

CITIZENS' WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CWAC)

Bill Redesign Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Tuesday, April 28, 2015, 12:00 p.m.

2-North Conference Room

Tucson Water, 2nd Floor

310 W. Alameda Street, Tucson, Arizona



Summary Minutes

1. Roll Call/Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Subcommittee Chair, Alan Tonelson, at 12:00 p.m. Those present and absent were:

Present:

Alan Tonelson	Chairperson – Representative, Ward 1
Mark Taylor	Representative, City Manager
Chuck Freitas	Representative, City Manager
Catlow Shipek	Representative, City Manager
Bruce Billings	Representative, Ward 3

Absent:

None

Tucson Water Staff Present:

Belinda Oden	Water Administrator
Nancy Gradillas	Lead Financial Accountant
Candice Rupprecht	Public Information Specialist
Johanna Hernandez	Staff Assistant
Kris LaFleur	Staff Assistant

Others Present:

Brian Wong	Representative, City Manager (not a member of subcommittee)
Mark Lewis	Representative, Ward 5 (not a member of subcommittee)
Claire Zugmeyer	Sonoran Institute

2. Announcements – None.

3. Call to Audience – Chairperson Tonelson recognized Claire Zugmeyer and Mark Lewis as members of the audience during Item 5.

4. Review Current Utility Services Statement – Chairperson Tonelson summarized the two issues that he believes prompted the CWAC review and modification of the current utility services statement. The two issues are, firstly, that the appropriate information is present on the statement, and secondly, that the calculation of the sewage fees based on winter quarter averages taken from usage graphs on the statement may be inaccurate. Tucson Water staff members Belinda Oden and Nancy Gradillas discuss the current statement in regards to water usage graphs and how they relate to the winter quarter average and impacts on sewage fee calculations. It was explained that

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depending upon the read dates of the meters (early and late cycles), the usage graph will display usage from the previous month, thus affecting the winter quarter average and calculation of sewer fees. Staff proposed modifying the labels on the graph to reflect read date, which will more accurately reflect usage. Members agreed that modification of the graph labels is necessary; however, that will not correct the issue with the winter quarter average and calculation of sewer fees. Subcommittee members and Staff agreed to have a representative of sewer present at a future meeting. Chairperson Tonelson clarified that proposed modified statement options will be provided to stakeholder groups for feedback, as opposed to requesting open-ended feedback on the current statement. Staff concurred that there would be developed options for modifications to the statement prior to focus groups. Member Taylor initiated a review on the reasons for formation of this Subcommittee, as well as other external factors influencing the modification of the statement. External factors include, further differentiation on the separate charges reflected on the statement, conservation measures, and representation of winter quarter averages for calculation of sewer fees. It is noted the County currently uses the lowest of either actual usage *or* winter quarter average to calculate fees. Staff will provide members with information regarding having the County recalculate the winter quarter average based upon actual usage. Members discussed possible solutions to the calculation of winter quarter averages. Possible solutions discussed are as follows:

- Software/system modifications to calculate winter quarter average based on actual usage during the winter months, and not usage billed for during those months
- Work with County to calculate winter quarter average by taking the three lowest of the four included months – this raises questions of revenue impact for the County

Members and Staff agreed that customers need to be informed of any changes affecting their statement, but that those explanations may not need to be reflected on the statement itself. Staff will follow up on these options and report back to the Subcommittee.

Member Taylor arrived at 12:05 p.m.

Member Billings arrived at 12:15 p.m.

5. Discuss Potential Modifications to Utility Services Statement – Chairperson Tonelson began discussion of what information members believe should be reflected on the statement. It is noted that the electronic bill presentment is an exact copy of the paper statement; however, the online bill-pay system does not allow the open space/riparian donation. This Subcommittee is tasked with addressing the actual statement, and not the bill-pay system. The following list of ideas was produced by members, and discussion was held on the items.

- Total due
- Detail breakdown of charges on first page of statement
- Consider removal of duplicate summary charges (top line/account activity)
- Dates of service
- Average temperatures
- Number of days in cycle
- Allow for recurrent donation or round-up as opposed to monthly selection

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- Multi-colored (sewer, trash, water)
- Better explanation of proration during rate changes
- Consider clarification/representation of the value of a Ccf
- Line item reflecting government expenses
 - Administrative service costs
 - PILOT
 - Low Income
 - Other expenses not directly related to water deliveries
- Impact of conservation (usage graph)
 - Smiley/frowny faces based on comparison of previous years usage for the same month
 - Set Y-Axis
 - Show block boundaries
 - Average (annual or monthly) TW volume for appropriate class
 - Consider making graph bigger and possibly moving it to page 2

Staff noted that there may be limitations to modifying the display of charges on the statement based on how the charges are codified. Brief discussion held on what might be appropriate to include in the trifold. Staff will reflect upon these suggestions and come back to the Subcommittee with options. Brief discussion held on the formation of focus groups and providing them in Spanish as well as English.

6. **Future Meetings / Agenda Items** – Staff will send a doodle poll for an early June meeting.
7. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Approved 6/1/15