

# City of La Verkin

435 North Main St., La Verkin, Utah, 84745

(435) 635-2581 Fax (435) 635-2104

www.laverkin.org

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## LA VERKIN CITY WATER BOARD MINUTES

Monday December 29, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

435 North Main Street, La Verkin, UT

**Present:** Kelly Wilson, Doug Wilson, Ken Cox, Kris Gubler, John Valenti, Kyle Gubler, Derek Imlay, Fay Reber, Nancy Cline, Kyle Lovelady. **Public:** Blaine Warrell.

### I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Doug Wilson at 2:00 p.m.

### II. Business:

1. Discussion and approval of HB 242 the secondary metering exemption conservation plan.

Kyle Lovelady explained that House Bill 242 came out around 2022 and that was the requirement for secondary irrigation systems to meter all of the users at their location. For example, at their homes they would have a meter metering your irrigation use. La Verkin has been exempt because of the quality of the water. We have not been able to have a meter that can accurately read the water, warrantable, and so we've been able to find exemptions through that since 2022 in this process. On December 10th, they received an email, showing that they needed to have this conservation plan in place, voted on by the water board, and accepted it by the end of the year. That's why we're here today. They had a little over 19 days to complete it.

Going through the paperwork it shows information regarding the La Verkin system and their overall plan of how they are currently conserving water, and then how they will in the future. He and Derek compiled a lot of this information and transferred it over to Sunrise to finalize the conservation plan. And it's separate from City Code's conservation plan. It's mainly just for irrigation.

Blaine explained that the main thing they want to see is the conservation plan. And it is a requirement, as Kyle said, to be able to have that exemption. It's like their culinary water conservation plan that the city has. It's very similar but a scaled down version. It has the number of connections and water rights. The secondary water systems information has a breakdown of usage by connection type. There's a section that talks about the system losses through the irrigation master plan over the years to be able to find that there's roughly a 200-acre feet loss every year. The biggest priority the state wants to see is a conservation goal, which is the whole point of this. They added a goal for conservation that the city's trying to accomplish. It's like here's the trajectory the city's already on based on the agreements with the Water and Conservancy District. Some of those things are with that surplus and exchange agreements that came on board here several months ago. What it comes down to is reducing consumption. The city uses about 1400-acre feet of available water right. In 10 years, by 2035 the city has 1400-acre feet that is essentially going down the river, and it's not been used by the secondary water system which is based on the surplus and exchange agreements to then be converted to culinary water connections. It's a goal the city is already moving towards. The reason they have this goal is the county has their own right, so the state has made their own regional conservation goals. Washington county has a goal of a 19% reduction by 2040. This goal would give the city approximately a 34% reduction by 2035 so it's more aggressive than the county. They are exceeding the regional goal and to back up that goal Derek helped us put together a list of the current conservation practices that are currently listed in the code. It shows the time of day when everybody's over the water conservation standards. The rules, as far as wasting of irrigation water, in the ordinances they can't water too much to where it's overflowing from their property to neighbors. Page seven and 8 is a list of city ordinances that relate to control of secondary water, trying to mitigate excess usage, and what the city had currently done. There's a section on future conservation practices, and this just lists the upcoming improvements that the city has planned over the next several years. There's the irrigation pond

project that's getting ready to start and will help with the quality of water. The intent there is to help with higher quality, more people will be using secondary water instead of culinary water, also the ability to use more efficient types of sprinkler systems, as well as the bigger one for conservation would be the use of reused water, replacing the need for river water. The first one is the replacement of the irrigation system, the plan to do about a quarter of the of the system replacing the aged pipe in people's backyards. Also, that loss they talked about earlier, that 200-acre feet loss is coming from those old pipes leaking. After those are replaced that 200-acre feet will no longer be going into the ground. It would stay in the river and with newer pipes there's fewer breaks and so there's less water being lost due to breaks and maintenance reasons. That's the future plan. In accordance with this water conservation plan, the city will be required every year at the end of the irrigation season to evaluate how the year went as far as conservation measures and report to the state how conservation went. That is a new burden for the city from the state proving the city is on track to meet its targets. They want a list of what the city is going to do and how they're going to measure that success. One is a municipality review, total effectiveness of ongoing and past conservation practices and implementations. The way to measure that is to review the secondary usage at the end of the season to compare it to year over year, month over month comparison to the previous months and years to see how much reduction there has been in water. The next one is a promotion in education. They will take advantage of the water district's education system. The first one is to promote the installation of smart irrigation controllers, something that the water district already has a program doing. The measure there would be working with the district to know what the total number of people that took advantage of that program in the city is. They would be making an assumption on how much water was saved based on how many connections switched over. Similar to the district's buyback program for grass. The district will buy grass square footage if people choose to put it into non-landscaped areas. The district tracks that, so the city will work with the district on knowing how many users participated in that, and then again making an assumption and an estimated acre footage of how much that saves based on how many people contributed over that particular year. By November 30th every year, the city would submit this evaluation to the state, and based on the state's review of that and how conservation went for the year, there would be a period where if measures aren't being met or if the goals change for the city there'd be a time period between then and February that the city would then revise this plan and come back to the board for approval and submit it to the state before February. We're continuing with the exemption status that Kyle's been working on for the past three years. The whole point of this is to be exempt from needing to install meters on the system. The classification comes from there's no meter that will be warrantied to run the water that's going through the cities system. The other one that is an exemption classification is to be able to install meters exceed 25% of the irrigation budget, which very much does in the city's case. The next part talks about the annual evaluation submitted by November 30th, and then the template and requirements from this state include this plan and then getting this signed by the board and adopted.

Fay wanted to clarify that this is in conjunction with the conservation plan with WCWCD and that the codes mentioned in it are from La Verkin city code and not modified. If they are modified city council would need to vote on it.

Blaine explained they are not amended codes, just referenced the city codes. Nothing in the code is changing.

Kyle Lovelady agreed and added it is copy and pasted from the city code.

John thought these goals were not in the city code so they should be reviewed by the city council.

Kyle commented that the Division of Drinking Rights did not include anything that the city council had to approve it. It asked for current conservation practices, and what Derek did was he essentially took our current conservation plan, how it is in our municipal code, and copied and pasted it into here. So, we're not doing anything outside of what the city council is currently stating we have to do.

John commented that this board is just an advisory board.

Kyle responded that the state was not asking for a municipal agreement.

Blaine added that it might be a thing where the state might not be, but the city might be required to as a public entity.

Fay agreed it should be put before the city council.

Kyle Lovelady informed them its due in two days.

Fay suggested approving it and when he submits it includes that its going before the city council to ratify it on January 7, 2026.

Kyle agreed to send it pending city council ratifying it.

Kyle Lovelady added that they are simply checking a box on the application and submitting the water board's approval.

Blaine added it doesn't change anything in the city. It's just anything to maintain the status quo. The only thing that does change is the requirement of the city to do this evaluation.

Doug asked about A-2-11, scarcity of water, is that already in our code. Is open discharge also in city code?

Blaine replied yes. Copied and pasted from the city code.

Doug thought the lettering was off on the document. Are we going to lose our exemption status as we go to the reuse water? The one requirement that we're using number two is that we cannot obtain a warranty meter due to water quality.

Blaine explained that No, currently the warranty is culinary grade.

Kyle Lovelady added that it's based off of your total dissolvable solids your TBS. If they go with the industry, it's 80 tbs it's not as high as what the virgin river is even remotely close. As we get to reuse you still have all the salt and different things that are from water softeners and the reclamation process. He spoke with Mike Chandler about that he said that he anticipated the TBS to probably be at virgin river height or higher.

Kyle Gubler added at some point the state will try and force them to do it.

Kyle Lovelady informed them when they do the replacement plan all of those connections are going to be brought up to date with setter. When that time comes, if they do require it, we're just paying for the cost of meters and gaskets. Right now, if we were to go in and switch them with how we're currently set up, we're probably \$5,000 to \$10,000 a connection for redoing everything. If they look at the replacement cost that we could retrofit, even with a 30-year loan it would be at 110% of income or operating budget.

Kyle Guber commented that when they push the city to meter the irrigation, they will push the state to help pay for it. Secondary water can't cost as much as culinary water, or it defeats the purpose. He asked if this is a yearly evaluation.

Blaine replied yes.

Kyle Gubler said it would be in their October water board meeting again. They could get it to the city council in November and send it off before the due date.

Doug commented that when they start getting the reuse water and settling pond water there will be higher usage from people not using irrigation because it's dirty. And culinary use should go down.

Blaine replied there will be an uptake before that.

Kyle Lovelady added that it's factored into that 2035 goal is actually through the irrigation project. There's some places they will move the backyard connections to the street, we're actually going to get water to the other side of the road. They will see an increase. They estimate it to take probably two or three years to kind of balance itself out because as irrigation is available everywhere, you may see more development on these fields that are heavier water users, where they're turning over to residential homes, they're not using as many acre feet of water. You're going to see a lot more savings.

Doug asked how many delivery contracts were turned in on the Howard property when they sold.

Kyle Lovelady responded that the Hot Springs bought 14 delivery contracts but didn't think they would be using that much water. They don't have any grass, and they're all drip emitters.

Doug asked if the city had already adopted the lawn buyback program the district offers.

Kyle Lovelady replied they report on that when they go to the R-TAC meetings and the ATC meetings where they report the buy back from jurisdictions. So, as far as the evaluation goes, we have that information readily available.

**The motion was made by Mayor Wilson to approve the secondary water conservation plan and take it before the city council for ratification, seconded by Ken Cox. Mayor Wilson-yes, Ken Cox-yes, Kris Gubler-yes, Doug Wilson-yes, John Valenti-No. The motion passed.**

### **III. Public concerns for Board Consideration:**

Identification of issues for consideration at future meeting.

Doug commented that they approved the grant from the water district. What's the next step in the process of getting the job going?

Mayor Wilson explained it would be on our agenda to approve the proposal.

Doug wanted to look at the proposal to see if they are hitting the right areas, and what they're doing. He also wanted to know how long it would take to get it out to bid.

Blaine explained that if they can do it, they will try to get it so it's November timeframe to the construction start next year.

Kyle Lovelady added there is no preliminary design at this current time.

Mayor Wilson said it was on the city council's agenda to approve the work order.

Blair added it would be October 2026 for bidding to take place. It's a big project. It'll be the biggest project La verkin's ever done.

Doug asked what percentage they are at now.

Kyle Lovlady responded he had a map that shows the areas that over the years they have updated. It didn't show the 100 East replacement of that 15-inch pit to 14-inch. And then there's going to be portions of where it's actually reduced in size now because now with the point of connection being at the pond, they don't have to have a 14-inch line the entire way going down to 100 East. So, there's a huge cost savings in that because we don't have that line at 14-inch with the current pricing.

Blaine displayed a map that all the colored lines would be new piping.

Kyle Lovelady explained the size of piping that would be used around town.

Ken Cox asked if they have already made improvements, will the connections stay where they are?

Kyle Lovelady replied that there's going to be some workable areas where they are going to have to make some decisions. They have done away with these backyard connections on the west side of 160 west; how do we maintain water to 160 north or 220. They have irrigation in the front that actually feeds off the 200. There might be some cutting and capping here at the end of this street and that's where they are at zero percent design right now because they are trying to figure out what they can do to get the most bang for their buck with the 13.6 million. They want to do everything they can to make it, so the system removes as much liability as possible.

Doug asked how much goes to engineering?

Blaine replied he thought it was \$1.26 total including construction.

Doug asked if Sunrise engineering would be doing the project management, and inspections.

Blaine replied yes. And he would send a copy to Doug.

Doug asked what the selection process was to get the engineers. How did Sunrise get this job.

Kyle Lovelady explained that they're our third-party city engineer. They have been talking and discussing over the years, it's just gone to them because they are the cities engineers.

Doug commented it's a big enough project they should put out to bid for other engineers.

Derek explained that the pond project, they put that out to bid. Sunrise bid was the lowest, and the fact that they already had all the information, we all agreed.

Mayor Wilson added that they have already done the preliminary work up to this point. If it went out to bid, then another engineering firm would have to go through all the gyrations to catch up.

Kyle Lovelady added they have a working model within a two-pound accuracy. They feel really comfortable with using Sunrise. But as far as going out to bid, that was anticipated just because they are our city engineer.

Doug asked if they got a bid when they granted them the job.

Kyle Lovelady thought they did it was about 2008 when they became city engineers.

Doug was concerned about the size of the job and whether their price was competitive.

Derek replied they bid for the pond project, and it was competitive.

Blaine added they keep it in the 10-13% range that is industry standard.

Doug replied at the water district they would have the engineers rebid their hours and bid project and they saved money doing that. And as a taxpayer of La Verkin City, he would say if that's not bid, why not?

Blaine replied that they can't actually bid professional services on a cost basis. Unless Utah's on a few exemptions, it's supposed to be qualification-based for procurement.

Doug agreed it's qualification-based, but also should be based on hourly rates also, doesn't it?

Fay wasn't sure exactly about the process.

Kyle Lovelady added that when they did the procurement for the pond pipeline when we worked with the district they were competitive.

Doug felt like they could have put it out to bid.

Kyle Gubler replied this project involves the water district.

Blaine replied that it was ran through the district originally, but they told them the city is running the project.

Derek added Sunrise already had the city's information from doing all our work through the years.

Doug asked who paid for that work.

Kyle Lovelady replied that the taxpayers did.

Doug explained so even though Sunrise has all the information the city owns it and has the right to that information. He wanted to make sure they follow good ethics of making sure they keep it competitive and are not paying too much.

Derek agreed that it is a different project than the pond, but that recent bid showed that they were lower than the rest of the bids and everyone was in agreement.

Doug wondered about bidding the engineering construction all in one lump, so then the company that comes in has in-house engineering, could then also do the engineering, the construction work all in one. They could potentially save money that way.

Mayor Wison asked if they used the same numbers from the pond project to bid for this project.

Blaine explained this bid was on man hours.

Kyle Lovelady added the numbers could change since they don't know the specifics of the design yet. There is potential for us to have some cost savings. For example, inspections, field inspection, if the city felt that they



could get enough of the field inspection from their own employees, then we might do that. There's still some give and take on either side to get that number to drop, so don't feel like that number is a concrete number.

Derek added they could save money with inspections and their own equipment.

Kyle Lovelady commented that with the pond and pipeline not being finished, they're actually going to see huge conservation because we're going to put fields not-river water this coming year because they'll most likely be easy-to-use water. They are going to see 300 gallons per minute, that is what they consistently flow, they will see that 300 gallons are not being used.

They discussed the treatment plan and what was new with it coming online in January.

**IV. Board members concerns:**

Already discussed.

**V. Adjourn:**

The meeting ended at 2:50 p.m.

Minutes were taken by Nancy Cline.



Chairman