



**CITY OF FLAGSTAFF  
WATER COMMISSION  
August 19, 2021  
Virtual Meeting  
SUMMARIZED MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ward Davis  
Malcolm Alter  
Timothy Bowers  
Ben Ruddell  
Elizabeth Christy  
Miranda Sweet (Council Rep)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**STAFF PRESENT**

Erin Young  
Marion Lee  
Lisa Deem  
Ed Schenk  
Gregg Clifton

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Jack Rathjen

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair, Ward Davis called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 17, 2021**

Moved by Timothy Bowers and seconded by Ben Ruddell to approve the meeting minutes of June 17, 2021. Motion carried unanimously

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None**

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Revisiting criteria defining a “large body of water” – reasonable restrictions on potable water – Erin Young

Erin Young presented this agenda item. At City Council’s November 3, 2019 meeting, Councilmember Aslan requested staff to investigate if there are any reasonable restrictions that can be adopted on the use of potable water. Former Water Services Director Brad Hill talked with Councilmember Aslan in Spring 2020 and discussed one alternative that he identified as a possible new restriction that the City Council may want to consider.

At the Water Commission’s November 2020, Staff presented the City’s Policy and concept for adoption into City Code. The Commission recommended City Council adopt into City Code the restriction on using potable water for amenity lakes.

Staff presented the attached powerpoint to City Council at their December 1, 2020 meeting. City Council requested staff continue a discussion with the public regarding the size of the water body. The goal in bringing this topic back to the Water Commission is to further the dialogue and increase public inclusion on defining the spatial or volumetric dimensions of the water body, or some other definition that maintains the intent. The “Lakes Bill” in state code was developed to exclude large ponds distinct from swimming facilities, but this distinction may not be the correct size for Flagstaff.

The measurement of the size proposed to City Council came from AMAs – a defensible baseline. He has no recommendation as to a basis to use for something smaller.

Ideas:

- refer to “body of water” as “amenity lake”
- remove definition of a swimming pool from code and from the conversation
- ??? ideas to define the size of amenity lakes the code would apply to ???
  - Legally defensible
  - There may be unforeseen consequences if we go too small

Staff recognized that Flagstaff’s City Code is silent on the types of water that can be used to fill new bodies of water (e.g., amenity lakes or ponds) that could be associated with a new future golf course or development. The State Legislature adopted Senate Bill 1200, known as the "Lakes Bill", over 33 years ago in 1987 that addressed this issue. The new legislation created Arizona Revised Statutes §45-132 (Attachment 3) that prohibits the filling of large bodies of water for landscape, scenic or recreational purposes unless they are filled with effluent (recycled water), stormwater, etc. However, that legislation only applies to communities within the State’s five Active Management Areas and not to northern Arizona and the City of Flagstaff.

Ben Ruddell agreed that their needs to be a clear definition of amenity lakes; spatial area or body of water that make sense. Currently potable water can be used for ponds or amenity stream and policy recommends the use of reclaimed water. Definition should align with active manage area restrictions. The proposal aligns with City Policy use reclaimed water. Ben suggested that this is a good place to set the maximum limit, for example no outdoor water use or consider positive use of potable water.

Marie Jones said she can’t recall any projects going through Planning & Zoning with pools. Marie is not sure how often this is an issue and will look further into it with the Planning and Zoning Committee. Ben suggested to float the possibility of a prohibition on outdoor water use of potable water use with limited exceptions. Staff will move forward with this item and bring it back some suggestions on reasonable restrictions of potable water use.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS - None**

## **VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS TO/FROM THE CHAIR, COMMISSION OR STAFF**

### **A. Report to the Water Commission – Lisa Deem**

Water Services Communication assumed oversight for the annual Report to the Water Commission in 2021. This is a combined effort throughout the division, to accurately report and capture data, activity, milestones and accomplishments attained during the year. This report covers activity in Calendar Year 2020 which was distributed to the Commissioners.

Over the years, this document has developed into the comprehensive accounting of water services activity in all areas: Water Resources, Water Production, Water Reclamation, Reclaimed Water, Engineering, Regulatory Compliance, SCADA IS, Water Distribution, Wastewater Collection, Stormwater and Customer Service.

Lisa announced that the City of Flagstaff Wildcat WWTP has been recognized and nominated by ADEQ to the Voluntary Environmental Stewardship Program (VESP). The VESP recognizes and awards incentives to Arizona businesses and other organizations that have a good history of environmental compliance and strive to go beyond what is legally required to protect human health and the environment.

ADEQ has nominated the City of Flagstaff Wildcat WWTP for the bronze level. The bronze level three-year recognition is available to regulated facilities that don't have any violations on record with any environmental agency within the past three years. Recipients must maintain this compliance record while a member of the program.

#### B. Flooding Update – Edward Schenk

Flagstaff has received large rain events in the East, West and South portions of Flagstaff through the Fanning, Bow and Arrow, Sinclair, Clay, and Ponderosa washes in addition to the Museum Area flooding. National weather service described the recent events as more than usual moisture typically seen during this part of the monsoon season. The East Flagstaff area received a 200-year rain event followed later by a 50-year rain event in West Flagstaff. The City has experienced heavy localized rain fall. As a result, Public Works and Water Services crews have been responding to several localized rain flooding events.

- Water Services crews have been out clearing drains and pipes of any debris to ensure additional rain events can flow through the system as needed. They have completed 508 work orders to date with 90% of the work being in the Museum Flood area.
- Engineer consultants have been out looking at Mt. Elden to consider additional ways of capturing the water as it runs off the impervious rock.
- Streets crews responded to repair and replace intersection signals damaged by lightning.
- Streets crews responded to remove debris from channels and streets to keep water contained to the highest degree possible and flowing.
- Water Services and Public Works personnel are assessing needs for the Francis Shore Pond to mitigate wildlife issues created by rain runoff.
- Parks staff are working to repair FUTS trail damage from the storms.

Engineering, project management and construction inspection staff members have been working to help determine damage to public infrastructure on an ongoing basis.

Flooding events began July 13, 2021.

- In only 3 weeks, experienced six rainfalls events on the burn scar with five significant downstream flooding events
- 22 homes and two businesses with interior flooding
- Damage estimated at \$500,000
- City infrastructure damage estimates \$1.8 million
- District infrastructure – Mt. Elden Estates Flood Mitigation estimated at \$400,000
- Mt. Elden Estates private roads – estimated damage at \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

C. Erin announced that her term as Interim Water Services Director ends September 6th and Andy Bertelsen, current Public Works Director will step in.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.