

**CITY OF
ASHLAND**
ASHLAND WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
AUGUST 24, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

Pieter Smeenk called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way.

Committee Members Present:

Pat Acklin
Alex Amarotico
Darrell Boldt
Sherri Cellini
Joseph Graf
Kate Jackson
Donna Mickley
Don Morris
Amy Patton
Donna Rhee
Councilor Carol Voisin
Rich Whitley (Chair)
John Williams

Carollo Consultants: (via teleconference)

Rachel Lanigan
David Kraska

Staff Members:

Mike Faught, Public Works Director
Betsy Harshman, Administrative Supervisor
Robbin Pearce, Conservation
Pieter Smeenk, Engineer
Jodi Vizzini, Office Assistant
Steve Walker, Water Quality Supervisor

Absent Members:

Lesley Adams
Greg Hunter

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Prior to the motion to approve the July 28, 2011 minutes, Amy Patton asked to change the language on page two regarding water from Ashland Creek and TID from goal to an idea. Rich Whitley agreed with Ms. Patton. Mr. Smeenk explained it was not necessarily the Committee's goal but it was an internal goal for operations purposes and stated the corrections would be made as suggested.

Chairman Whitley m/s to approve the July 28, 2011 Ashland Water Advisory Committee (AWAC) Minutes.

Voice Vote: all AYES. Motion passed.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

PUBLIC FORUM

None

DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS

Project Status:

Mr. Whitley reminded the group he will be moving to Portland but will finish with the Committee either by phone, or will be down to help. Mr. Smeenk will put out an update to the City Council.

Water Supply Alternatives Update:

Ms. Acklin requested a chart of what has been decided thus far. Mr. Smeenk handed out the "Summary of Options Considered" chart and asked for feedback. He stated he will discuss the distribution system chapter in this meeting

and if time permits will discuss a list of capital projects and operation costs. The financial packages will be covered in October.

Mr. Smeenk reminded the Committee that Carollo needs a decision on whether the half day or full day's storage is preferred. At the conclusion of the last meeting Mr. Smeenk thought AWAC was in favor of increasing more than a half day, but less than a full day. The current Crowson II Project proposal equates approximately 70 or 80 percent of a day of storage with a cost of approximately \$1.00 per gallon, which equates to \$1 million difference between the two options. At the end of the meeting Mr. Smeenk hopes that AWAC will decide whether to recommend two or three million gallons (MG) of storage.

Ms. Patton mentioned the Fire Chief suggested 5,000 to 8,000 gallons per minute (gpm), but it looks like 4,000 gpm is included in most of the packages. Mr. Smeenk replied the Fire Chief had not changed his mind. Ms. Patton stated it looked like Carollo thought this was really high and asked if the Committee had decided at the last meeting that 4,000 gpm would be sufficient. John Williams confirmed AWAC did not vote on this yet. Don Morris asked if this was under the assumption that Ashland, as a community, was keeping current with brush clearing requirements. Mr. Smeenk stated the Fire Wise Commission will be addressing this and hopefully be able to improve fire protection. Mike Faught suggested AWAC hear from the consultants first and then invite the Fire Chief back.

Rachel Lanigan responded that 4,000 gpm is standard, and is a high level to provide for commercial buildings. She explained that she just returned from a city that required 8,000 gpm fire flow for very large commercial properties and it had quite an impact on their system.

David Kraska reiterated that 8,000 gpm is extremely unusual and typically the largest requirement seen in a very well developed city is about 5,000 gpm. He pointed out that in order to meet insurance requirements, developers have to provide on-site storage and pumping for that purpose, and in a city like Ashland a lot of redesign of the distribution system and new pipe would be needed in order to carry flows in this range. Mr. Smeenk suggested if AWAC set a limit of 4,000 gpm instead of 6,000 gpm, it would be a more conservative approach and developers will be required to provide increased fire protection. Mr. Kraska's response was that 4,000 gpm is a lot of water and typically, 1,500 gpm per hydrant is available; when more is needed, more hydrants are opened. This puts the requirement on the developer to design a facility that does not require such a high fire demand. A better approach is to keep 4,000 gpm as the maximum capacity for the system.

Mr. Faught questioned whether 4,000 gpm will be sufficient for residential areas considering the high amount of fuel in the area. He reminded the Committee of the Oak Knoll fire last year where 11 homes were lost in a fairly short period of time. Conversation focused on structure fires, simultaneous fires, and recent fires fueled by landscape. Kate Jackson referred to the minutes where the Fire Chief was asked about a worst case scenario and she suggested AWAC considers the plans currently in place in Palo Alto or East Berkeley. Mr. Whitley commented that fast moving rural fires are not fought using hydrants; instead, retardant is dropped and tankers are used. He suggested the Committee think differently than in the context of a town fire. Mr. Faught commented that Mr. Kraska is spot-on about the commercial flows, and he will talk to the Fire Chief. Mr. Smeenk added that in October AWAC will be addressing redundancy and requested the Committee be in agreement before bringing this to the Council. Ms. Jackson suggested tabling this part of the discussion.

Mr. Williams stated he thought Option 2a includes extra costs if the Committee decides to just go that route, and also remembered needing to build an extra retaining wall to harden the plant. Mr. Faught agreed that if AWAC does not choose the second plant, then it is needed. Mr. Smeenk agreed that if Option 2a is chosen, it may need to be added back in. Ms. Jackson asked for clarification of 2b and the hardening of Option 7. Mr. Faught stated the only way Option 7 is eliminated is if Ashland builds a second plant. Mr. Williams questioned if AWAC just went with 2a would

Option 5 be needed. Mr. Smeenk replied if the Partial TAP is hooked up Ashland may need one more million gallons per day (mgd) to meet the 2.5 mgd shortfall in 2060; it would depend on how the replacement plant was phased.

Ms. Acklin was not as certain regarding the need to add back Option 7 if 2a was chosen since the City would get redundancy with 2a, be conservative, and protect the plant. Mr. Faught stated the need for daily consumption is around 2 to 2.5 mgd, and if the water plant is wiped out TAP provides 1.5 mgd which is short by roughly 1 mgd. Mr. Smeenk noted that for emergencies TAP would be able to pump up to 3 mgd for short periods, but not all season. Ms. Acklin did not think it was necessarily a good idea, but if it was damaged the City would suffer. Ms. Jackson asked whether the Committee had decided to drop consideration of a full TAP project. The Committee replied yes. Mr. Smeenk added the mini TAP does not preclude the full TAP in the future.

Mr. Williams suggested that staff prepare two summaries describing the two main plans the Committee has been considering, and what each would entail. It should include the schedule of capital projects over the next 50 years, and how much it would cost. Mr. Smeenk answered he would like to include something visual in the newspaper before the meeting in October to get the community used to the information. Mr. Faught suggested the update to the Council include the two options left and the costs, without having to go back through this information. The chart should clarify TAP 2a plus 5 and 7 as one option, and 6 as the other option, which is stand alone for \$12 million.

Ms. Patton asked if the assumption is that additional water supply should come from TID. Mr. Smeenk replied that it could come from either supply and reminded the Committee that supply does not need to increase until 2038. AWAC set that question aside so it can get the redundancy problem solved first. He also clarified that partial TAP provides 1.5 mgd over a six month period, but can supply 3 mgd in an emergency. Mr. Faught added that both cost the same and referred AWAC to the chart. Mr. Smeenk stated this is true except for net present value effects. Mr. Faught clarified that both cost about the same if you add 2a, 5 and 7, which approximately equals the new water treatment plant (WTP) cost. He suggested AWAC keep it simplistic and make the cost comparisons clear.

Mr. Williams asked what improvements should be made on the existing plant if AWAC is going to focus on the TAP and commented he thought it was purely a value judgment. Mr. Whitley questioned if the Committee agreed with the revised approach being presented to the Council. Ms. Patton suggested a relevant question would be what it cost, and how long it took to get the treatment system working again. Mr. Faught answered the flood in 1997 took a couple of weeks, but the minimum is three months.

Conservation Commission liaison, Sherri Cellini, asked if the dam has been damaged by fire, earthquake or flood the most in the last 30 years and if the answer was flood, then this should be the main focus of AWAC without discounting the others. Mr. Whitley commented that regardless of fire, flood, or earthquake redundancy becomes the single biggest issue. Mr. Morris noted the picture of Reeder Dam during the flood and asked if the dam was designed for water going over the top. Mr. Smeenk answered that it is designed for up to four feet of water spilling over the top and concluded that AWAC has agreed on a new approach. He can put together a chart that compares those two redundancy solution options and include a graphic and timeline. Ms. Acklin added it would be helpful for the Council to have a short list of things AWAC considered that did not make the grade. Councilor Voisin agreed. Darrell Boldt commented the Council will ask why each was not considered further.

Mr. Smeenk updated AWAC on the Medford Water Commission rates discussion and reminded the Committee that Talent and Phoenix are still very interested in getting water from Ashland.

Prior to Ms. Lanigan's presentation, Mr. Kraska prefaced it by explaining that Carollo took what they heard from the last meeting and did additional analysis. He added that Carollo needs a final decision on the storage criteria before moving forward to identify deficiencies or start work on the CIP projects. He requested that following Ms. Lanigan's presentation AWAC come to a conclusion on storage requirements.

PRESENTATION

Draft Chapter 5 Attachment – Distribution System Evaluation (excluding fire flow analysis)

Ms. Lanigan stated Carollo submitted a draft chapter for review which included three components; storage, pumping, and pipe capacity. She referred AWAC to Table 6.3, Figure 6.1, and Table 6.9 and also recapped the last meeting. The committee questioned if providing half of the maximum day demand (MDD) would be enough. Ms. Lanigan defined reliable supply capacity as one of three different options or criteria.

Ms. Patton pointed out that Fallon or Alsing had excess capacity and asked if they could supply Crowson. Ms. Lanigan agreed it could be connected and asked AWAC to look at Table 6.10. Ms. Acklin commented that Fallon is uphill from Granite and it seems like there could be a connection between them.

Ms. Lanigan agreed that Alsing definitely has excess capacity compared to Fallon and it is possible to connect pressure zones down to lower pressure zones, but piping and pressure reducing valves will need to be added. Ms. Lanigan suggested it is ideal to have a gravity system. She explained that Alsing has trouble with its water turnover and that it affects the quality. Including lower zones will improve water quality.

Ms. Lanigan asked AWAC to consider Nesting as Criteria 4. Rather than adding fire flow and emergency storage together, it chooses the larger of the two. The idea is to plan for fire, but not at same time as a system-wide emergency. Mr. Smeenk asked Mr. Kraska to comment on the common usage of Nesting. Mr. Kraska replied it is not very common. It is the rule in the state of Washington, but most other states evaluate operational, fire and emergency independently. Mr. Kraska is not a big fan of the Nesting approach.

Ms. Acklin suggested Mr. Kraska's advice and drop Nesting. Mr. Whitley asked the committee their opinion of Nesting. Mr. Williams and Councilor Voisin requested to look at statistics on how frequent things happen. Mr. Williams asked if the size of community would make a difference in the equation of types of natural disasters a community is prone to, and also asked if the main reason for Nesting is to simply save a lot of money (in this example it would be \$1 million). Mr. Smeenk answered that Ashland would still need another reservoir; only it would need to be a 2 million, instead of a 3 million. Mr. Whitley reminded the Committee that the question was still on the table. He asked if AWAC wanted to accept Ms. Acklin's recommendation or get additional information from the consultants.

Ms. Acklin questioned how this would affect insurance rates for home owners.

Mr. Williams added that Nesting would equate to about five to ten percent of total capital cost. Mr. Kraska asked if he meant total CIP. Mr. Williams answered either option.

Ms. Lanigan added that AWAC is looking at one million gallons difference when considering a 3 or 4 million gallon reservoir. It is closer to 25 percent of the cost. Mr. Williams interjected that means AWAC is looking at a \$12 million project. Mr. Kraska commented Ashland has flexibility sizing storage and can get more storage without equal increments of cost. It really depends on the site but cannot be figured out until the design phase. Mr. Morris moved to accept the idea, move forward, and table and reevaluate Nesting later. Mr. Williams stated if Nesting is saving five percent it is not worth the risk, but if it saves 25 percent then that is significant. Mr. Kraska replied that it depends on the tightness of the site. Mr. Faught motioned to accept Mr. Kraska's suggestion. Mr. Whitley motioned for the Committee to accept Mr. Kraska's suggestion to initially not use Nesting, but to leave the final decision until the costs have been determined.

Voice vote: all AYES.

Ms. Jackson added that having larger storage volume gives more insurance for fighting fire and being sensitive to fire flow demand allows more water to work with. Ms. Patton commented there was some talk at the last meeting of going to 80 percent. Ms. Acklin asked what it would look like if AWAC met half way and commented that if AWAC goes ahead and adopts future supply and redundancy AWAC is stuck looking at 3a or 3b, and if both get Ashland to 75 percent or more, that makes best of options in front of the Committee. Mr. Williams commented that another important thing to look at is which areas of town are serviced by storage facilities. The Crowson storage is servicing more of the wildfire interface areas than Granite.

Mr. Smeenk asked if there was an agreement that 3 would be the preferred alternative.

Voice vote: all AYES.

Mr. Whitley asked for public input and none was offered, but Ms. Cellini reminded the Committee that the focus should remain on the main problem of flooding. Mr. Williams commented an important thing to consider is that both zones are right up against the water shed.

Mr. Faught asked Ms. Lanigan if this is the TAP verses the WTP, or are they roughly the same. Ms. Lanigan answered they are the same; the difference is just which supply comes in where. She added that overall the deficiency in Crowson changes, and the overall in Granite changes. Mr. Williams added it just flip flops which one has the deficiency. He asked if there is an overall advantage of having less deficiency at Crowson. Ms. Lanigan answered yes and will recommend a reservoir in the Crowson area to meet deficiencies in both Crowson and Granite.

Ms. Jackson commented when talking about the new WTP, it reduces the storage need. If Ashland just relies on TID to feed the new WTP, it is only reliable four months a year. Mr. Smeenk answered the scheme is to run the new WTP year around. In the summer it runs off TID; in the winter it runs off Ashland Creek since there will always be water coming down the Creek. Only the source will be changed. Ms. Lanigan reminded the Committee when they are talking about redundant supply they are talking redundant treated water.

Mr. Faught asked Ms. Lanigan if Carollo wanted the Committee to pick one of four options. Ms. Lanigan replied it was not an either/or but instead giving the Committee a preemptive look at the solutions discussed and these were reiterations of those and also a way to gage if Carollo is going in the right direction with solutions.

Mr. Faught asked the Committee if all were in agreement with this.

Voice vote: all AYES.

NEXT MEETING AND SUGGESTED AGENDA TOPICS

Mr. Smeenk announced he will confirm the next meeting date via email.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jodi Vizzini, Office Assistant*