

MINUTES
Water Advocacy Task Force
March 27, 2008

Members present: Chairperson JP Duniphan, Mayor Alan Hanks, Mark Anderson, Pete Cappa, Marcia Elkins, Robert Ellis, Dave Emery, Karen Gundersen-Olson, Tom Johnson, Larry Kostaneski, Ron Kroeger, Jim Preston, Hani Shafai, John Wagner

Support Staff present: Stacey Titus, Peggy Nielson

Others present: Mark Lichtwardt, Anthony Beeson, Timothy Behlings, Jim Bell, Dan Ferber, Linda Harris, Ron Koth, Pat McElgunn, Bob Morcom, Dave Muck, Jeff Nettleton, Perry Rahn, Nancy Trautman, Rich Wells, Sig Zvejnieks

Chairperson JP Duniphan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and stated the objective of the meeting, Task 1 of the three tasks from prior meetings: Task 1 – Develop a source water management tool to assist City staff in managing the City's water supply sources based on source water availability as it pertains to drought conditions and surface water availability. There are two other tasks and future meetings are anticipated in mid-May.

Robert Ellis explained Task 1 is the source water utilization tool that will be used by the water operator to make decisions on what water source is appropriate for a specific time. This tool will be crucial to formalize and adopt for design, cost estimates, and funding for the two treatment plants.

Mark Lichtwardt, Burns & McDonnell, explained the portion of the recommendation by the Water Advocacy Task Force that will be addressed by this presentation: The City should adopt a water source use management plan to ensure optimal use of all surface and groundwater sources available to the City, and that needed to include municipal, industrial, natural resource and recreational uses. The advantages of implementing this plan are:

1. Maximizes the use of water resources.
2. Ensures water resources will be available in the future.
3. Provides flexibility for operation.

Currently, the City uses the wells first. The surface water treatment plant is just for peaking in the summer months. This has worked well for many years but now ground water levels are dropping significantly and this will not be the best scenario.

The goal of this tool is very simple but addresses all needs:

1. Identify the interested parties.
2. Collect documents and review agreements.
3. Determine the variables of interest.

4. Analyze historical data.
5. Develop scoring method that addresses variables.

Anthony Beeson, Burns & McDonnell, reviewed the list of documents pertaining to this topic: historical data of Pactola level and releases, U.S. stream gauge locations on Rapid Creek, and precipitation data from several places throughout the region. Variables were categorized as dependent or independent.

A spreadsheet was used to score and tally each variable and obtain a score to indicate a move towards using surface water or ground water. The water operators would input data to cells on this spreadsheet. Lichtwardt explained 108 different scenarios were tested which included extremes for each month, wet and dry, etc. By implementing this tool, all interested parties and the City will benefit through better utilization of water resources.

Mark Anderson noted the importance of allowing the aquifer to recover in the wintertime. Lichtwardt explained the model would achieve this at times of precipitation and at times of adequate levels of Pactola: 100% surface water and 0% groundwater would be utilized.

Larry Kostaneski questioned a bias against using surface water. Lichtwardt answered the aquifer is a beneficiary of the presented plan.

Mayor Hanks questioned the precipitation levels in the model. Beeson explained the limitations of the Excel program by using a running total of precipitation. Lichtwardt further explained the rolling averages merely are an indication of a wet or dry year.

Hani Shafai mentioned the difference between the Airport and the City precipitation. Another gauging station may have to be set up. The many users of the Madison Aquifer should also be aware of this plan. The regulations for use of the aquifer may have to apply to those users, also. The level of the aquifer should also be noted.

Lichtwardt explained the rolling average is a trend of wet versus dry year. Other interested parties are included in the Utility System Master Plan. The aquifer could be added to the worksheet, however, all of the sources are monitored and the data is readily available. The tool uses the aquifer primarily in a drought period and surface water when it is available.

Ron Kroeger asked the timeframe for design and construction. Conceptual designs are complete and costs will be completed soon. There has been activity on funding options, also. The Jackson Springs plant could be complete by 2011 or 2012. The existing plant will depend on whether it will be a retrofit or a new facility, and 2012 will be a reasonable estimate.

Tom Johnson wondered if there was a component in the plan to allow for economics.

John Wagner questioned what quantity of water is taken out of the aquifer besides the City's. Mark Anderson explained that individual users could be estimated.

Mark Anderson affirmed the shifting towards surface water that the tool addresses. Precipitation will reduce demand. The strategy should be sustainability.

Robert Ellis stated he was comfortable with the plan, and adoption would still mean further discussions.

Duniphan read Task 2 – Develop a conceptual surface water treatment plant design and accompanying costs estimates: evaluate the cost effectiveness of retrofitting the Mountain View Water Treatment Plant or constructing a new facility.

Shafai noted this community would be larger by 2012.

Lichtwardt stated the Utility System Master Plan addresses water conservation measures. John Wagner explained the water conservation measures were set by ordinance. Conservation needs to be consistent to be monitored. Shafai declared the water conservation measures should be stricter for the future.

Duniphan asked for additional comments.

Tom Johnson moved, second by Pete Cappa, to adopt the source water utilization tool and to allow staff to proceed to the Public Works Committee and the City Council. The motion carried.

Duniphan noted there were 13 out of 17 members at this meeting.

Adjourn

Mark Anderson moved, second by Robert Ellis to adjourn the Water Advocacy Task Force meeting at 6:30 p.m. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Nielson
Water Division Administrative Secretary