

# Groundwater Management Plan Committee

November 9, 2017

12pm – 2pm @ Festival Hall Rm 5 & 6

## Committee Members in Attendance

Paul Bittmenn	Ramon Prestwich	Rob Dotson	Paul Monroe
Paul Cozzens	Paul Nelson	Spencer Jones	

## Others in Attendance

Shelby Ericksen

## Minutes

### Review Minutes

Vice-Chairman Bittmenn called the meeting to order at 12:18pm. (11:10)

**Motion to approve minutes by Robert Dotson**

**Second by Paul Cozzens**

**Motion unanimous at 12:19pm (11:35)**

### Review the Groundwater Management Plan Draft & Divide Up Items Based on Committee Experience

Bittmenn went through the draft section by section.

#### *A. Water Rights Monitoring and Hydrology and Policy Goals*

Understanding the current water rights system, working with measurement tools, working with the water rights office, funding sources. Dotson is creating a mechanism of understanding water rights and surface water. He is trying to identify mechanisms to identify and keep track of water rights. Dotson would like it to be in a context that is more easily understood and in one place. Dotson would like to see better data management and would be willing to work on this section of the draft. Where the water rights are in context to the Groundwater Management Plan. Paul Nelson said someone was hired to do this, but he has not heard anything further. Dotson said he got busy with other things and an interim person was hired to take that over. Nelson said he was supposed to get a feel about how many acre feet of water were used to water certain crops.

Rob Dotson will be handling section A.

#### *B. New Importation of Water Goals and Policy*

Benchmarks on getting new water into the valley, achieve the development of a financially sound system. Cozzens nominated Paul Monroe to handle this topic. Paul Nelson asked what the Water Conservancy District plans to do with this. Paul Monroe said the Water District has a plan for bringing in more water, but it needs to be an effort of more than just the Water District. The Water District hired an economic group to look at the cost of this and it would be about \$50 a month per household in the Cedar Valley. Cozzens commented that this cost is very low compared to alternatives, but it could be hard for fixed income residents. Monroe said that impact fees and taxes will help pay for this as well. Monroe said he and Paul Cozzens met with the State Engineer a month ago and they were able to work out a deal. They came to an agreement and it just needs to be signed. Monroe will follow up with Kent Jones. Cozzens said the meeting went well. Dotson asked how they were able to reach a goal. Monroe said they were able to make a couple of small compromises. Paul Nelson asked what the property owners in the West Desert think of that. Spencer Jones said about 97% of all the land is federally owned there. Discussions about

power, water storage, and other topics continue for a few minutes. Monroe said he would be happy to start working on this topic.

Paul Monroe will be handling section B. (29:00)

### *C. Reuse of treated water*

Develop a plant for treated effluent water is the goal. Second goal is how do we pay for it? Paul Bittmenn asked if he should work on this since Cedar City has been working on this. Cedar City is already trying to plan out how the water can be reused. Discussions about reuse water and recharge is discussed for several minutes. (36:54)

Paul Bittmenn will handle section C.

### *D. Development of Infrastructure plans for Recharge*

This item as it is on the list now is limited to just Coal Creek, Paul Bittman stated that we need to expand this item to have all other areas of recharge involved regardless of which end of the valley it is on.

Spencer Jones suggested Paul Cozzens focus on this item since he has been very heavily involved in the recent recharge projects.

Paul Cozzens will handle section D. (40:35)

The second part of D is how to pay for it:

### *E. Water Use Calculations, modifications to policy and monitoring*

This topic is to assist in the creation of data that calculates actual usage, monitoring changes to actual usage and water duty.

Spencer Jones will be taking this topic and looking at considerations for duty. (41:47)

### *F. Water Conservation*

Goal #1-To use current and develop new collaborative educational resources

Goal #2-Incentives for agricultural

Goal #3-User rates and usage data

Spencer Jones suggested reaching out to Brent Hunter on this topic. Paul Monroe said he will have Brent Hunter come in and work on that with Shelby.

Monroe went to an irrigation conference a couple days ago. Kansas State University was there with a lot of research based on Center Pivots. Monroe said that there is a lot of data out there.

Spencer Jones brought up user rates and usage data as topics under water conservation. Jones suggested that there may be some parallels with topic A-Water Rights Monitoring and Hydrology and Policy Goals.

He would like to see coordination with Rob and Brent. Bittmenn suggested collaborating with himself, Paul Monroe and Rob. Just so they can put together the data that each office has gathered on agriculture.

Paul Monroe let the committee know that Shelby Ericksen had acquired a grant that will be basin wide in the amount of \$20,000 for water efficient irrigation systems Cozzens said LuAnn Adams with the Department of Agriculture looked at the Quichapa Recharge Project and they were impressed. They have another \$50,000 that they would like to give that Recharge Project. (47:10)

### *G. Water Data Management*

Keep GMP data current for planning and mitigation purposes. Jones asked if Monroe would be interested in taking this topic on. Monroe said he would. Bittmenn said that Cedar City has a lot of data that they have available that can help with that. Dotson would like the data for this valley all in one place. Dotson said that Dan Jessen should be involved in this portion. Jones asked if Dan Jessen could be put on the Groundwater Management Plan Committee. Paul Monroe will reach out to Dan and work with him on that. Jessen is the County Auditor and is very experienced with spreadsheets.

Paul Monroe will handle section G (53:14)

#### *H. Collaboration and Cooperation in Building Long-Term Relationships with Water Users*

Dotson said he would like to see everyone on the committee work on this topic. Jones suggested every member prepare their own ideas for this topic and meet back together to discuss what they have come up with. Dotson said this is a great topic for Paul Nelson and Ramon Nelson to focus on since they represent a lot of farmers. Dotson said he would like to see everyone on the committee work on this topic. Jones suggested every member prepare their own ideas for this topic and meet back together to discuss what they have come up with. Dotson said this is a great topic for Paul Nelson and Ramon Nelson to focus on since they represent a lot of farmers. Dotson said he would like to see everyone on the committee work on this topic. Jones suggested every member prepare their own ideas for this topic and meet back together to discuss what they have come up with.

The committee will handle section H. (55:35)

#### **Response to State Engineer on Draft Policies**

Monroe brought up the policy of getting rid of the Highway 56 boundary. He would like to know what the Committee thinks and to send a letter with their response. Monroe explained that people have not been able to move water from the North to the South. The North has a lot of water compared to the south. Bittmenn said he does not see a reason for the boundary. Bittmenn would like it managed based on safe yield, not the line. Paul Nelson asked about people paying more for water on the south compared to the north and the problems that may arise because of that. Prestwich said the water is going to keep going down in the south especially if that boundary is removed. Prestwich said people keep having to dip their wells deeper. Prestwich said that water will not be recharged in that area and he fears the levels will continue to drop. He said if the boundary was removed it would create an issue like what happened with the removal of the boundary of Midvalley Road. Jones said that many banks are concerned. At the south end of the valley, water rights are around \$7000 compared to around \$3000-\$4000 in the north. Jones said in order to get this groundwater management plan to work, it needs to be a combined effort among all water users. Jones said the value of the water in the south will go down a lot and could cause some money issues and ultimately litigation. Bittmenn thought the State Engineer was interested in moving the Highway 56 boundary, to include Quichipa and Enoch. There are a lot of different elements. Jones suggested instead of restricting areas, they should be focusing on recharging and helping those areas. The reasoning the State Engineer had for removing that line is that there is no scientific basis behind the boundary. Prestwich stated that the only thing that is keeping any water in the South is the Hwy 56 boundary because there is no recharge. Jones wants to keep it the way it is because of the decreases in water lines, the issues of money and funding. The USGS is coming out with a report soon that shows that water is flowing from Parowan to Enoch. If the State identifies a boundary around Enoch, that will increase water prices and could create a boundary. Parowan is affecting the water in the Cedar Valley Basin.

Jones would like the State Engineer to let the committee fix these areas with recharge instead of removing the line which could cause further problems. Prestwich would like to consider moving the boundary if water levels increase in the south. Monroe asked if the committee would like there to be allowance for moving water out of the south end. Prestwich said he would like to see that, but he is unsure if anyone would move it. Bittmenn said the City is drilling exploratory wells by the airport. Our thought is that if the quality and well tests are good they would like to have a culinary well there. We could use that well more than we use Quichipa. Prestwich just reiterated that it is critical that the boundary stays the same. **Prestwich made a motion to suggest to the State Engineer that the boundary of Highway 56 not be changed or removed.**

**Second by Cozzens.**

**Motion unanimous 1:30pm (1:22:30)**

Monroe read the application to appropriate consumptive ground and surface water with the exception of terminus water from Rush Lake and Quichipa Lake.

The committee does agree that the State Engineer should follow statute to allow waters that end up in the terminus lakes which do not provide benefit to the local aquifer or other beneficial uses should be appropriated. However arbitrary it may seem this committee is very cautious toward a pending application under the State Engineer Office to appropriate water from the terminus Rush Lake, strictly on the point that the applicant does not currently have enough groundwater to supply the recent 9+ pivots which were installed this past year. Water may reach Rush Lake once every decade which we agree should be appropriated. However, under the current circumstance we are fearful that the applicant will use groundwater claiming it is surface water to irrigate grow crops and generate revenue to pay back their new investment.

**Dotson motioned that a message be sent to the State Engineers office that the Committee does not approve this policy change because of the potential of the policy being abused as discussed by Paul Monroe.**

**Second by Jones**

**Motion Unanimous 1:46PM. (1:39:24)**

The third point the State Engineer made was about spring water rights and changing those to groundwater rights. The Committee agrees with the State Engineer. (1:40:16)

#### **Cloud Seeding**

Monroe would like to see this on the agenda next month. A short update. The County agreed to pay for cloud seeding this year. (1:41:17)

#### **Agricultural Incentive Conservation Update**

Monroe talked about this earlier.

#### **Public Comment (Limit to 3 minutes each)**

None

#### **Next Meeting Date**

#### **December 14, 2017 Festival Hall Room #1**

Bittmenn asked that everyone do work on their assigned items and have an update next month.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50PM (1:42:26)