

City of Ashland
Ashland Water Advisory Committee
51 Winburn Way, Siskiyou Room
April 06, 2011 Minutes

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting called to order by Chair Rich Whitley at 4:08 p.m.
Committee Members Present: Pat Acklin, Alex Amarotico, Darrell Boldt, Lesley Adams, Don Morris, Amy Patton, Donna Rhee, Councilor Carol Voisin, Rich Whitley (Chair) and John Williams
Absent: Kate Jackson
Staff Present: Brenda Barker, Mike Faught, Robbin Pearce, Nancy Slocum, Pieter Smeenk
Carollo Consultants: Nikki Pozos via teleconference
Guests: Joseph Graf, 1160 Fern Street and Sheri Cellini, Conservation Commission

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
The minutes from the March 30, 2011 meeting were not available for approval.

- III. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA:**
Whitley provided time for response to committee member emails that had been sent prior to this meeting. Smeenk provided information regarding the March 30 2011 “straw men: two options to provide redundancy” handout.

- IV. PUBLIC FORUM:**
Cellini shared information from a meeting she recently attended that was put on by the State of Oregon regarding gray water. According to Cellini, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) had just announced a \$50 permit for people who want to use gray water. DEQ will not issue the permits, but will require City’s to implement systems for taking over the licensing and permit issuance.

Graf presented his preferred option which constructs a new WTP instead of upgrading the existing one. Graf pointed out that if the existing plant were to go down, becoming completely non-functioning, or catastrophically destroyed, the City would only have access to 1.5 mgd daily from the proposed TAP system at the most. Graf surmised that water Treatment Plant failure would result in forced extreme water curtailment. However, Graf felt that if a new plant were to be constructed away from the existing plant, and as long as water is flowing into Ashland Creek and TID, it would provide the redundancy that the committee is striving for.

- V. DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS:**
A. Continue Discussion of Water Supply Options
Whitley gave additional time at the start of the meeting for members to review the summary of decisions before asking for a vote.

Adams requested clarification on what recommendations would be included for presentation to the Council. She wanted to make sure that the committee communicated to the Council how important water rights are. Slocum stated that the options would only be removed from the matrix, not from package of the options.

Morris motioned for accepting the March 30, 2011 AWAC Motion summary memo as is. Amarotico seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- a. Water Storage: Smeenk indicated that currently, there are no more available permits for water storage in Bear Creek per DHS (Department of Human Services). Smeenk then referenced Tech Memo 8, which can be reviewed on the City website at www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=13401, would provide members additional technical background on storage.
- b. Option to Sell Water to Talent: Smeenk recently spoke to an engineer who works for City of Talent about the possibility of selling drinking water to Talent during winter months. The estimated cost for a setup that would allow the City of Ashland to send water to the City of Talent is estimated to be less than \$100k. Smeenk stated that this could benefit both Cities as Talent now pays .55 cents per thousand gallons of water, particularly in the winter months, which they feel is too high. Production costs for Ashland is less than .20 cents per thousand gallons of water. Talent does not have a large demand, approximately 5000 citizens in Talent and 2000 in Phoenix. Talent is very interested in having a little competition in prices.

If an additional 5% conservation is achieved, the City would not need additional water supply until the year 2018 or 2019. This level of conservation would also provide approximately one million gallons more water during peak months.

Williams, quoting Jackson's email, clarified that TAP could be completed much sooner than Crowson II. Smeenk agreed, adding that implementing "mini TAP" would mean that pipe installation could take place within one month if that option was chosen. Choosing the full TAP option, which includes a pump station and acquiring a permit could take a couple of years to complete. Amarotico suggested that funding for permit costs may be sought after through grants or other funds from the federal government.

Adams summarized her comments and stated that conservation should be the City's number one effort and after doing the best the City can with the existing infrastructure resources, then expanding to other options would be warranted. She wants the committee to revisit the conservation plan and wonders where the 5% planning versus the 15% goal would factor in that additional supply would be needed in 2038. If by 2020 a conservation goal of 10, 12 or 15% is reached, Adams questioned if there would still be a need to invest in more supply and water options or would the City then not need to look at other options? If that is not the case and the demand is still progressing, the more expensive highly engineered options could be discussed at a later time.

Whitley agreed that the importance of conservation could push out the date for additional water need. However, conservation alone still doesn't address redundancy which is one of the most important goals the committee agreed upon in the beginning. On the supply side, the general agreement is 15% additional conservation could push out the need for additional water beyond the year 2038.

Smeenck reminded the committee that if a new water treatment plant was installed it would provide redundancy for any failures such as flood, fire, and equipment breakage. This would provide the City with an additional source that it could use in the interim, prior to implementing a second option, such as hooking up to TAP. Adding an additional redundancy option could significantly lower costs. Patton asked if a new water treatment plant could be phased in and built on a scalable level by using two plants at one time. Smeenck thought that idea should be added in the "straw people plan" to be discussed at a later date.

Smeenck presented the "straw man plan" options (a partial TAP (mini TAP) and a back up water treatment plant hybrid) in regard to redundancy only.

Faught suggested that since the committee was having a difficult time selecting either of the options at this point that the committee should delay making a recommendation to the City Council at this point and send the remaining two options to the consultants for analysis of costs and rates, etc. Morris pointed out that developing a timeline for the financial part of any options could be staged and that the City may be required to use funds now to meet any regulatory requirements first, that may be imposed by any new or changing federal regulations.

Faught said that the committee will be looking at the rate structure once the rest of the master plan has been completed (Water Treatment Plant, Distribution System replacement schedules, and staffing) and that this will not be an easy task.

Option 1 Backup Water Treatment Plant (WTP):

Option 1 is to phase the construction of a 2.5 MGD backup WTP outside Ashland Creek canyon to serve redundancy needs at the Crowson II reservoir site. In addition, the Crowson II reservoir would also be constructed as part of the WTP improvement project. The proposed new WTP would be able to handle high turbid water conditions.

When the committee inquired about how the City would run two plants, Smeenck said the existing water plant would be able to be run from April until November and that both plants would be used for the remainder of the year as needed.

Faught asked Smeek to explain what how the City would provide water if the supply line from the dam to the treatment plant was damaged. Smeenck explained that there would be an emergency intake from the new water plant to the swimming hole that can be used.

Amarotico asked if there would be more opportunity for more power generation and power to be sold if there were two plants, Smeenck replied "no."

Option 2 “Mini TAP”

Option 2 is ‘mini TAP’, which if implemented would provide redundancy. The cost for the “mini TAP” over the long haul is anticipated to be a little higher as it is implemented, as well as when it will be used, but the initial start up costs are to be lower per Smeenk. The “mini TAP” can be financed over a long period of time. The water coming from Medford through the TAP pipeline is already treated.

Adams asked why we would pay Talent to treat the water. Patton responded there isn’t a choice to buy raw water because of federal regulations. Faught commented that the City could sell drinking water to Talent to offset the City of Ashland water user’s costs during winter months when production is lower. By 2018 the City would need to provide an additional 1 mgd of water per day to keep up with population and customer use. By 2038 the need is projected to be up to 10 mgd a day.

Whitley added that the committee could adjust any of the options once Carollo has completed the financials, if there are any additions that need to be included.

VI. NEXT MEETING AND SUGGESTED AGENDA TOPICS:

The next meeting will not be determined until the financial analysis for the two water supply options has been completed. At that time a doodle.com will be sent out to the members.

VII. MEETING ADJOURNED: 5:50 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by
Brenda Barker, Administrative Assistant*