



## City/County Water and Wastewater Study Oversight Committee



To: Oversight Committee Members

From: J.T. Barry  
Chair

Re: **Clarification on Jim Kiser Comments at the April 18, 2008 Meeting**

Date: April 19, 2008

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At the April 18, 2008 meeting, Jim Kiser referred to a committee member comment that the committee's oversight role did not include part of the approved scope of work. Jim refers to a conversation he and I had after the April 11, 2008 meeting. In his comments at that meeting, Jim said that there were imminent items in the scope of work that would be of interest to people beyond the City and County, specifically referring to the following scope items:

During this phase, we expect Tucson Water and Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation staff to advance City and County cooperative efforts by taking four steps to significantly improve communication and coordination in implementing future regional water policy:

1. Improve communication and coordination between Tucson Water and Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation staff by establishing more direct communication, including a periodic, executive, on-loan exchange program for management staff of each organization.
2. Cooperatively pursue and develop a joint constructed recharge project for City and County effluent being discharged to the Santa Cruz River. Such a constructed recharge program would accrue significant additional recharge credits for both the City and County that are presently being lost due to the discharge of effluent to the Santa Cruz River being classified as "managed recharge."
3. Finalize the Conservation Effluent Pool and Intergovernmental Agreement amendments to respect, foster and encourage the preservation as well as restoration of riparian-dependent ecosystems, and to establish the principle that water providers have access to effluent, subject to deduction for the Southern Arizona Water Rights Settlement Act and the Conservation Effluent Pool. The City and County should finalize the Conservation Effluent Pool and Intergovernmental Agreement amendments, which are near final approval by both the City and County.
4. Finalize the location of wastewater reclamation facilities in the Southeast Area. A new upgradient, subregional wastewater reclamation facility has not been constructed in nearly 30 years, even though such a facility was contemplated in the 1979 Sewer Merger Agreement. The final siting of this facility needs to occur as part of the City's Southeast Area planning.

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I did say to Jim that I thought these were commitments that the City and County would accomplish between themselves, and were not a part of the Phase 1 inventory the committee was addressing. Jim replied that the City and County should undertake the four action items with public consultation and I agreed with him that should happen.

In response to Jim's public comments, the Committee could acknowledge these concerns in our public process report to Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors. Our comments could include the following points:

- The City and County can implement a "periodic, executive, on-loan program for management staff of each organization" on their own, without much need for heightened public scrutiny.
- Two commitments – "joint constructed recharge project" and "wastewater reclamation facility in the southeast area" – will be multi-year planning, design and construction efforts. The committee assumes the City and County will include an open, inclusive, and collaborative public participation process for both projects
- Apparently the conservation effluent pool and intergovernmental agreement amendments "are near final approval" The committee assumes the City and County will appropriately publicize and receive public comment on these agreements before they go to Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors for public hearing.

Because Jim raised this issue before the Committee, I expected you wanted to know what his comments were about. It is perfectly appropriate for the committee to include these concerns in our public process report, but I believe the committee has no mandate, special expertise, or length of tenure to assume responsibility specifically for implementing the requested public process.

I do expect, however, that staff will include these items in the Phase 1 inventory report, so we will have opportunity to discuss and learn more about them.

I believe the committee's platter already is full enough platter on its own. If the Committee, however, disagrees with my observations, then by all means let us put the item on a future agenda for discussion and possible action.

