

City of Prescott
Council Subcommittee on Water Issues



July 7, 2026 | 9:30 AM
201 N Montezuma Street
Council Chambers, 1st Floor
Prescott, AZ 86301

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rusing called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Rusing
Member Fruhwirth
Member Garing

3. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

- A. Approval of the June 2, 2026 Council Subcommittee on Water Issues Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION BY MEMBER FRUHWIRTH TO APPROVE JUNE 2, 2026 MINUTES;
SECONDED BY CHAIR RUSING: PASSED (3 - 0)**

- B. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the Amended 2022 Water Management Policy — Current Residential & Non-Residential Water Budget Overview for January 1, 2026, through June 24, 2026.

Water Resources Manager Brian Ruiz presented the semi-annual water budget established under the Amended 2022 Water Policy (Guidelines 11–13) for the period of January 1 through June 30, 2026. The residential water budget was 25 acre-feet per year, with 11.93 acre-feet approved for five projects, including the Lakeview Plaza multifamily development and the Embry-Riddle modular dorms, leaving 13.07 acre-feet remaining. The non-residential water budget was also 25 acre-feet per year, with 8.39 acre-feet approved for twelve projects, including the Prescott Plaza Hotel, leaving 16.61 acre-feet remaining. Mr. Ruiz noted that the Deep Well Commercial Development was approved through an appeal and did not count toward the budget. Additionally, nine projects were approved under existing contracts, which are not included in the water budget pursuant to Water Policy Guideline 9.

Member Fruhwirth asked for clarification on the expansion of an assisted living location in the Pinion Oaks neighborhood.

Mr. Ruiz responded that Community Development reviews the zoning requirements during the application and approval process.

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

- C. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Updates on the Ongoing Water Meter Replacement Program, and the EyeOnWater Program for Fiscal Year 2026.

Water Superintendent Nathan Graham provided the first portion of the presentation. As of June 25, 2026, 14,991 water meters out of the 27,000 have been upgraded. Currently the project is ahead of schedule.

Chair Rusing asked if it is normal when a new meter is installed for the customer to see an increase in their water bill.

Mr. Graham confirmed the new meters are more efficient and the old meters wear out over time and become less effective at capturing accurate water usage. He continued the presentation and reported positive results from the smart water meter implementation. Utility billing service orders decreased by 32%, from 15,576 in FY25 to 10,684 in FY26, reducing the number of billing-related inquiries such as missing or abnormal meter reads. The reduction in service orders has allowed staff to spend more time on critical maintenance activities instead of manually reading meters.

Member Garing commented that the old meters run slow as they age and don't account for water usage accurately.

Water Resource Project Manager Tracie Beasley continued the presentation and reviewed the EyeOnWater website/app available to each customer to monitor their usage and where they can activate a leak alert option. She also explained that the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) program will be incorporated into the City's Long-Term Water Management Plan. Consultants are in the early stages of evaluating the program's potential benefits, including estimating citywide water use reductions resulting from AMI implementation on both the customer and infrastructure sides. Consultants will also assess how the AMI program can reduce overall water demand based on the experiences of other utilities and develop recommended conservation goals and actions. Staff noted that the Beacon AMI software provides multiple tools to support these efforts, with leak reduction identified as a significant benefit. Initial discussions and recommendations will be included in the first version of the Long-Term Water Management Plan.

Member Fruhwirth asked for clarification on the leak count number.

Ms. Beasley clarified the system flags unusual water use patterns for customer review. These alerts do not necessarily indicate leaks, as some properties have expected higher or atypical water use. Ms. Beasley continued with an overview of outreach efforts supporting the EyeOnWater program, which began in September 2025 in partnership with Water Operations. Outreach included website resources, meter change-out maps, community workshops, utility bill inserts, radio public service announcements, social media, print advertisements, and customer assistance events. Ms. Beasley reported that utility bill inserts were the most effective outreach tool, contributing to strong attendance at informational workshops. Staff also launched a pilot outreach initiative in the Chino Valley service area to increase EyeOnWater enrollment through direct customer assistance, including phone calls, emails, and one-on-one support. She reported that 14% of customers citywide have enrolled in EyeOnWater, exceeding typical participation rates for similar programs. Looking ahead, staff

plans to continue expanding outreach, improve customer support resources, develop standardized procedures, enhance data analytics, increase enrollment and leak notification participation, and evaluate the pilot program to guide future outreach efforts.

Member Garing asked if the system will send an alert to the customer if they have the leak alert set up.

Ms. Beasley confirmed that if the customer signs up for the leak alert they can select how to be notified by phone or email.

Member Fruhwirth commented on her recent experience with a leak at her residence and a text or email is a great idea.

Chair Rusing thanked the water users for being water aware.

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

D. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Updates to the Willow Lake Management Plan.

Environmental Project Manager Jeremy Cordova provided an update on the development of the Willow Lake Management Plan, which began in late FY25 and is anticipated to be completed in FY27. The plan is being developed in collaboration with city staff, regulatory agencies, stakeholder groups, and consultants to address the lake's unique management needs. Mr. Cordova reported that the plan focuses on improving water quality and quantity, habitat and vegetation management, recreation, and public outreach and education. Ongoing efforts include establishing water quality goals, developing vegetation management strategies, planning water quality treatments, coordinating with partner agencies on fish habitat improvements, watershed assessments, and evaluating recreational amenities. He noted that next steps include departmental review of the draft plan, a second public meeting, and presentation of a draft plan to the City Council.

Chair Rusing asked for more information on the prior Prescott Dirt site.

Mr. Cordova explained that the city-owned property was previously leased to Prescott Dirt for topsoil harvesting, which also provided sediment control and created habitat areas through excavation. Following the company's departure, the site experienced significant illegal dumping of debris, including organic material and construction waste. He added that some of the dumped material is located within a FEMA-regulated area and must be removed. To help prevent future dumping, the Public Works Director has recommended installing key card access to track site entry and a surveillance camera to monitor activity.

Member Fruhwirth commented that she would like to thank ADEQ for helping us with the bathymetric lake surveying.

Chair Rusing asked if you could eat the fish in the lake.

Mr. Cordova responded that the current advisory from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) applies only to largemouth bass in Watson Lake due to elevated PFOS levels identified through fish tissue testing. Other fish species have not shown the same level of bioaccumulation, but additional testing is planned in coordination with ADEQ and the Arizona Game and Fish Department to evaluate all species in Watson Lake and collect data for Willow Lake. Staff also confirmed that ADEQ provided fish consumption advisory signs that have been posted at boat launches and other lake access points.

Member Garing commented that there is a lot of vegetation in the low water trail to Willow Lake, and the trail signage around the lake is great.

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

- E. Presentation & Discussion Regarding the City's Long-Term Water Management Plan Communications Strategy.

Mr. Ruiz provided a presentation on the communications strategy for the long term water management plan. Mr. Ruiz introduced Public Engagement Manager Danielle Trotter to help with the presentation. The first brochure was developed back in July 2025 and information was also added to a dedicated page on the city website. Facebook posts were also created for the public and analytics have been reviewed to monitor the reach of the information.

Ms. Trotter discussed the communications strategy going forward and provided examples and opportunities.

Mr. Ruiz added that two study session meetings have been planned and will be presenting the topic at a community meeting as well.

Chair Rusing commented that it was off to a good start.

Member Fruhwirth added that she noticed a trend on Facebook regarding advertisements on other pages to reach people who don't watch our meetings.

Ms. Trotter responded that she has started exploring the Facebook ads option and looking at other city departments and collaborating with their posts.

Member Garing added that the meat of the plan will come later this year when we have more information from the consultant. Educating the public is crucial.

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

4. UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM STAFF

- A. Presentation & Discussion Regarding Proposed Water Legislation Impacting the City of Prescott & Surrounding Areas.

Mr. Ruiz reported that the city, as a member of the Northern Arizona Municipal Water Users Association (NAMWUA), monitors state water-related legislation. During the 2026 Legislative Session, NAMWUA reviewed 69 water-related bills

and provided recommendations to support, oppose, or remain neutral. He provided an update on the status of legislation that could impact water management at the state and local levels.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Rusing adjourned the meeting at 10:59 a.m.

Cathey Rusing

CATHEY RUSING, Chair

ATTEST:

Torey Dawson

Torey Dawson, Deputy City Clerk