



**Sustainability Commission
Online Meeting via Zoom**

Wednesday, July 24, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order at 6:31 P.M.

2. Roll Call by Staff Liaison

Members Present: Chair Daniel Schuh; Vice Chair Daniel Smith-Castillo; and Commissioner Paul Lemmon

Members Absent: Commissioner Al Nunez

Municipal Staff Present: Kimberly Anderson, Sustainability Officer / Staff Liaison; Eric Bay, Public Works Assistant Director; and Cole Pihl, Water Resources Manager

3. Unscheduled Public Appearances

No public present.

4. Approval of May 22, 2024, Minutes (For Action)

COMMISSIONER LEMMON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 22, 2024, AS PRESENTED. VICE-CHAIR SMITH-CASTILLO SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 3-0 WITH CHAIR SCHUH, VICE CHAIR SMITH-CASTILLO, AND COMMISSIONER LEMMON VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

5. Guest Speaker, Cole Pihl

Cole Pihl, Water Resources Manager, provided the Commission with an overview of Avondale's diversified water resources and portfolio, where the water comes from, the different compositions, saving and using water wisely, and water conservation programs and water resource projects. Mr. Pihl, who has been with the City of Avondale for six months, provided an overview of his educational and professional background.

The Water Resources Division has three branches: Water Resources, Conservation, and Water Quality. This presentation focused primarily on Water Resources. The three main water supplies come from the Fall River Project, which is rain and snow

melt from the Salt and Verde Rivers, the Roosevelt Dam, and water flowing through the SRP canals; the Central Arizona Project, which is snow melt from the Colorado Rockies flowing through the Colorado River; and reclaimed wastewater from the Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). Last year, the City of Avondale used a total of 15,079-acre feet (AF) of water supply, with the majority coming from SRP.

Mr. Pihl discussed the distinction between paper water and wet water. Paper water describes water the City of Avondale has rights to, and wet water is what goes into the distribution system. There are various ways water comes into the city and then goes through the City's Urban Water Cycle, including SRP, CAP, and the Colorado River. Through an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Phoenix, they take our Central Arizona Project Water, treat it, and transfer it into Avondale's system. There are several recharge facilities that also provide water to Avondale.

The City of Avondale can only use SRP water that comes from the Salt and Verde Rivers for nonspecific SRP Project lands. Other sources, such as CAP and long-term storage credits, are used for when SRP water is not permitted. Most of the water usage is for single-family residents, with 75% of water used outside and water used for landscaping /irrigation being the next highest use.

Mr. Pihl discussed the ground water model released by the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) that indicates some cities did not have 100 years' worth of water supply based on ground water tables. Cities must have water resources 100 years into the future to obtain an assured water supply designation, according to the Ground Water Management Act of 1980. Avondale has consistently received a designation of Assured Water Supply. Avondale's current yearly designation is 30,000 AF, but the City is only using approximately 15,000 AF.

Water is stored at an underground storage facility (USF), such as the Avondale Wetlands Recharge Basin, where the water percolates into ground water. Avondale also stores water on behalf of the City of Phoenix at the wetlands. Water is also sent to the New River Aqua Fria Underground Storage Project (NAUSP) because the wetlands do not have enough space for future water storage. Avondale presently holds most of the storage entitlements for NAUSP.

The City of Avondale is continuously seeking different projects in terms of water resources to add to their portfolio and ensure there is enough water for residents in the future. The Roosevelt Dam Flood Control Space Temporary Deviation Project uses "free" flood water and can be used on or off SRP projects. Another one is the Bartlett Dam Modification Feasibility Study Project that requires the City of Avondale to pay \$13 million towards the project, but this water can be used off-project and

allows the long-term credits to be saved. The White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Lease is another water possibility that can be used for off-project areas. There are also many partners and experts in the Valley that work with the Cities on water resources.

In response to questions from the Commission, Mr. Pihl responded the water used for landscaping and irrigation is the same water that goes into homes. Water exchanges and how they relate to paper water vs wet water were discussed. Farmers were given certificates awarding them grandfathered ground water rights for a specific amount of water under the Ground Water Management Act of 1980. When the farmland is transferred for development, the certificates are extinguished, and the credits then become part of the City's portfolio. SRP water cannot be converted to long-term storage credits, which is why the SRP water is fully utilized. Although the water is mixed from all resources, the SRP must be recognized separately to ensure the City does not go over its allotment. Avondale, unlike some of the neighboring Cities, receives SRP water because it is part of the Kent Decree. Mr. Pihl directed members of the Commission to the recent Consumer Competence Report (CCR) for more information.

6. Sustainability Updates

- Three Commissioners were removed from their position for continuous absences with no communication. Hopefully, this will provide an opportunity for involved residents to join and participate in the Commission. Applications have been received, recommendations have been made, and the City Council will review the recommendations for approval at their August 19th meeting.
- Chair Schuh and Commissioner Lemmon attended the Ribbon Cutting event for the Community Recycling Drop-Off Center. There was a great turnout. This supplemental service provides multi-family housing residents with an opportunity to recycle, which will be monitored over the next couple of months to see how the residents are using it. In response to Commissioner Lemmon's question, Ms. Anderson confirmed the pull charges are part of the grant.
- Ms. Anderson discussed the Natural Aquaculture Pilot Program initiated by Reid Birrell, Wetlands and Aquaculture Coordinator. This is a year-long pilot project to evaluate the effectiveness of an outdoor pass-through tank system for the tilapia hatchery grow out utilizing the effluent resource to Crystal Gardens.

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- Ms. Anderson provided an overview of the staff meeting in June with Flagstaff's Sustainability Department, which provided an opportunity to build relationships, share projects, and discuss challenges and opportunities in sustainability. Avondale is interested in exploring Community Sustainability Grants through the
- Environmental Fund that provides up to \$5,000 for projects within the City that promote grassroots movements and community involvement. A discussion ensued regarding potential projects and the commission's interest and involvement.


Commission items for discussion at the next meeting

- Energy Efficiency
- Topics, projects, and deliverables for 2025. All suggestions and ideas will be compiled and built into the agendas for 2025.


7. Adjournment

The next Sustainability Commission Regular Meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

COMMISSIONER LEMMON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:35 P.M. VICE CHAIR SMITH-CASTILLO SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED 3-0, WITH CHAIR SCHUH, VICE CHAIR SMITH-CASTILLO, AND COMMISSIONER LEMMON VOTING IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.


Chair Dan Schuh (Sep 26, 2024 09:40 PDT)

Daniel Schuh, Chair



Kimberly Anderson

Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting held on the 24th day of July 2024. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.



Kimberly Anderson

Sustainability Officer as Staff Liaison






CITY OF AVONDALE

Final Audit Report

2024-09-26

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