



Agenda

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WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

CITY HALL - 200 LINCOLN AVE.

CITY COUNCILORS' CONFERENCE ROOM

TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2011

4:00 PM TO 6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES JUNE 14, 2011 WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

5. Water Sources and Water Emergency Management Plan Update. (Daniel Ransom)
6. Pilot project for audits. (Doug Pushard)

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

MATTERS FROM STAFF:

MATTERS FROM THE COMMITTEE:

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA – TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2011:

ADJOURN.

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WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Tuesday, July 12 , 2011**

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**MINUTES OF THE
CITY OF SANTA FE
WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
Tuesday, July 12, 2011
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER.

A meeting of the Water Conservation Committee was called to order by Councilor Christopher Calvert, Chair, at approximately 4:00 p.m., on July 12, 2011, in the City Council Conference Room, City Hall, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor Christopher Calvert, Chair
Giselle Piburn
Doug Pushard
Stephen K. Wiman
D.H. Strongheart

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Melissa McDonald, Vice-Chair
Reese Baker
Mitch Davenport
Lisa Knouse
Grace Perez
Karyn Schmitt

OTHERS ATTENDING

Dan Ransom, Water Division
Laurie Trevizo, Water Division
Melessia Helberg, Stenographer

There was not a quorum of the membership in attendance. Chair Calvert opened the meeting only for the receiving of reports, and no decisions were made and no votes were taken.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

No action.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: JUNE 14, 2011, WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

No action.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5. WATER SOURCES AND WATER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE. (DANIEL RANSOM)

A copy of "Santa Fe Water System Daily Report in Million Gallons of Water (MG)," for July 1 through 4, 2011, is incorporated herewith to these minutes as Exhibit "1."

Mr. Ransom presented information from his Memorandum of June 30, 2011, which is in the Committee packet, noting our water capacity has doubled since the last drought. Please see this Memorandum for specifics of this presentation. Mr. Ransom said the handout [Exhibit "1"] shows storage in the reservoirs and other water use over a 4-day period.

The Committee commented and asked questions as followed:

- Chair Calvert said the increased use is a combination of a dry winter and summer, where in 2010 there was a wet winter and there was a good snowpack.
- Mr. Pushard asked what is the peak production potential of the system.

Mr. Ransom noted that some of the production is after the fact, and we are replacing use. He said the total production capacity is 36 million gallons a day, but that can be sustained only for a certain period of time. He said you can compensate for more through storage.

- Mr. Pushard said 36 million gallons a day is the total capacity, but what is the peak demand the City can sustain.

Mr. Ransom said certain City wells don't have a lot of water rights attached to them, and once the total capacity is used, the wells have to be shut down. He said the peak demands are in June-August, and taper off after that.

Mr. Pushard asked, for example if we receive no rain in the next 45 days, and peak days are 16-17 million gallons, what does the water situation look like.

Mr. Ransom said the water from the Buckman Project can cover the peak demand by itself.

Claudia Borchert said we can sustain the 8.9 million daily from either the Buckman well field and the route north by which the BDD enters our system is the same 8.9 million – currently we can get only 8.9 million gallons per day either from the Buckman Well Field or the BDD. She said we can get an 2 million gallons per day by the southern route from the BDD. She said we do have the capacity, but currently there is a bottleneck in the distribution system.

- Mr. Pushard said there is an infrastructure issue, not a capacity or storage issue.
- Chair Calvert said that situation is temporary, and by this time next year, the 15 million gallons per day will stand.

Responding to Mr. Strongheart, Ms. Borchert said there is an annual cap of 5,230 afy. She said we cannot sustain 15 million gallons per day all day based on the limitations of infrastructure and water rights.

- Chair Calvert said, in terms of what would trigger a water emergency, this was discussed by the Public Utilities Committee. He said where we are, to a certain degree, is how much pumping do we want to do. He said we need to determine what is sustainable in terms of pumping the wells, along with the limitations of infrastructure and water rights.

Ms. Borchert said there is a range, and it depends on what effects “you are willing to live with.”

- Chair Calvert said the BDD was built to rest the wells because we were certain the level at which we had been pumping was not sustainable.

Ms. Borchert said over the over the past 15 years, the use of the Buckman Well Field was about 6,000 afy. She said with conservation efforts and the BDD we probably are using the Buckman Well Field on the average of 1,000 afy for the next 10-15 years, which is below the sustainable level. She said you have to model over-use for the first 15 years, and under use for the next 15 years, and the sustainability, should be between 2,500 afy and 5,000 afy.

- Chair Calvert said the City will be monitoring the well fields to see if they rebound from the over-pumping years.

Ms. Borchert said they are rebounding and the water levels are coming up in 75% of the wells, even this year.

- Mr. Strongheart asked if there is a website where we can find the recharge information on the City wells.

Ms. Borchert said yes, it is on the City website, noting there is information on the Buckman Well Field Monitoring Program which can be downloaded.

Ms. Borchert said this is the Buckman Well Field plus private, domestic wells and government wells which are part of the network. She said the U.S. Geological Survey [USGS] has put in a series of wells, and there is a site for those wells, but she has also included them as downloads on the City site. She said the USGS has other wells in other places around the County which are not included at the City's website.

- Mr. Wiman asked how many City wells there are, and Ms. Borchert said there are 7.
- Ms. Piburn asked about the recharge of the Buckman Wells.

Ms. Borchert said it is not the result of a recharge, but it is a response of the aquifer, and demonstrated in a drawing how this is happening. She said there are some wells that are drying up as a result of the drought because the wells are so shallow. She said, however, there is a correlation between pumping the wells and the lowered water table.

- Chair Calvert said part of the County's plan is to drill some more wells, and asked if they have applications to the State Engineer to drill more wells.

Ms. Borchert said the County withdrew applications, and they want the City to provide the backup wells.

Mr. Ransom quoted from his Memorandum, "The City has not needed to impose emergency demand management restrictions since removing them in 2007. Nonetheless, the Emergency Water Regulations Ordinance adopted in June 1996 remains an important component." He said we have never used the current stages, noting the new Ordinance has two states as noted in his Memorandum.

Mr. Ransom reviewed the City's Water Emergency Management Plan, which is contained in the Committee packet. 30, 2011..

Mr. Ransom reviewed Exhibits C and D, noting Exhibit C Emergency Water Regulations for Orange Implementation State and Exhibit D Water Emergency Red Implement Stage are attached to the Memorandum. Mr. Ransom noted many of the City's previous water restrictions were made year-round restrictions.

The Committee commented and asked questions as followed:

- Chair Calvert asked what is the normal prohibition against planting of grasses, and if there is a square footage limitation.

Mr. Ransom said there is a limitation on the oasis area which can include a swimming pool, spa and such which is a 1,000 sq. ft. limitation, noting it could be less depending on lot size. He said residential and commercial have different limitations. He said the oasis isn't just grass, and it could be any water feature.

- Councilor Calvert asked if it all could be grass.

Mr. Ransom said yes, and they can plant fescue but not blue grass, noting blue grass is not allowed any time. He said they can use a fescue mix with up to 5-10% blue grass mix, and for the parks up to 25% blue grass mix..

- Ms. Piburn asked about serving water at restaurants.

Mr. Ransom said that is a year-round requirement. He said this information is supposed to be on a table tent or on the menu, noting this has become standard in most states.

- Chair Calvert said complacency has set in since 2002, and we are not enforcing the regulations as rigorously.

Mr. Ransom said this goes to the need to consistently remind the public of the year-round regulations and what is and isn't permissible, and Chair Calvert agreed.

- Ms. Piburn asked what kind of grass can be planted.

Mr. Ransom said fescue is allowed.

- Ms. Piburn ask how quickly do problems, such as an issue at the BDD, go to the Governing Body.

Mr. Ransom said it depends, noting the Buckman Treatment Plant is designed to shut-off immediately when there is contaminated water. He said if the water is going to be contaminated for a month or more, that is a different issue.

- Chair Calvert said high turbidity after a rain will trigger a shut-off, noting this happened recently because of a rain event up river in the Rio Grande.

Mr. Ransom said sometimes a contaminant will attach itself to the sediment, which we don't want to happen. He said the plant is designed to treat this water and to temporarily shut down in the event of contaminants or turbidity.

- Ms. Piburn asked what happens if it takes longer.

Mr. Ransom said the storage will take care of the demand while the Buckman Treatment Plant is out. Mr. Ransom doesn't know if that would be hours or days. He said there is other capacity such as water from the Canyon Road Treatment Plant to fill in. He said the Buckman can act quickly while the other sources kick in.

- Chair Calvert said these have to be balanced, noting we may have capacity but not the water rights, so you have to manage the sources in this context.

Mr. Ransom said when there is water in the Canyon Road Treatment Plant they use that replenishable supply "to the gallon."

- Chair Calvert said there is also the running battle with the State Engineer that if we don't use the water, we can't keep it.

- Mr. Strongheart wants to find out more about the BDD Project, and asked about available materials.

Mr. Ransom suggested he go to the website, noting it has its own website which is being updated now that it is going on line – BDD.org.

- Ms. Piburn asked what happens with commercial car washes in red restrictions.

- Chair Calvert said this is a policy issue – an economics versus water issue..

Mr. Ransom noted it comes down to what is "public health, safety & welfare."

- Chair Calvert said it is very difficult to stop car washes.

Mr. Ransom said car wash water use is not a large percentage of water use.

- Mr. Ransom said these restrictions hurt the landscaping businesses.

- Chair Calvert said their reputations would be hurt even more if they were trying to sell plants under those conditions.

- Ms. Piburn asked, in the orange stage, how it relates to community gardens on private property.

Mr. Ransom said it means planting is discouraged and you can water only twice a week with potable water. He said graywater use would be more tough with community gardens. He said you can use graywater on high water use plants.

- Mr. Pushard thanked Mr. Ransom for the information. He said we are in a drought, but have become complacent. He asked what kinds of outreach programs the City is doing to take advantage of this opportunity to inform the public.

Mr. Ransom said staff is overwhelmed with work, and it took a lot to do the last press release, which he is unsure was ever sent out.

- Chair Calvert said we should use all kinds of venues to get the message across to the public.

Mr. Ransom said the press releases are on website.

- Mr. Pushard suggested putting something in the water bills.
- Chair Calvert said it is difficult to get information sent out with the water bills – it is competitive and expensive.

Mr. Ransom said they have been using the bill message space to send messages to the public through the entire year, noting he already has bill messages prepared a year in advance, noting there isn't a lot of competition for this space. He said there have been brochures and inserts in most water bills. He said he and Ms. Trevizo will be meeting to develop the message so they can develop the marketing plan.

- Mr. Pushard asked how difficult it would be to send a letter to all businesses reminding them about their normal obligations in terms of water use and conservation.

Ms. Trevizo said she and Mr. Ransom have been discussing this as a part of their marketing campaign, and sending targeted letters to local big boxes, restaurants, hotels/motels, laundries and such, to reinforce and remind them.

- Chair Calvert asked about sending a message when they renew their licenses.

Ms. Trevizo said this was discussed, and they decided to take this year to look at what is possible.

- Chair Calvert asked if it would be possible to do this if they identify the type of business.

Mr. Ransom said the City has done mailings in the past, and there is a printout under publications at the website where you can request some of our signs. He said there was a good response on the signs. He noted there is turnover in hotels, for example, and the people don't know the water regulations with regard to hotels. He said there are many people who complain they don't get notification because they don't have computers.

Ms. Trevizo reiterated that they have discussed these things, and will work on them in terms of public outreach, noting they do put a lot of money in public outreach on flyers, print publishing and such.

Mr. Ransom said they are looking to put a message on line at the website where people go to look to see what is playing at the cinemas – water conservation, rebates and such.

- Mr. Pushard asked if there is a barrier to sending out letters to the businesses.

Mr. Ransom said it isn't really hard, noting they can get the mailing list. However, the only barrier really is time.

Ms. Trevizo said we should make the message the same in all venues for one month.

- Mr. Pushard agrees, but that approach won't give him the message to run his business better.

- Ms. Piburn asked if the mailing lists are packaged.

Mr. Ransom said we can get the mailing list from Finance which handles the business registrations and licenses. He said this is a difficult mailing list to maintain because it changes every year. He said it is difficult to get a category mailing list, such as for car washes.

- Ms. Piburn asked if the cost of mailing is a huge deterrent.

Mr. Ransom said the postage is the largest cost. He said this is the reason he likes to use inserts which are much cheaper, as well as the fact that they are reaching all water customers with the inserts. He said it is possible to do bill inserts just to commercial only.

Ms. Trevizo said people have been calling and reporting illegal water use during the drought. She said they do remind them they probably should water only twice a week.

- Mr. Pushard said people are asking when we are going to go into emergency water restrictions.
- Chair Calvert said the first answer is that a lot of those have been incorporated into year-round regulations, and there are things they should be doing year round.

Mr. Ransom said we need to remind people of those year-round regulations, because people either forget or don't know about them, such as washing cars at home requires a cut-off nozzle.

Mr. Strongheart left the meeting

- Mr. Wiman said he really appreciates this presentation.

Mr. Ransom said the message we don't want to send is that "oh, we have plenty of water." He said part of the press release addresses that, and he needs to follow up to be sure that press release is sent out

- Ms. Piburn asked when was the last time Mr. Ransom used inserts to reinforce the regulations which were rolled into year-round.

Mr. Ransom said a flyer was sent out two years ago, but didn't go out this year because they were pushing the rebates. He said that flyer is in the rack at the front of the City Hall.

- Ms. Piburn asked when can it be an insert again, and if that could be done this summer.

Mr. Ransom said it probably won't be this summer, because you need to start early because all of the things that have to happen to get it done.

- Mr. Pushard reiterated that it is in our best interest to do something pro-actively to take advantage of drought to get out conservation message, especially if there is a catastrophic event.

- Chair Calvert agreed, saying this may be one in a series of many drought years, and it is important to keep reminding the public.

- Mr. Pushard said if we're wrong, we've conserved water, and if we're right we've saved water – it is the reduced risk scenario that no matter what happens we'll look good.

- Chair Calvert cautioned about "crying wolf" too often, or people will quit paying attention.

- Mr. Pushard said we all agree that people are becoming complacent and he is saying we need to "turn up the heat."

Ms. Trevizo commented that these are management decisions, with regard to publications and press releases.

- Mr. Wiman said if we aren't doing more about it, it doesn't seem like it is a high priority for the City. He understands the lack of staff, and said perhaps we can get assistance to turn up the heat on the public to participate. He said the efforts in terms of conservation aren't commensurate with what the City has done in long term planning. He asked if there is anything this Committee can do to get more support so Mr. Ransom can do the things he is always talking about.

Mr. Ransom said they are looking at their budget and what can be done, noting the input from this Committee has given them some great ideas, as well as reinforcing what they want to do. This Committee has been a great help in this respect.

- Chair Calvert said water conservation is one of the 3-4 main strategies in the long term water supply plan. He said there is a lot happening in this respect, and we've done a lot to promote water conservation.
- Mr. Wiman said the department at the top of the communication line seems to be "hamstrung" in terms of the budget.

- Chair Calvert said there was a budget decision several years ago to do away with the PIO which would have that responsibility.
- Ms. Piburn asked if we can do more than one insert at a time, or if that will increase the weight and increase postage costs.

Mr. Ransom said it can increase the price and they try to keep it to one at a time. He said Data Print can print and insert a brochure, noting that would be cheaper than a separate mailing.

- Mr. Pushard said he received a letter regarding mulch from Solid Waste Division as a separate item.
- Chair Calvert said he thought those were in the water bills, noting there was to be a coupon for mulch.
- Mr. Pushard asked if it would be possible to send an electronic copy of any inserts to people who are billed electronically.

Mr. Ransom said he will look into this.

6. PILOT PROJECT FOR AUDITS. (DOUG PUSHARD)

Chair Calvert and Mr. Pushard suggested, and the other members agreed, since there are so few members in attendance, to postpone this presentation to the next meeting..

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

There were no discussion items.

MATTERS FROM STAFF

Mr. Ransom asked if the Committee is interested in a report on the Residential End Users Water Update Study, which can be presented as information. He noted the Water Research Foundation contracted with Aquacraft 10 years ago, and they are now updating that report, noting SF is participating by providing information at no cost to the City to participate. He said the study is done only in Canada and the U.S. He said the survey will be done of 1,000 water users at random in Santa Fe, and hope to get 30% participation.

MATTERS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Concern was expressed about members who are not attending meetings, because it is difficult to get a quorum of the Committee.

Mr. Wiman said this is one of the best meetings in terms of information and discussion.

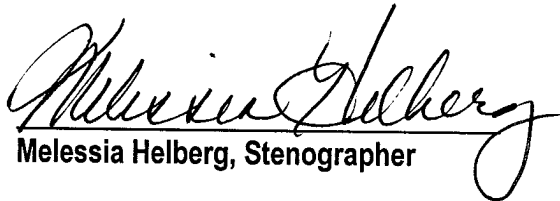
ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA – TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2011

1. Report on the staff planning for marketing and communications.
2. Pilot project on Water Audits.
3. Report on the End Use Study and include the 2001 study electronically for information.
4. Report on the pilot program for the new automatic meter readers if Mr. Ortega has new information.
5. Further information on Austin. Mr. Pushard will coordinate with Mr. Ransom.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Committee, and the Committee, having completed its agenda, adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Christopher Calvert, Chair


Melessia Helberg, Stenographer