

Arizona Department of Water Resources
GROUNDWATER USERS ADVISORY COUNCIL
Tucson Active Management Area
Jeff Tannler, Area Director



JOHN MAWHINNEY
Chair

DAN M. OFFRET
Vice-Chair

DEE T. O'NEILL

JON POST

CHUCK SWEET

Minutes
September 26, 2008

Members Present: Dee O'Neill, Chair
John Mawhinney, Vice-Chair
Dan M. Offret
Chuck Sweet

Tucson Staff Present: Jeff Tannler
Mary Bauer
Christina Bickelmann
Laura Grignano
Dawne Wilson

Others Present: Beryl Baker, Private Citizen
Pat Carlstad, Community Water Co.
Kathleen Chavez, Pima County
Dave Crockett, Flowing Wells Irrigation Dist.
Jim Davis, E.L. Montgomery & Assoc.
Eve Halper, Bureau of Reclamation
Val Little, Water CASA
Philip Saletta, Oro Valley Water Utility
Pete Schlegel, PMA Group
Linda Smith, Tucson Water
Sidney Smith, CMID
Dale Shahan, Las Quintas Serenas Water Co.
Claire Zucker, Pima Assoc. of Governments

1. Call to Order

Chair Dee O'Neill called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. Approval of Minutes

Dan Offret made a motion to approve the minutes of July 23, 2008. John Mawhinney seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Election of GUAC Officers

Area Director, Jeff Tannler, reported that according to statute the GUAC shall elect from its members a chairman and vice-chairman for terms of two years, expiring on the third Monday of January of each even numbered year. Since current terms are expired, Dee O'Neill nominated John Mawhinney as the new chairman; Dan Offret seconded the nomination. Chuck Sweet nominated Dan Offret as vice-chair, Dee O'Neill seconded the nomination. Both nominations were unanimously approved.

4. Arizona Water Banking Authority (AWBA) M&I Firming Opportunities

John Mawhinney, appointed member of the AWBA, reported the AWBA was established in 1996 to increase utilization of Arizona's Colorado River entitlement. One of the obligations of the Arizona Water Banking Authority (AWBA) is to firm M&I CAP supplies within each of the three central AMAs, thereby making the water available in times of shortages on the Colorado River and when there is disruption on the Central Arizona Project.

There are three limitations on the AWBA for establishing storage credits: 1) the availability of money for purchasing water to store, 2) the availability of water, and 3) the availability of facilities to store water. The AWBA stores water at Underground Storage Facilities (USF) and Groundwater Savings Facilities (GSF).

The two sources of funding for the AWBA are the 4 cent ad valorem tax and groundwater withdrawal fees. From 1997- 2007 the Tucson AMA has stored only 28% toward its firming goal of 864,000 acre-feet. John Mawhinney has asked the AWBA staff to explore ways it can accelerate the Tucson AMA's ability to store more CAP water in order to get closer to its M&I firming goal. Since this would be a fairly technical exercise, the GUAC has asked that a meeting of the Institutional Policy Advisory Group (IPAG) be convened to brainstorm ideas and come back to the GUAC with recommendations.

At this point, Mr. Mawhinney opened the floor to questions and/or comments. Pete Schlegel of the PMA Group suggested that the IPAG contact the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to request funding assistance that was initially earmarked for a reservoir to be built at Black Wash as a reliability feature. The reservoir was never constructed because Tucson decided that it would not directly deliver CAP water.

Eve Halper of the BOR responded by reporting that the reliability planning effort is still underway. The BOR is meeting with all water providers in the region to find out their needs. Currently, there is a reservoir planned for four Northwest area providers, and a facility for Tucson is also in the planning stages. The purpose of these facilities is to address planned outages on the CAP canal, not longer-term water shortages. They could also serve for emergency outages as well.

Chuck Sweet made a motion to support Mr. Mawhinney's suggestion to convene the IPAG to discuss possible options for storing more M&I water in the Tucson AMA, as well as to explore reliability features for the region in times of outages on the CAP canal. Dan Offret seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

5. 2009 Withdrawal Fee

Each year the GUAC makes recommendations to the Director of ADWR on groundwater withdrawal fees for the upcoming year. Currently, \$2.50 per acre-foot is assessed in the Tucson AMA to assist the AWBA, and \$.50 per acre-foot is assessed for conservation assistance and aquifer storage and subsidence monitoring activities, which are being conducted through a USGS contract. The conservation fee also funds Christina Bickelmann's outreach and program development activities.

Mr. Tannler pointed out that there has been an increased focus during the last year on statewide conservation activities, which Christina has been involved with, in addition to Tucson AMA related activities.

Mr. Mawhinney recognized the importance of the work being conducted by Christina but also noted there are restrictions on how the withdrawal fees are used. One of those restrictions states that the use of the funds must be directly related to the benefit of the AMA from which they are collected.

Dan Offret asked what it would take to have Christina's salary funded through the General Fund. Mr. Tannler responded that this question has been asked several times in the past, and due to budget restrictions it hasn't happened.

John Mawhinney reported that the AWBA has assisted ADWR with roughly 13 million dollars this fiscal year to assist its budget shortfall due to recent cuts. Since the budget outlook for next year doesn't look any more promising, Mr. Mawhinney thought the Director should be asked about the appropriateness of using AMA fees for other statewide activities.

Christina Bickelmann clarified that even though she is working with statewide staff and other AMAs, everything that is being developed is benefiting the TAMA. The different divisions of ADWR are working in a more cohesive manner to develop material that could be used by all the AMAs, as well as other parts of the state.

John Mawhinney made a motion to recommend to the Director that the Groundwater Withdrawal Fee for 2009 continue to be set at \$3.00 per acre-foot. In addition to the withdrawal fee recommendation, the GUAC wished to express their preference that Conservation/Augmentation fees collected in the TAMA be used specifically for activities that take place within the TAMA. GUAC would also like to see more participation from rural areas in statewide activities. Chuck Sweet seconded the motion. The recommendation was unanimously approved.

6. Update – ADWR 4th Management Plan Process

Jeff Tannler reported that ADWR is currently going through a series of activities known as the water resources assessment. One of the activities was to develop a water budget, including water supply and demand figures of the different water sectors from 1985 to present. This information was presented at the July 23, 2008 GUAC meeting by Laura Grignano, TAMA's Industrial Planner.

In addition to compiling data on water use trends, another task will be to work on water use projections to the year 2025. Data is showing that if the region continues on its current water use track, safe-yield will not be met by 2025. Therefore, ADWR is looking at other options that could be considered in order to meet the goal, which would likely require statutory change. The goal is to have the assessment done by the end of this year, at which time staff will update GUAC members on its findings. Work on the 4th Management Plan is scheduled to begin in 2009.

John Mawhinney strongly encouraged that all the regional water providers and water entities are included as stakeholders during the 4th Management Plan process.

7. Area Director's Report

Jeff Tannler reported the Arizona Water Atlas, Vol. 8 is now available in draft form. Public comments for all volumes of the Atlas are due by October 31, 2008. Comments can be given directly on ADWR's website: azwater.gov

The new Modified Non-Per Capita Conservation Program goes into effect January, 2010. The water providers who do not have a Designation of Assured Water Supply (DAWS) must enter this program

DRAFT

and submit their Provider Profile by July, 2009. Providers that have a DAWS will have a choice to enter the new program or remain in the current Total GPCD program.

An advisory committee is being formed to oversee the program, and workshops will be offered to assist providers in implementing the program.

In the upcoming weeks, ADWR will be sending out calculation notices to all large water providers informing them of their GPCD targets and use, along with Lost and Unaccounted for Water, based on service area population and water use.

8. Public Comment

Beryl Baker, concerned citizen, expressed that she has been involved in the water resources management process in the Tucson region for a long time and feels nothing is being done to protect this finite resource.

John Mawhinney responded by pointing out several, major accomplishments since the Groundwater Code was enacted: Tucson is receiving CAP water and storing large amounts for future use; there is an Assured and Adequate Water Supply program implemented; there are restrictions on the amount of agricultural irrigation that can be brought into the AMA; and Management Plans are in place to help achieve the safe-yield goal. Progress is being made.

9. Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

The tentative date for the next meeting was set for Thursday, October 30th at 9:00 a.m. [Meeting rescheduled to Monday, November 3 at 9:30 AM].

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.