

Groundwater Management Plan Committee

April 11, 2019

12pm – 2pm at Division of Natural Resources
646 N Main St. Cedar City, Utah 84720

Committee Members:

Brent Hunter Paul Monroe Reed Erickson Rob Dotson

Committee Members not in Attendance:

Ramon Prestwich Paul Cozzens Spencer Jones Paul Nelson
Paul Bittmenn

Others in attendance:

Jessica Staheli

Rob Dotson called the meeting to order at 12:25pm.

1. Review Minutes from January, February, and March:

Committee Member Dotson motioned to approve the minutes from January, February, and March. Second by Committee Member Erickson. Motion Unanimous.

2. Review Draft Groundwater Management Plan:

Monroe began discussion about the Draft Groundwater Management Plan. He went over a few changes that the Water Rights Office had created. The committee had asked Monroe to make a few changes to the Draft. The committee asked that the 10-year timeline be changed to 15 years.

Erickson wondered about the distribution of phases. Currently it is based on priority. He wondered if it should be more evenly distributed. Monroe stated that he thought the way it is listed now is good. Monroe's reasoning was that even numbers does not really affect individuals as much. Erickson thought it seems strange that they would cut so much more at the first rather than the small chunks at the middle. He thought that it should probably be more even. Monroe and Hunter said they probably will not arrive at the last cut due to other measures being taken. Dotson said that a good majority of rights are paper and not being used. There was discussion for several minutes on the water rights that are being used vs the rights that are not being used.

The committee discussed the question about the current proposed cuts versus cutting in even portions. There was discussion regarding priority dates. This discussion lasted for several minutes.

Dotson mentioned an incomplete sentence that Monroe had in the draft. Monroe started discussion regarding the importation of water. The committee thought that the paragraph should be added under “priority regulation” and “adaptive management”. There was some discussion regarding the West Desert Project and how it would work. Monroe wondered about adding water in the West Desert to this plan. Dotson mentioned that the State seems to like a simplified plan. Erickson thought that they should mention the concept in there to say that the CICWCD has plans to import water, and that the State will recognize that in context to the cuts when it happens. You can keep it simple, but at least reference it. Dotson mentioned that a simplified plan can bring up miscommunication between entities as well. He agreed with Erickson’s suggestion.

The committee discussed artificial recharge for several minutes regarding the difference between natural and artificial recharge. They said they could add importing as supplemental water and/or artificial recharge. Monroe spoke about how the importation of water must be quantified somehow. The committee spoke about water banking for a several minutes. Monroe said that he would speak with Nathan Moses about some of the ideas the committee speaks about at this meeting. Erickson thought they needed to at least add the general ideas into the plan. Dotson spoke about hydrologic models and studies. They spoke about the “deep water” or water that may not be part of our aquifer. New technologies could change a lot of things in water. The committee would like to add in the new technologies and new scientific findings into the adaptive management portion. Hunter talked about the different hydrology in the aquifer system. There was discussion on the topic for several minutes. There was discussion regarding new technologies for several minutes. Dotson said there needs to be a water right protection for the people who that idle their wells/water use because they are using new technologies, imported water, etc. Erickson thought that the topic would be best under the voluntary arrangements portion. Monroe said that he thought their may be state statute that protects water rights not being used under a groundwater management plan. Monroe was going to check in State Code to see what is listed there.

Monroe added on page 6 the portion about recharge and recovery. It is the change that Paul Bittmenn suggested.

Dotson voiced his approval.

3. Discuss CICWCD Pine Valley Water Supply and Conservation Project:

Dotson and Erickson wondered about the financial part of the project. Monroe said the CICWCD is in the process of the RFP for the financial business plan and water needs assessment. They would also like to create an impact fee facilities plan. Currently the project estimated total is \$250,000,000. Erickson wondered about timeframe. Monroe said the EIS will potentially be 2 years. We will need to do the water needs assessment, financial plan, NEPA requirements. Then CICWCD will have to have discussions with Cedar City, Enoch, and other water users that will make the decision on whether we do the project or not. The water right settlement was completed recently. There was some discussion about grants, bonds, and funding for several minutes. It needs to be on the political radar as well.

There was some discussion regarding an educational plan. The CICWCD Water Advisory Committee was discussed for several minutes. The public needs to be aware of the water issues and concepts. They need to know general information to help water be at the forefront of their minds. This would help with bonds and other project needs. There was some discussion in regard to the District needing to provide water for the next 50 years. Erickson said that there is plenty of land for growth, but water is the limiting factor to growth. Erickson suggested putting some sort of timeline together. There was some discussion regarding climate change.

4. Public Comment (Limit to 3 minutes each)

None.

Dotson closed the meeting. *(Meeting adjourned at 1:37pm)*

Next Meeting Date:

Thursday, June 13th @ 12pm
Division of Natural Resources
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