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CITY/COUNTY WATER AND WASTEWATER STUDY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

**July 23, 2008
Meeting Summary**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jim Barry called the July 23, 2008 meeting of the City/County Water and Wastewater Study Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee) to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Randolph Golf Course Club House, Copper Room, 600 South Alvernon Way, Tucson, Arizona.

Members Present:

Jim Barry, Chairman
John Carlson
Marcelino Flores
Rob Kulakofsky
Bruce Gungle
Tina Lee
Bonnie Poulos
Sean Sullivan
Daniel Sullivan
James Watson

Representing:

Citizens Water Advisory Committee (CWAC)
Wastewater Management Advisory Committee (WMAC)
WMAC
WMAC
County Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission
CWAC
County P&Z Commission
City Planning Commission
CWAC
City Planning Commission

Alternate Present:

Bob Cook

Representing:

County P&Z Commission

Members Absent:

Carol Zimmerman
Mark Stratton

Representing:

CWAC
WMAC

City/County Staff Present:

Nicole Ewing Gavin, City Manager's Office
Chris Avery, Tucson Water
Sandy Elder, Tucson Water
John Thomas, Tucson Water
Melaney Seacat, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department
Nicole Fyffe, Pima County Administrator's Office
Mike Gritzik, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department
Eric Wieduwilt, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department
Ed Curley, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department

A quorum of the Committee was established.

2. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: July 9, 2008**

Jim Barry stated that this item needs to be continued to the next meeting because the July 9th meeting was not properly posted through the City Clerk's office.

3. **COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Marcelino Flores announced two upcoming training opportunities. A handout was provided to the Committee and is attached.

Sean Sullivan requested that information be provided to the Committee on impacts of infrastructure to wildlife and habitat, mitigation efforts, and an update on the City's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) process. Jim Barry stated that we will respond to this at a future meeting.

4. **PREPARATION FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS / AUGUST PROGRESS REPORT**

Jim Barry discussed the need for additional meetings to be able to complete Phase 1 by the end of December. He distributed a handout (attached) with proposed new meeting dates, an outline of presentation topics, and a draft outline of the final December report.

Marcelino Flores handed out a draft list of questions (attached) that he suggested the Committee members respond to for each presentation. The purpose is to get Committee member input on the key messages and issues to help draft the final report. Marcelino also mentioned that a retreat might be an alternative to weekly meetings in October.

Jim Barry described the final five presentations which he stated will raise larger issues that will be more fully addressed in Phase 2.

Rob Kulakofsky questioned the relevance of the presentation on history of native peoples in the Tucson area.

Jim Barry asked the committee to review the proposed meeting dates and topics and be prepared to give feedback at the next meeting.

John Carlson brought up the issue that population forecasting is not precise and that we need to make sure we are looking at high and low brackets.

Nicole Ewing Gavin distributed a draft of the August progress report from the Committee to the Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors (attached) and asked the Committee to e-mail suggested changes to Brenda Garcia. The goal is to finalize the report at the next meeting for presentation to the Council and Board at their September 9 meeting.

5. **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS PRESENTATIONS**

Eric Wieduwilt responded to a question about siting a wastewater treatment facility on the southeast side. He stated that we are looking at the need for this facility and that

it's a matter of timing and build-out of the area. It will likely be looked at in the 2025 planning period.

Eric Wieduwilt stated that the Corona de Tucson wastewater agreement is now posted to the Study Website under the Resources tab.

Eric Wieduwilt responded to a question about the number of Grade 3 and 4 rated pipes in the wastewater system. He stated there are currently 170 reaches of pipe and 30 manholes with grade 3 and 4 defects and that \$5-\$6 million is spent each year to take care of the highest priority needs.

Eric Wieduwilt responded to a question as to whether we have had to repair our sewer system because of subsidence problems. Eric stated that there is no evidence of a connection between USGS monitored subsidence and sewer defects, however this is something we will continue to monitor.

John Carlson asked what time period is used to plan system repairs. Eric stated they use a 5 year planning horizon.

6. **NATIONAL AND STATE INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES / TUCSON WATER CIP**

Chris Avery made a presentation on national and state infrastructure issues as well as Tucson Water's infrastructure needs and planned infrastructure improvements. The Power Point presentation is posted to the study website (tucsonpimawaterstudy.com).

7. **QUESTION AND ANSWERS WITH THE PRESENTER**

Dan Sullivan asked how funding shortfalls would be addressed (related to the Statewide infrastructure study). Chris Avery responded that the study aggregated data from local utilities.

Bonnie Poulos asked how we address lower revenues that come from conservation. Chris Avery responded that Tucson Water is already accommodating flat usage while population is growing and is planning for this in their rate structure. Also, there is a cost savings to Tucson Water when they don't deliver water. There is a certain amount of fixed cost and a certain amount variable. It is important to understand and track conservation trends because that helps plan the CIP including appropriate sizing for peak demand. Bonnie asked whether you can split out the water bill to reflect fixed vs. variable costs. Chris stated that this could be addressed at the following meeting.

Rob Kulakofsky asked who pays for the new infrastructure to serve growth (9% of total). Chris Avery responded that its hard to say exactly. Typically we install major mains in advance of new development. Over the past 10 years however, we are requiring developers to build larger pieces of the system.

John Carlson asked how population growth relates to the Nessie curve. Chris responded that the Nessie curve is only looking at maintenance of the existing system.

Bob Cook asked what part of the recharge projects are needed to accommodate new growth. Chris responded that some portion of Clearwater is for new growth but most of it is for existing customers and replacing groundwater use with surface water use. Bob stated that as part of Smart Growth we need to make the cost of growth more transparent. Jim Barry stated that this would be discussed at a future meeting.

Clyde Stagner requested that information be provided on the quality of water including total dissolved solids (TDS) that we will be sending into the system and how that could affect infrastructure. Jim Barry stated that this would be discussed at a future meeting.

Tres English asked about the per capita cost of infrastructure. Chris responded that for the 5 year CIP, its approximately \$500/customer.

Dick Basie asked why we replace water meters after 2 years of use and why we have to read water meters every month. Chris Avery stated that its easier to deal with issues like a water leak on a monthly basis.

Collette Altaffer asked about the purpose of recharging reclaimed water. Chris Avery responded that recharging reclaimed water helps us store and accumulate credits during the winter months to pump and use during peak demand. Collette asked about whether this water migrates into potable water. Chris responded that it is recharged in an area that is geologically contained.

8. **WASTEWATER CIP (CORE)**

Eric Wieduwilt, Pima County Wastewater, gave a presentation on the Pima County Wastewater Reclamation Department Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The presentation is posted to the study website.

9. **WASTEWATER: REGIONAL OPTIMIZATION MASTER PLAN**

Mike Gritzik, Director of the Pima County Wastewater Reclamation Department, gave a presentation on the Regional Optimization Master Plan (ROMP). The presentation is posted to the study website.

10. **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH PRESENTERS**

Eric Wieduwilt responded to a question from the previous meeting stating that 4.8 million gallons of potable water is used for conveyance annually in the wastewater system.

Bob Cook asked about flexibility in the design of ROMP to adapt to future uncertainties related to population growth, interest rates, cost of construction, etc. Mike Gritzik responded that yes, the size could be adjusted if the assumptions behind the design change.

Bruce Gungle asked about growth needs and trends related to planning these facilities. Mike Gritzik responded that 2030 projections were used to size the facilities.

Rob Kulakofsky asked what the lifespan is of the facility and what the consequences are of not building it. Mike Gritzik responded that the new facility will be designed to last 50-70 years with flexibility in terms of mechanical and instrument change-out as new technologies are developed. The interconnect will have a design life of 100 years. The facility is being designed to ensure fail safe compliance with regulatory standards.

John Carlson asked about whether Wastewater gets revenue for Class A and B biosolids. Mike Gritzik responded that users will typically pay for Class A biosolids and Wastewater pays users to take Class B. Pima County has a very low sludge disposal rate because of a high usage rate.

Bob Cook asked about centralized vs. decentralized wastewater treatment facilities. Mike Gritzik responded that the ROMP looked at all treatment facilities and makes recommendations on both the smaller facilities and large facilities. There is a need for both.

George Hubbard asked whether sludge is considered a hazardous material. Mike Gritzik responded that it is not because we regulate industrial discharge into the system.

Mac Hudson asked how we will pay for ROMP if voters don't approve the bonds. Mike Gritzik stated that this program will happen whether it passes or not because regulatory agencies will require it through consent decree. Certificates of Participation (COPS), private sector funding, or short term financing are other funding options that could be pursued.

Dick Basye asked about the quality of water being discharged into the Santa Cruz river. Mike Gritzik stated that this is regulated and that wastewater must be treated to certain standards for discharge.

Bonnie Poulos made the point that a positive aspect of agriculture's use of water is that they provide a productive use for our biosolids.

Colette Altaffer asked where the nitrogen in biosolids goes and if it gets into the aquifer. Mike Gritzik responded that it acts in a similar way to fertilizer used on crops but in a much smaller concentration. It stays near the surface and is an organic, mild fertilizer that enhances the quality of soil.

11. **CALL TO THE AUDIENCE**

Tracy Williams expressed concern about lack of attendance by some Committee members at meetings.

Colette Altaffer referred the Committee to the July 9 letter from the Neighborhood Infill Coalition. Letter is attached to July 9 meeting summary.

Charles Cole spoke about rainwater harvesting and referred the Committee to the article distributed at the last meeting "Rainwater Collection Systems" (article is posted to the study website).

Dick Bayse stated that we have more water than we know what to do with, we just don't use it in the right way (such as how we discharge water into the Santa Cruz). There are cheaper and more effective methods. We are granting water to Rosemont mine and they will turn it into a toxic soup. We must address the hypocrisy going on here.

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Jim Barry at 9:00 p.m.

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