



CITY OF FLAGSTAFF  
WATER COMMISSION  
November 18, 2021  
Virtual Meeting  
SUMMARIZED MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ward Davis  
Timothy Bowers  
Ben Ruddell  
Miranda Sweet (Council Rep)

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Elizabeth Christy  
Malcolm Alter

**STAFF PRESENT**

Andy Bertelsen  
Marion Lee  
Erin Young  
Sterling Solomon  
Trevor Henry  
Bryce Doty  
Gary Miller

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Paul Turner

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair, Ward Davis called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 21, 2021**

Moved by Timothy Bowers and seconded by Ben Ruddell to approve the meeting minutes of October 21, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None**

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Exec Session pursuant to ARS 38-431.03(3),(7) to provide legal advice, and to receive direction for purposes of contract and property negotiations related to Switzer Canyon Water Transmission Main Project Phases IV & V

Moved by Timothy Bowers and seconded by Ward Davis to move to Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

The Water Commission Meeting was called back to order at 5:15.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Revisiting Water Commission recommendation to provide water service to lot owners along Switzer Canyon transmission main – Andy Bertelsen

Andy Bertelsen, Water Services Director indicated that in November of 2020 the Water Commission made a decision to provide water services to lots along the Switzer Canyon transmission line, in exchange for allowing that line to be run, the City would provide water services. At the August 27 & September 17, 2019 Council meetings

- ❖ Council authorized the acquisition of real property and/or easements for the Switzer Canyon Water Transmission Main Project – Phase IV & V
- ❖ Council requested Staff explore exchanging or offering water services to offset land acquisition costs; return to Council with information
- ❖ Staff return to Council on 12/7/2021

Staff evaluated the request of exchange

- City Code 2-04-001-007 and Water Policy requires any person outside city limits apply to the Commission for water service
- Staff made recommendation to provide water service for these residents, with conditions outlined in a non-annexation type agreement, in exchange for or to offset costs of acquisition
- Staff will also seek appraisals of the property rights needed and negotiate with property owners to offset the cost of the fees necessary for the out of City water service.

New Information

- ❖ Appraisals estimated for Phase IV: \$48,000 for permanent easement and \$94,000 for temporary easement
- ❖ Cost of acquisition varies for each parcel
- ❖ Adjacent properties part of HOA have requested water service
- ❖ No policy exists for providing a fair and equitable method for trading or providing water service in exchange for real property, where more than one property is affected

Staff revised recommendation

- Difficult to determine an exchange value in an equitable and fair manner
- Not all property owners responded
- Access to stub-outs require some property owners to allow pipeline access to neighbor properties
- Water service agreement binds property owners to criteria on meter size, number of meters/acre
- Setting precedent to offer water service and hydrants in exchange for property on all waterline replacement projects that cross County properties?
- Setting precedent to design and construct stub-outs and hydrants on all future transmission main projects? (e.g. Lockett Ranches, Harold Ranch Road)
- Hydrants, valves and stub-outs are additional points of potential leakage and maintenance

Recommendations:

- ❖ Option 1: acquire easements and not exchange or offer water service
- ❖ Option 2: acquire easements and as a separate issue ask staff to bring back a non-annexation policy and draft non-annexation agreement to consolidate water service process for Phase IV properties

Staff recommends for the Water Commission to reconsider their recommendation to City Council from the October 19, 2020 meeting based upon the follow-up information received. Staff recommends not to deviate from City Policy to provide out-of-city service to the County residents located outside the Urban Growth Boundary in exchange for a property easement.

Tim Bowers indicated that paying for easements is a better option at this time. Ben Ruddell said he agrees with the recommendation because the law provides specific ways to handle these transactions but swapping creates problems.

Paul Turner, Turner Engineering said they designed this pipeline (Phase IV & V) that will complete the backbone of the water system that serves the entire core of the City of Flagstaff. Paul said its

imperative that the City moves forward with condemnation and then resolving water meter issues later. Switzer Canyon transmission line is a critical line for the city.

Motion by Timothy Bowers and seconded by Ward Davis to approve and recommend to Council Option 1: acquire easements and not exchange or offer water service. Motioned passed unanimously.

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

Andy indicated that Commissioner, Malcolm Alter requested for a brief update on an article that was in the paper of Council forming a Bond committee which included the Wildcat Plant and the Museum Flood. Staff has had some discussions with Council and will continue to do so at this time. Really nothing to share so far, but staff will give brief updates as it moves forward.

Andy introduced Gary Miller, the new Water Services Engineering Section Director.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.