

City Manager's Report

June 10, 2022

Council and Colleagues, greetings. These reports will be included in the City Council packet for regularly scheduled Council meetings. The reports are intended to be informational, covering miscellaneous events and topics involving the City organization.

One item in this report will be called out for public discussion, concerning pursuit of a WaterSMART grant. Also, appended to this report is the monthly update from our Capital Projects Team and the monthly report from Sustainability.

Heart of Gold Awards

Assistant City Attorney, Robert Brown, and Executive Assistant, Carol Harvey were each recognized by the Coconino County Victim Witness Services, which is now known as "Northern Arizona Victim Witness Services." The two employees received the Heart of Gold Award for their efforts in assisting victim witnesses through their work in the Prosecution Section. Robert and Carol are amazing employees who continue to ensure that justice is served for all members of our community. They are each very deserving of the recognition they received with these awards. Nicely done, Robert and Carol!



To continue with this recognition of amazing City employees, Detective Todd Martinet (who has since been promoted to Sergeant) was also honored by the Victim Witnesses service of Northern Arizona as a Heart of Gold recipient. He was given this award due to his service to victims of domestic violence crimes in our community. Thank You Sergeant ... well done!



And continuing on with this list of awardees, Detective Joe Gilbert was the second individual from Flagstaff PD to be honored by Victim Witnesses service of Northern Arizona as Victim Witness Heart of gold recipient. Like Sergeant Martinet, Detective Gilbert was awarded due to his service to victims of domestic violence crimes in our community. Thank you, Detective Gilbert!



City Engineer

A very nice send-off for Mr. Barrett, indeed. Many employees from the City organization, accompanied by several individuals from stakeholder organizations, were present at Foxglenn Park to celebrate the amazing tenure and retirement of Rick Barrett. Speeches were made, a City Plaque was presented, and gifts from fellow employees (privately funded) were presented. It was wonderful. Thanks to the Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Councilmember McCarthy for your presence. Rick Barrett, thank you sir for your 40 years of service to the City. You will be greatly missed!



BNSF Conference

Many members from the BNSF organization converged upon the City of Flagstaff this week to conference, and the City welcomed them in good fashion. Christine Cameron presented on the importance of relationship building between the City and BNSF.



City Volunteer Days

The second of a series of City-sponsored community volunteer events occurred on June 4th in both the Sunnyside Neighborhood and Grandview Neighborhood. The task at hand: sandbags. Lots of sandbags. Efforts were focused on replenishing the existing sandbag walls for residents who were on the list (there is a call-in number ... website link on below flyer). We had an amazing turnout and mad props to all who came and ... replenished. Some action shots below and flyer for the next event, occurring on June 18th.



Museum Flood Area Volunteer Event

Distributing Sandbags

Saturday, June 18
8am-12pm & 1pm-4pm



Meet at Coconino County Health and
Human Services at 2625 N. King St.

Please wear sturdy shoes, pants, and sun
protection, and bring a refillable water bottle and
work gloves if able. Food will be provided!

Volunteers should register online in advance
at: <https://loom.ly/kYtSY4k>



CITY OF
FLAGSTAFF

Bond Issue ... 1990

With all the recent activity related to this year's bond measures, I thought that it would be of interest to see what was developing related to City bonds back in 1990. The topic: the proposed new Airport Terminal, which as history has it, was successfully approved and built. I am not sure of the exact date of the below posting, but the bond measure was considered by the City Council in March of 1990. An interesting read:



WaterSMART Grant

Given the topic involves reclaimed water, we would like to gauge Council support for a grant application prior to submittal on June 15th. Council will need to formally accept the grant, if awarded, in April of 2023. The application is for an aquifer recharge and recovery project through the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Drought Response Program. Staff feels that the talking points are solid given that the project is tied to Water Policy and City Code. Notably, the Water Commission endorsed the proposal on a 5-1 vote. Additionally, there are support letters from FoRio, Audubon, AGFD, and possibly Willow Bend. Not in support are F3 and the Flagstaff water group. Issues with not supporting are related to concerns on reclaimed water quality mixing with aquifer water.

Staff's position is that the grant dollars should be pursued, and water quality is something that can be tackled separately, especially noting the near-future plans and public processes to significantly upgrade our wastewater treatment facilities. Please see the below talking points in support of this pursuit, and an appended letter from our Congressional Delegates.

- Arizona Game and Fish Department staff walked the area with Water Services staff about whether such a project was feasible in Sinclair Wash approximately ten years ago
- NAU professor emeritus, Dr. Paul Beier, co-presented with Erin Young, on the topic of the Sinclair wash site as a possible amenity co-benefit with aquifer recharge. This presentation occurred before the Water Commission, Coconino Plateau Watershed Partnership, and Friends of the Rio de Flag in 2018.
- Water Services' perspective has always been focused on the water management benefit of such a project as per the 2014 Water Policies, with amenity co-benefits a nice-to-have – unless the organization wanted to pay for the infrastructure and the monthly cost of the water as a reclaimed water customer
- Staff did not have enough data to support the Sinclair wash location over other sites, including the current discharge point at the I-40 wetlands. Natural Channel Designs completed a feasibility

study in January 2020 and staff have collected additional data to support an application to Arizona Department of Water Resources. Two sites are selected (Sinclair and Bow & Arrow) to have flexibility with where water is discharged for maximum recharge benefit while learning a lot about how the two sites function similarly or differently

- The WaterSMART Drought Response Program objectives matched very nicely with the scope of the City's aquifer recharge and recovery initiatives in the 2014 Water Policy
- Water Services is utilizing the budget for the City's next well site as the match from Reclamation to fund the outfalls in Sinclair and Bow and Arrow washes
- The next well site will be located on Canyon Del Rio property (a well site is included in Development Agreement). City customers benefit from the redundancy the added well capacity brings to the local wells system. The added well improves the City's ability to mitigate a Water Emergency during a water shortage. Local wells are also independently tied into the distribution system and at less risk to loss in a catastrophic wildfire. A catastrophic wildfire in the forest outside of City Limits could take out an entire wellfield.
- Each outfall will have about 0.5 mile of flowing water at variable rates throughout the year, but very little during the dry months of May and June when reclaimed water is in high demand
- Flagstaff is probably 7 to 10 years away from implementing direct potable reuse, should the community elect for DPR vs. ongoing aquifer recharge or augmentation of Upper Lake Mary
- The aquifer should benefit from substantial recharge during this time – staff will work on establishing acceptable minimum flows, when excess reclaimed is available, at the two locations, to prepare for the possibility of reduced flows in the future
- Sinclair outfall project supports a project listed in the Watershed Alliance for Rio de Flag Watershed Plan funded by a WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program grant in 2019
- Flagstaff would provide \$4.2 million as a 50% cost share, receiving \$4.2 million from Reclamation
- Anticipated letters of support include: Senators and Congressman O'Halleran, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Southside Community Association, Friends of the Rio de Flag, Arizona Department of Water Resources, Coconino Plateau Watershed Partnership, Dr. Tom Whitham at NAU, National Audubon Society
- Water Commission endorsed the project 5 to 1 in favor of the project and submitting the grant application, at their May meeting. Opposition was heard during the Water Commission meeting from Friends of Flagstaff's Future, and one citizen with flagstaff water group, regarding water quality concerns with Class A+ water. Support for the project was heard from AGFD, National Audubon Society, Friends of the Rio de Flag.

Staff's recommendation is that we pursue the grant application and continue discussions around water quality standards beyond A+ separately from sound water management decisions included in the Council-adopted 2014 Water Policies. Should Council not be supportive of this pursuit, staff will not proceed any further. Thank you.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2022

Ms. Camille Touton
Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Dear Commissioner Touton:

We are writing regarding the City of Flagstaff's \$4.2 million WaterSmart Drought Response Program grant for its Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Project, in which the City's unused reclaimed water will be released to an effective area of aquifer recharge along Sinclair and Bow and Arrow Washes. The City has already allocated \$4.3 million for the required match for this proposed project.

As you may know, the City of Flagstaff has been on the leading edge for rural Arizona communities in the pursuit of a drought resilient water system. The City currently releases unused reclaimed water into Rio de Flag Wash under Arizona Pollution Discharge Elimination System (AZPDES) and Arizona Aquifer Protection (APP) permits. However, these locations are not providing a discernable benefit to the deep C-aquifer from which the City draws its groundwater.

Therefore, Flagstaff is voluntarily pursuing funding two new locations at which to recharge 1,000 acre-feet or more of water a year. The City's Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Project will allow Flagstaff to improve drought resilience, increase amenity and environmental benefits and continue to be a leader for rural communities in water resource planning.

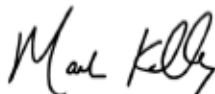
In-stream aquifer recharge also offers abundant community and ecological benefits. Sinclair Wash is one of City's most natural washes and parallels a highly trafficked urban trail. Perennial flow within the wash will encourage the growth of riparian vegetation such as cottonwoods and willows, which improves aesthetics and can help minimize flooding in these low-income communities. Perennial flow in both washes will also provide important habitat for birds and aquatic organisms. The City of Flagstaff's Aquifer Recharge and Recovery Program has many community benefits including increasing drought resilience and improving amenity value. Releasing high quality reclaimed water into the city's aquifer is a vital step for this northern Arizona community to ensure an adequate water supply for the future of Flagstaff.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter in accordance with all applicable rules, regulations, laws, and guidelines.

Sincerely,



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



Mark Kelly
U.S. Senate



Kyrsten Sinema
U.S. Senate

cc: Ms. Sherri Looper, Program Coordinator, WaterSMART Drought Response Program

That's it Council ... it's a wrap. Enjoy the Division updates as appended.