



City of Prescott

Council Subcommittee on Water Issues

April 2, 2024 | 9:30 AM
201 N Montezuma Street
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Rusing called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Rusing
Member Fruhwirth
Member Gambogi

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

4. **DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Approval of the February 6, 2024 Water Issues Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

MOTION BY MEMBER FRUHWIRTH TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 6, 2024, MINUTES; SECONDED BY CHAIR RUSING: PASSED (3 - 0).

- B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding a PFAS Update.

Public Works Utility Manager Steven Olfers presented upcoming rules and regulations from the EPA.

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) is an emerging contaminant found everywhere in the world and in approximately 17% of public wells in Arizona. They are a large, complex group of synthetic chemicals that have been used in consumer products around the world since the 1950's.

How do we Remove PFAS?

- remove at well (drinking water)
- remove at wastewater plant
- remove before reuse/recharge

Prescott has chosen to start treatment at the well

- can use blending (Chino well field)
- on-site treatment (Airport well field)

Member Gambogi asked if anyone is looking back at causes and contributors to PFAS and is anyone working on stopping those contributors going forward.

Mr. Olfers responded that there are a lot of things going on at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding PFAS on both the drinking water and the wastewater sides, and they are attempting to outlaw use of PFAS or control disposal of these chemicals.

Chair Rusing commented that there is PFAS in things we use every day like lotions and makeup, we need a double pronged approach, not just blending but also look at filtration.

Mr. Olfers responded that PFAS is everywhere, and it does bioaccumulate. He outlined the focus of on-site treatment at the airport wellfield due to the absence of a blending tank. Each well serves as an entry point to the distribution system (EPDS), requiring compliance with EPA regulations. In Chino these regulations apply after the tanks, all water must be mixed to serve users. Notably, each well at the airport must be treated individually. Currently, AP wells 2 and 3 show non-detect or very low-level detections, while AP5 exceeds proposed regulations by three to four times.

Member Gambogi asked if there is any idea why the airport well 5 has higher levels.

Mr. Olfers responded it is hard to say exactly where it came from, there are a number of ideas where the PFAS comes from.

Member Fruhwirth asked if this is something that over time can grow and therefore will be left to eventually remove from all the wells.

Mr. Olfers responded it is possible.

Member Fruhwirth asked if items needed to filter, and if treatment has been budgeted for.

Mr. Olfers responded that the items have been asked for in the budget.

4 Treatment Options

- GAC (granular activated carbon)
- Ion Exchange
- Microfiltration/Reverse Osmosis
- New Source Allocation

Mr. Olfers continued that they are planning on using all the treatment options except reverse osmosis. He has attended several meetings with Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and is on a monthly call with them on this topic. Other entities are already implementing treatment options and we will learn from them.

Chair Rusing asked if we have a contract with an engineering firm to design something.

Mr. Olfers responded the contract was not passed by the Council so at this point they are trying to gather as much information as possible on their own.

Upcoming Maximum Contaminate Level (MCL)

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a proposed rule limiting PFAS in Drinking Water to 4 ppt (parts per trillion)
- The final rule is expected to be released in April 2024
- Detection limit is around 2 ppt
- all wells are below this level except Airport Well #5
- Chino Wells are blended to ensure compliance
- Airport Well #2 and #3 are non-detect

Chair Rusing asked since we were already blending to bring down arsenic levels, has that made a difference for PFAS levels, too.

Mr. Olfers responded blending should always help and it was helpful that the infrastructure was there to be able to blend.

Member Fruhwirth asked for a description of PFOA.

Mr. Olfers responded it is a subcategory of PFAS.

Chair Rusing commented that well 5 is downstream from the airport and is a large water producer.

Mr. Olfers responded that it is ran at a reduced capacity when it was running because the distribution system could not support its full capability, we have never seen its full potential.

Member Gambogi asked where the other wells are located and if everyone is drawing from the same aquifer.

Mr. Olfers confirmed that everyone is drawing from the same aquifer.

Member Fruhwirth asked if the city should look at buying land upstream from our wells to protect our flows from industry that could be placed nearby.

Mr. Olfers responded there are a lot of challenges.

Chair Rusing commented that Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) told the city need to have wells near the recharge areas.

Mr. Olfers responded that they do not see evidence from the industry contributing to PFAS in the water, and believe it is from everyday things being used by everyone.

Member Fruhwirth commented that it sounds like a better long-term strategy to treat the water when it comes out of the ground or before it goes back into the ground.

Chair Rusing commented that she would like to revisit hiring an engineering firm.

This item was for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

- C. 2022 Water Management Policy Discussion - Current Residential & Non-Residential Water Budget Overview for January 1, 2024 through March 20, 2024.

Brian Ruiz, Water Resources and Environmental Services Manager, presented the water budget.

Residential- 2 new residential projects totaling .34 acre-feet
Commercial / Non-Residential - 7 projects approved totaling 3.07 acre-feet
A total of 14 projects approved under existing contracts for residential totaling 2.46 acre-feet.

Member Gambogi asked about the Chino Valley entries on the list.

Mr. Ruiz responded they are tracked since they are in the water service area.

Chair Rusing commented that the commercial corridor in Chino Valley is serviced by City of Prescott Water, multiple areas outside the city limits are on City of Prescott water.

This item was for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

D. Educational Series: Presentation & Discussion Regarding Water Resource Management - Prescott Water Supplies & Service Area.

Leslie Graser, Water Resources Project Manager, presented the education topic. She showed a video from Arizona Project WET, Arizona groundwater video episode 1, The Unique Hydrological Cycle of Arizona.

Member Fruhwirth asked how the public can view the video.

Ms. Graser responded that the video can be found on YouTube, search for Arizona project WET Groundwater.

Prescott Water Supplies-Physical

- Groundwater – pumped from wells in Little Chino Sub-basin aquifer
- Surface Water - captured in Watson and Willow Reservoirs
- Reclaimed - collected at City water treatment facilities
- Imported – stored in the Big Chino Sub-basin aquifer (not pumped at this time)

City's Service Area

Potable Supplies

Inside City Limits

Outside City Limits

-Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe,

-Portions of the Town of Chino Valley,

-Portions of unincorporated Yavapai County

-Water hauling

Non-potable Supplies – Inside City Limits only

Chair Rusing asked how many water accounts there are currently.

Ms. Graser responded that there are 23,176 accounts inside city limits and 3,495 outside city limits.

Chair Rusing commented that Chino Valley has their own wells and also has a separate water system.

Member Fruhwirth asked why so much potable water is used for construction type services instead of using non-potable water.

Ms. Graser responded that primarily, there's an attempt to utilize effluent supplies, which are then contracted out to multiple parties. While accessing these supplies isn't necessarily easy and involves costs, there's still availability. Additionally, some cases involve connections to fire hydrants, utilizing commercial, potable water.

Member Fruhwirth asked can we use more non-potable in the future for construction type uses such as dust control to save the potable for the public.

Ms. Graser responded that the water management and operations departments have a lot of information and can get more details on what types of water is used for the different purposes. Then can have a more strategic discussion down the road with the details.

Member Gambogi asked if agriculture is covered in the water usage tracking.

Ms. Graser responded that turf is covered but not agriculture since that is not a large component in our area.

Chair Rusing summarized the water usage areas.

This item was for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

E. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the 2025 General Plan Water Resources Element - Part 1.

Brian Ruiz presented the 2025 General Plan Water Resources Element. The first part will focus on goals and basic structure, then will bring back the document to review.

Chair Rusing questioned the deadline for the water element.

Tammy DeWitt, Community Planner, explained the process for developing the 2025 General Plan.

Chair Rusing commented that the old General Plan did not mention preserving the headwaters of Verde River or Gila River adjudications.

Mr. Ruiz responded those will be touched on.

Mr. Ruiz provided the below goals for the subcommittee's review:

Goal 1: Maintain the highest Arizona standard for water providers- Designation of Assured Water Supplies

Goal 2: Protect local supplies, potable and non-potable, and their delivery infrastructure

Goal 3: Continue forward planning to serve existing and future supplies with available or to be acquired supply types

Chair Rusing commented that it looks like a good start, The General Plan is voter approved and needs to reflect the values of the community. Need to include things accomplished in the last few years such as changing to ductile iron water mains, now having tiered water rates to encourage conservation, changing over to smart water meters to collect data and find leaks sooner. Would like to bring attention to the unprotected Big Chino water area. Should include some elements of the 2022 water management policy, maybe send a draft for public comments to the CWAG (Citizens Water Advocacy Group) group for their review and input.

Member Fruhwirth added that she would like to highlight the future, the past is great, but would rather focus on where we are going. Would like the public to focus on the future.

Chair Rusing said sustainability and resiliency standpoint is an important aspect to include.

This item was for discussion only. No formal action was taken.

5. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM STAFF

Kay Sydow, Water Resource Project Manager, announced that April is Water Awareness month, a display will be available in the library. 30 tips for 30 days will be on Facebook and the water conservation website with a new water tip every day. April 20th is Earth Day.

Chair Rusing commented that during a recent presentation Ms. Sydow gave to the Yavapai College Olli program, she noticed they were very engaged and may want a more comprehensive presentation.

Member Fruhwirth stated that she likes the 30 tips for 30 days.

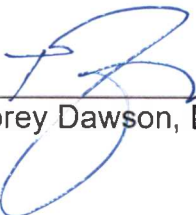
Mr. Ruiz commented Prescott Creeks annual clean-up will also be on Earth Day.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Rusing adjourned the meeting at 11:03 a.m.


Cathey Rusing, Chair

ATTEST:


Torey Dawson, Deputy City Clerk