

TRANSCRIPT OF OCTOBER 15, 2008

CALL TO THE AUDIENCE

CHAIRMAN JIM BARRY: Okay. We're going to do Call to the Audience. Charles, do you want to . . . ?

CHARLES COLE: Mr. Chairman, I was out of town and missed two meetings, and they were recent meetings and I reviewed them on the website and saw that some misleading information on cost of rainwater harvesting was presented. I'd like to take about three minutes to correct the record.

In answering a question from the audience on October 2nd, Mr. Avery compared the cost of our residential rainwater harvesting system to the \$20 or \$25 average household's monthly water bill. He was essentially comparing the cost of apples and oranges because of the following: One, our system was built in a remote, semi-remote location, with no other development occurring at the time. So, we had no options for cost sharing; whereas, most people in Tucson are spreading infrastructure costs across thousands of households.

Two, mortgage estimates for our costs were based on year 2003 costs, but the Tucson Water infrastructure was priced decades ago. The monthly water bill stated for Tucsonans does not - and this is number three - does not accurately reflect what citizens are paying for their water.

For our system, the reasonable comparison would be with the estimated costs the Pima County Board of Supervisors obtained a year or so ago for possibly extending water service up Camino Del Cerro, the next canyon to the north of us. If the Board had not voted that down, they would have assessed each household at least \$50,000 to \$60,000, plus a connection fee, plus a monthly water fee. This cost would have been far more expensive than our system, and ours provides outstanding water quality.

In addition, Mr. Avery's use of the \$20 to \$25 average water bill per month in Tucson does not reflect properly what people are actually paying for water. After the last meeting, last week's meeting, I asked Mr. Mitch Basefsky if they had any idea how much people are paying for bottled water. He said that a survey was conducted about two years ago and, if he recalled correctly, people were paying \$28 to \$30 a month for bottled water. This would bring the average monthly water cost to \$50 per household, if accurate, not \$20 or \$25.

In considering such things as untapped water sources, innovative planning, and extending new water surface - new water service - excuse me - to areas that will include shared costs among many water users, futuristic planning should include thinking out of the box, being entirely objective without bias, and costs analyses for possible alternative systems must include appropriate comparisons, not the apples versus oranges phenomenon.

You are discussing extremely serious issues here, and anybody who would use misleading comparisons or funny numbers would be providing a great disservice to the Committee and to the citizens of Southern Arizona. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN JIM BARRY: Tracy, you want to . . .?

TRACY WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair and Committee members. Clearly, one of our community's greatest concerns is the aging infrastructure of Tucson Water and Pima County Wastewater Departments. Many of the pipes, pumps, wells, and treatment plants are outdated, and due to be replaced. This places a huge burden on the employees who are responsible for the operation and maintenance of these vital systems. To improve our understanding of the big picture, we asked the Water Committee to acquire some basic Human Resources information.

Number one - and, Melaney, I'll get this to you in writing, so you don't have to put it on the chart - overall, how many people are currently employed at Tucson Water and Pima County Wastewater? How do these numbers compare with people employed there five years ago, back in 2003?

Number three. How many people work in Operations and Maintenance for both of these systems? And what are their responsibilities, like, what are their job descriptions?

And four. Are any of these Operation and Maintenance jobs being outsourced to private contractors, consultants, companies, or individuals? If so, what are the timelines related to those contracts? How much is being paid? What are the costs related to those contracts? If there are, do they produce reports, and are those reports available as public records? Please provide these reports for our review. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN JIM BARRY: We'll - we'll do that. Asking about how many people work there reminds me of back in 1963 somebody asked John Paul the 22nd, who was the Pope at the time, how many people worked in the Vatican and he said, "Oh, about a third." So, maybe we'll get you that information.

Anybody else? Call to the Audience. Colette?

COLETTE ALTAFER: I feel like I've gone down the rabbit hole when it comes to talking about effluent and gray water. We talk about the amount of gray water increasing as the

population increases, but the water to fill the toilets has to come from somewhere first; doesn't come out of thin air. So, it sounds like we're not factoring that in.

And then we talk about how we're going to conserve water by putting in gray water systems but, because of the way our sewer system is designed, it is designed at a particular pitch, which means you have to have a certain amount of water in the system in order for the sewer system to function, and if we start taking water out, that may amount to a savings for me if I put a gray water system in, but somewhere down the line we've got to put - whether it's potable or pipe effluent back uphill to put it back into the system. So, it looks like all we're doing is redistributing my costs to the rest of the community that doesn't put a gray water system in, and I 'm just hoping we don't lose sight of that and that we keep that in mind is that, at this point, it doesn't really sound like a real conservation measure.

MEMBER JOHN CARLSON: Yeah, we addressed that last time; that there's -

CHAIRMAN JIM BARRY: Yeah. Anybody else? Anybody want to adjourn? Done. Thank you all very much.

(Conclusion of meeting.)

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that, to the best of my ability, the foregoing is a true and accurate transcription of the audio recording of (Call to the Audience) of the City/County Water & Wastewater Study Oversight Committee Meeting held on October 15, 2008.

Transcription completed: October 19, 2008.

DANIELLE L. KRASSOW-TISDALE