



City of La Verkin

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LA VERKIN CITY WATER BOARD MINUTES

Thursday, February 24, 2022, 3:00 pm.

111 South Main Street, La Verkin, UT

Present: Kyle Gubler, Kelly Wilson, Derek Imlay, John Valenti, Kenneth Cox, Don Halterman, and Christy Ballard.
Richard Prince was excused.

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Don Halterman at 3:02 pm.

II. Approval of Minutes: October 27, 2021, minutes.

The motion was made by Kyle Gubler to approve the October 27, 2021, minutes, second by Ken Cox. Wilson-yes, Imlay-yes, Gubler-yes, Valenti-yes, Cox-yes, Halterman-yes. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Reports:

A. Water Purchase:

Kyle reported that from February 15, 2021, the City had spent \$63,000 to purchase 31.50 water shares from different people. He has included additional funds in the upcoming budget amendment to purchase shares from two other people interested in selling to the City.

The City is paying \$2,000 per share.

Don mentioned selling his water shares to avoid having to meter the secondary water.

Kyle explained that the meters would happen, and it won't matter if you rent the water or own shares; every parcel will have one.

B. Culinary Water Management update:

Derek passed out a paper showing water usage from the two springs. The Water Conservancy District has requested this report. We increased the water usage by 14% from 2020 to 2021.

Don asked if the City notices a difference in the spring when there is adequate runoff or storms.

Derek replied that the water stays consistent. It comes from an underground spring.

The water increased several years ago after divers went down and removed tree roots and perforated the pipe to catch water from soil saturation.

The report shows we are down by 12,903 from January 2021 to January 2022. The conservation methods seem to be reflected in this number.

He will meet with the Division of Water Rights to discuss usage and calculate the slippage. We have been less than 10% slippage, which is a healthy system.

C. Irrigation Water Management update

Derek reported that irrigation would be back on March 7 to give his crew time to address any problems before the official date of March 15th.

The City ended with approximately 800-acre feet of water. That gives the City a ten-year average of about 700-acre-feet per year of unused water. The usage does fluctuate.

We haven't noticed a difference from the number of building permits issued.

Mayor Wilson commented that generally, buildings usually lower water usage. You sprinkle less acreage for lawns than irrigating a field. Cottonwood Hollow subdivision will increase our numbers because they haven't been putting any water on those parcels.

It was mentioned that the County is purchasing water shares from the Virgin River Land Preservation Association. That water is good only in La Verkin.

There was also a discussion on ownership of the hot springs.

The Water District owns the property, and there is a development coming in that will use the hot spring water. It is the second biggest polluter of the Colorado River. The goal of the Water District is to capture all the hot water with help from the federal government.

IV. Business:

A. Discussion on House Bill 242 secondary water metering.

Kyle reported HB242 passed the House and is now with the Senate. He is being told it will probably pass. Mayor Wilson has talked with Steve Lisonbee, who has the ear of the Governor, so Mr. Lisonbee is aware of our concerns.

The bill has an exception for communities that cannot purchase warrantied water meters. La Verkin would fall under this exception. The concern is that the state is offering grant money to cover 70% of the cost to install these meters, up to 5 million dollars. If a meter is developed after the 2030 deadline and the City is forced to put meters in, will the original 70% grant money be available to us?

The fines are also a concern. It is a \$10 per connection fine for communities that do not have the meter installed by 2030. That dollar amount increases by \$10 per connection per year for five years.

Mayor Wilson wondered if the City could get the 70% to install the system, so once a meter is developed, that would need to be the only thing purchased.

Derek said new developments are required to install a yoke with an idler where the meter will go.

Kyle explained that the goal is to have all water lines in the street. Any major projects include moving those lines when possible.

Mayor Wilson reported that Hurricane is moving to ¾-inch water lines on their setters because of the cost. His subdivision currently has ¾-inch lines.

Derek mentioned that decreasing the size of the line would make it easier to tie into the yoke.

John asked if the City had installed any trial meters.

Derek replied that we installed 4 meters. They are still reading, but we are unsure how accurate they are. They measure the water by sensors. We are not sure how the dirty water affects those sensors.

Mayor Wilson stated that the only way to test the meters is to put them on a test bench.

John mentioned it would all be open source so people can see what their neighbors are using to try and influence people to conserve.

Mayor Wilson mentioned that with our culinary water system, the City would call you if your meter is running continually to let you know you may have a leak. It has been a great asset to the City for various reasons.

Ken pointed out there is no mention of agriculture in HB 242. Is there an exemption for it?

Kyle reported that Mayor John Bramall brought up that exact point several times. Kyle wondered if they would force people to install a pressurized system if they didn't have one.

John said flood irrigating was brought up in the last meeting, and the answer was they would do nothing about that right now.

Kyle stated he didn't think they were considering agriculture at this point. That is another hole in the problem. He feels they are lumping everyone into this bill to address something for the Wasatch Front. We argued that this is not a one-size-fits-all issue; everybody's system is different.

Ken said he has heard for years how every drop of water in Washington County will be in a culinary water system. That is basically what is happening. St. George City is down to almost no irrigation water.

Kyle said the City needs to plan for this to pass. Perhaps we should start putting money aside to cover the City's portion.

Mayor Wilson would like to request the grant money and begin the improvements.
Another option may be to trade with the Water Conservancy District for water from Anderson Junction Lake.

There was a discussion on where the water for the lake will come from and a discussion on the Toquerville bypass road.

B. Discussion and possible action to change the date and time of the Water Board meetings.

Don reported it had been proposed to change the Water Board meetings from the fourth Wednesday to the fourth Thursday in February, June, and October. The time will remain at 3:00 pm.

The motion was made by Ken Cox to change the day of the Water Board meetings from Wednesday to Thursday at 3:00 pm, second by Derek Imlay. Wilson-yes, Halterman-yes, Cox-yes, Valenti-yes, Gubler-yes, Imlay-yes. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Public Concerns for Board Consideration:

No comments were made.

VI. Board Member Concerns:

Mayor Wilson reported the City pays \$1.57 per thousand gallons for water to the Water Conservancy District for water used from the Cottam Well. If we go over the allotted amount, the City pays \$ 1.73 per thousand gallons. The City only charges \$1.28 per thousand gallons to everybody in town. We need to figure out how much money we need to charge people to stop losing money and have enough money to maintain and replace the system over time.

The cost of water for the City also goes up \$.10 per thousand gallons every year until the District gets \$3.00 per thousand gallons.

The City needs to consider adjusting the water rate.

John suggested increasing the current annual percentage increase from 2.0% to 2.5%.

Kyle suggested reviewing the Cottam Well usage compared to the overall use of the City and then make a recommendation to the City Council based on those numbers.

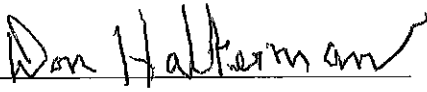
Mayor Wilson reported learning at a water convention that most of the communities in the State are not charging enough for water to replace the system. If cities don't have money put aside for water improvement projects, they will need to borrow the funds from the Board of Water Resources. Part of the approval process is to make sure the citizens pay the appropriate amount for water. If they aren't, they will require the City to increase the rate before they loan any money.

We are already behind by \$.60 from the Water Conservancy District's \$.10 per thousand-gallon increase. This item will be on the next agenda.

VII. Adjourn:

The motion was made by Kelly Wilson to adjourn, second by Ken Cox. Gubler-yes, Wilson-yes, Halterman-yes, Cox-yes, Imlay-yes, Valenti-yes. The motion carried unanimously at 3:49 pm.

Minutes were taken by Christy Ballard.


Chairman