Valley Well #2 static level is around 235 feet, and the pumping level is around 270 feet.

Member Goode asked if the assured water supply status is reevaluated in the Decision and Order that is issued every 15 years and if the city can expect a 10 year term on our Decision and Order this time around.

Ms. Graser stated the city's current Decision and Order is coming to an end soon and had a 20 year window. If the Big Chino had not been approved for construction the city would need to resubmit an Application to Modify by Dec 31, 2021. This time around they are holding more of the designations to a 10 year term however we are going to negotiate for 20, is how we are preparing the documents Member Goode inquired if ADWR will look at the management history and availability of importable water amounts or sources to determine if a longer period of time is justified.

Ms. Graser confirmed.

Chairman Blair asked if, based on the city being part of an AMA and how well water has been managed in Prescott, ADWR might demand we send our water to our outlying communities. At some point in time there will be a need to bring that water in from the Big Chino to manage our area and the areas around us.

Ms. Graser stated it is hard to say, not sure there is a correct answer at this point. It is important to continue the work to prepare this Decision and Order, watch what is going on at the City and State level, then wait and see if there is any reason for ADWR to do a force.

This item was for discussion only, no formal action was taken.

D. Focus Topic – Decision and Order No. 86-401501.0001 Modification Presentation

Ms. Graser provided a presentation to the Subcommittee regarding the kickoff of the modification to Decision and Order of Assured Water Supply, particularly focused on physical availability. The city is not currently bringing in supplies so that won't be part of this modeling exercise, will be looking at the supplies in the active management area. Also is important to note that there are two separate groundwater models, one already in play in the Big Chino with Golder as the consultant and the one presented today.

Member Goode asked if there are two different modeling firms, one working on data for the SRP lawsuit and a second that ADWR will use to determine where the city stands prior to the issuance of this new Assured Water Supply status by the end of the year.

Ms. Graser responded that the city has engaged Matrix, formerly known as Southwest Groundwater, as a consultant to use the ADWR model, then it is filtered back to the department as part of our application.

Member Goode asked when their model will be presented to ADWR in order to make their determination by the end of the year and if Golder will try to get their report done in a similar timeframe so it can be compared.

Ms. Graser responded that August is the pre-application meeting with the state, would like to have the application in by November. The due date as part of existing Decision and Order is Dec. 31, 2021, but trying to get it in early. The Golder modeling report looks at how pumping may impact the Verde, and if there are any mitigation requirements; the original date was set for September 2021 but may not be ready until February 2022. The model being discussed is solely for the Active Management Area; the two sub basins of the little Chino and the Upper Agua Fria.

Ms. Graser continued the presentation with the PrAMA Groundwater Flow Model which was first developed in 1995 and has been updated three times since. This model is currently being updated by Matrix for current pumping, projected pumping, water levels, artificial recharge and other information about aquifer properties. All these things will be part of the city's historic data and projections to show the ADWR that the city can maintain its assured water supply into the future.

4. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of the March 2, 2021 and March 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

MOTION BY MEMBER SISCHKA TO APPROVE ITEM 4.A; SECONDED BY MEMBER GOODE: PASSED [3-0].

B. Infrastructure Topic - Pumping vs. Recharge 2021 Update

Water Resources Project Manager Leslie Graser provided a presentation to the Subcommittee regarding the preliminary total pumped and preliminary total delivered to the recharge facility from January 1 - February 28, 2021:

- Preliminary total pumped – 854.15 AF
- Preliminary total delivered to recharge facility – 624.68 AF

At this point the delivery to the recharge facility is entirely reclaimed effluent supplies, the window for recharge just opened up for surface water as of April 1, 2021. Ms. Graser also provided a modified Monthly Water Pumped (AF) vs. Recharge Deliveries in comparison to the previous year, and asked the Subcommittee if they would like to keep seeing the cumulative as only showing the effluent.

Member Sischka asked how the surface water is pumped down and then pumped right out.

Ms. Graser noted that the city tracks the amount of water that is put down and are working on tracking similar amounts at Chino Wells 1-5.

Member Goode asked for clarification on the approximate recoverable amount of water stored in a month.

Ms. Graser commented that when the statute was written they did not realize the challenges on the operation side, so even though staff is monitoring what is being put down and trying to match it, those amounts don't have to absolutely match month for month. The state is very understanding as long as municipalities show what they recovered at the end of the year.

Member Sischka noted that on the percent of water pumped vs. percent of water delivered, January was 68%, February was 79% and asked what caused the difference.

Ms. Graser responded that in February there was more effluent available to put towards the recharge facility.

Chairman Blair asked if this means the golf courses did not use it.

Ms. Graser responded that it is a possibility, it was late January when the big storm hit.

- The proposed schedule for the process:
Data Gathering and Analysis – End of March
- Secure latest ADWR PrAMA model and update historical period through 2020 – End of April
- Build future years into model – End of May
- Run model scenarios and analyze results – June/July
- Report Documentation – August/September

Member of the public Leslie Hoy addressed the subcommittee and asked: 1) if the Big Chino is going to be involved in our Decision and Order this time, 2) if the city bases the Decision and Order current model instead of the new model what impact will that have on the Decision and Order outcome, and 3) when does Ms. Graser anticipate the final Decision and Order will be issued.

Chairman Blair commented that he can't see why, based on what we are able to pump and our conservation efforts, they would make us go to the Big Chino.

Ms. Graser responded: 1) Even though the physical supply is not linked to our infrastructure, that right to the Big Chino will be in our Decision and Order as an inactive supply type. 2) Does not have an answer to second question at this point as she can't see into the future to know which direction we are going, but if the state wants us to use the new model we need a fairly clear date of when it is available so we can meet the timelines required for the application. 3) Will submit a complete and correct application on time, the state will start the review process, if any changes needed or if they have questions we will address them, ultimately rolled into a document signed by the Director and will be issued. Recognized that our last Decision and Order was a workout so are doing their best on this DNO to submit timely, have things organized and documented.

This item was for discussion only, no formal action was taken.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Blair adjourned the meeting at 10:32 a.m.



STEVE BLAIR, Chairman

ATTEST:


SARAH M. SLEP, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular Subcommittee Meeting of the Council Subcommittee on Water Issues of the City of Prescott, Arizona held on January 12, 2021. I further certify the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

Dated this 5 day of May, 2021

AFFIX
CITY
SEAL





Sarah M. Siep, City Clerk