



Posted: Monday, February 26, 2024

NOTICE AND CALL OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Water Advisory Committee will hold a special meeting on
TUESDAY, MARCH 05, 2024, at 5:00 PM
at the Trinidad Town Hall, 409 Trinity Street, Trinidad, CA.

HYBRID FORMAT – TOWN HALL & VIDEOCONFERENCE (ZOOM)

For your convenience, this meeting will also be held via videoconference, hosted on the **Zoom platform**. Learn more about Zoom here: <https://zoom.us>

PUBLIC COMMENT: Public comment may be submitted via email in advance of the meeting, or in an orderly process during the meeting. If you do not have access to email and you would like to provide a written statement, please deliver your comments to 409 Trinity Street, Trinidad CA, by 2:00pm on the meeting day, or email to cityclerk@trinidad.ca.gov

HOW TO PARTICIPATE: You are invited to participate in person at the Trinidad Town Hall, or by Zoom. The City will publish a direct link to the Zoom teleconference, along with the participant code, on the City Calendar page online at <http://trinidad.ca.gov/calendar>

To phone in, dial 1-888-278-0296, Conference Code: 685171 Meeting ID: 821 5110 6611 Passcode: 486047

PLEASE NOTE that live meeting logistics will be prioritized. The quality of the Zoom teleconference meeting cannot be guaranteed, but should be satisfactory to allow for remote participation.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
(5) Voting Members: Aaron Hakenen, Planning Commission. Cheryl Kelly, City Council. Jack Tuttle, City Council. Bryce Kenny, Trinidad Resident. Dwight Miller, Trinidad Resident.
- II. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – 09-27-2023, 11-08-2023 wac
- IV. **ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR**
At this time, members of the public may comment on items NOT appearing on the agenda. Individual comments will be limited to 3 minutes or less. Please direct your comments to the Council as a whole, maintain decorum and avoid personal attacks on staff, members of the Council and/or other members of the public. Council and staff responses will be minimal for non-agenda items.
- V. **CONSENT AGENDA - None**
- VI. **DISCUSSION/ACTION AGENDA ITEMS**
 1. Water Rate Study.
 2. Water Plant Staffing.
 3. Raw water storage project update.
 4. Discuss financial considerations of City-run water plant vs HBMWD.
- VII. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**
- VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2023 VIA HYBRID

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL (5:00 pm)

Committee Members Present: Hakenen, Kelly, Kenny, Tuttle, Miller (joined via Zoom at 5:23 P.M.)

Committee Staff Absent:

City Staff: Naffah, Souza

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion (Kelly/Kenny) to approve the agenda. Passed unanimously (4-0).

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 02-23-2023

Motion (Kenny/Kelly) to approve the minutes. Passed unanimously (4-0).

IV. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Anita Thompson, Trinidad Resident, voiced concerns about the 2022 Consumer Confidence Report.

Paula Levine, Trinidad Resident, urged the Committee to follow up on Resolution 2021-02 tasks, including “analyzing potential options of water sources.” This is the resolution authorizing the Water Advisory Committee. She also asked for a cost analysis comparison between the purchasing of wholesale water and Luffenholz Creek.

V. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

None.

VI. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Status of Water Tank replacement grant planning and discuss trade-off decisions given increased cost of tanks.

Committee Discussion

City Manager Naffah explained that the cost for the project increased approximately 40%. Rather than compromise the quality of the tank the City opted for a smaller stainless steel tank that holds 250,000 gallons. He noted that the work will begin next year, but did not provide a timeline.

Hakenen asked if a secondary chlorination system will be installed. He also asked if the City had concerns about another increase in cost as the project will not begin until next year. Naffah stated

that even if there is an increase in cost the City will opt for a second 250,000 gallon stainless steel tank.

Kenny asked about stored untreated water as a fire safety precaution.

Miller asked how much of the water reserve fund has not yet been committed.

Public Comment

Anita Thompson, Trinidad Resident, asked why the project isn't starting sooner and when the grant expires.

2. Water plant staffing and Coleman role.

Committee Discussion

City Manager Naffah explained that Coleman Engineering is the current Chief Plant Operator (CPO). He shared that Lyle Lowery is preparing for the T-3 exam and will eventually take over as CPO. Dereck Shadle will take the T-2 exam in November and Kyle Shipman is currently studying for the T-2 exam. Naffah said that even after Lyle becomes CPO he would like Coleman to continue as a supplemental tech expert. The run-rate for Coleman will be \$128/hour and up to \$4,000/month.

Kelly noted that Lowery, as CPO, will be a part-time employee. Given that, she agreed that keeping Coleman Engineering on retainer as a supplemental tech expert was a valid plan.

Miller asked if the WAC was in a position to make a recommendation relating to costs. Naffah responded that the \$128/hour will be as needed. He added that the City is performing a water rate study with RCAC that should be completed by the end of the year. Kelly asked if the water plant's budget is included in the water rate study. Kenny asked about capping Coleman's contract hours.

Hakenen voiced his skepticism about the water staffing plan. He noted that the City hired a T-3 employee who is not working at the water plant and that the City has spent over \$600,000 in the search for a T-3 operator since Ryan Desmet left in late 2021. He urged the WAC to come up with a Plan B. Kelly agreed and voiced her concerns about communication and the amount of money the City has invested in this plan.

Naffah noted that adjacent cities are serviced by Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD). Hakenen suggested researching a shared service agreement.

Kelly suggested that Plan B could include researching a connection to HBMWD.

Public Comment

Paula Levine, Trinidad Resident, asked the City to research the cost differences of treating water from the Luffenholz Creek and purchasing potable water from HBMWD.

3. PWA report on Luffenholz water 'reserve' ponds and creek flow.

Committee Discussion

City Manager Naffah explained that the creek flow had fallen to .7, but rose to 3.658 after the recent rain. He shared with the WAC that the City has sent letters to fifteen properties regarding leasing or donating land for raw water storage for up to a million gallons. There have been two responses. Kelly asked about potential costs and noted again that the City has already invested a lot into the water system.

Kenny asked if McKinleyville has reserve tanks. He also had concerns about commercial cannibis leaching without permits and other illegal diversions.

Hakenen asked how often the creek flow is measured. Naffah assured him that it is measured weekly. He also shared his issues with leasing ponds for water storage.

Public Comment

Paula Levine, Trinidad Resident, asked if there are other cities with similar water systems. Naffah stated that the concept of reserve ponds is identical to a reservoir.

4. Water use monitoring and oversight: Planning Commission request for WAC to review water use data and oversight tools and provide input.

Committee Discussion

Kelly noted that the Planning Commission had already made a decision regarding this item.

Hakenen spoke on behalf of City Planner Trever Parker. He provided a summary of her Staff Reports from recent Planning Commission meetings regarding water conservation.

Kenny noted that leaks have a major impact on the data. Kelly mentioned that household population also factors into consumption.

Hakenen asked how the City intends to measure water rationing.

Miller threw his support behind an annual postcard that would inform water customers about their usage. He urged the City to support a rebate or grant program for customers that reduce their consumption.

Kelly noted landscaping can incur high water consumption. Hakenen reminded her that some landscaping is regulated. There was a discussion about rainwater catchment systems and drip irrigation. They agreed that the City would benefit from an education program.

Public Comment

None.

VII. REQUEST FOR FUTURE ITEMS

- Plan B for Water Plant
- Conservation / Education
- Rainwater Catchments
- PWA Reports
- HBMWD / Other Water Sources
- Drought Contingency Plan
- Upper Luffenholz
- Watershed Water Rights
- Summary of Water System Costs / Budget
- Water Rate Study
- Consumer Confidence Report / Water Quality

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 P.M.

Submitted by:

Anton J. Souza
Administrative Assistant

Approved by:

Cheryl Kelly
Water Advisory Committee Chair

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023 VIA HYBRID

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL (5:00 pm)

Committee Members Present: Hakenen, Kelly,
Committee Members on Zoom: Kenny, Tuttle, Miller
Committee Staff Absent:
City Staff: Naffah, Souza

Due to a lack of quorum and AB224 the Water Advisory Committee proceeded to discuss the agenda items in a workshop forum without actions being taken.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

No action taken as a quorum was not physically present.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 09-27-2023

No action taken as a quorum was not physically present.

IV. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

Anita Thompson, Trinidad Resident, asked about T-3 staffing at the water plant and payments to Coleman Engineering. City Manager Naffah said that Lyle Lowery does not have a date yet for the T-3 exam. Naffah also stated that he believes the last payment to Coleman was for \$12,000, but he didn't know how many hours that represented.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

None.

VI. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consumer Confidence Reports – Overview, State requirements for monitoring and reporting, quick review of 2022 report highlights.

Committee Discussion

Phil Godman provided an overview of the Consumer Confidence Report and emailed a lead and copper graph of four sample sites for the last twenty years to Naffah. He said that the numbers go up and down depending on usage and the age of the pipes. Naffah explained that there are ten sample sites in Trinidad that were selected in 1996. Godman explained that not every test occurs annually. Some tests are every three years and others are every ten or twelve years.

Kelly asked Godman if the report could be more user-friendly. Kenny suggested adding an executive summary. Hakenen provided copies of similar reports from Blue Lake and Fairfield noting that the formats differ. Godmen said that the CCR is a State report and cannot be modified, but an amendment can be included when the City distributes it. He also noted that reports differ by water plant grade. He will contact the State Regulator about adding to the report.

Public Comment

Anita Thompson, Trinidad Resident, thanked the Committee for following up on the CCR and asked about the protocol for notifying residents about contaminants. Naffah said that residents would be notified by group email, by emergency texts, or by staff going door-to-door.

2. Rainwater Catchments – Review the 2021 Rainwater Catchment report and recommendations, discuss grant funding opportunities and feasibility of developing ‘boilerplate’ permitting options to streamline adoption.

Committee Discussion

Kelly provided a brief overview of the 2021 report and shared the more recent Rainwater Harvesting brochure.

Naffah informed the Committee of permission from the stormwater grant to hire a consultant for the boilerplate permit options.

Naffah explained the rainwater catchment program at the Trinidad Elementary School. He said there's a possibility of also implementing a rainwater catchment program at the Town Hall. Hakenen suggested a residential demonstration site and including a QR code in the signage and educational materials. Miller shared that Chi-Wei Lin set up a rainwater catchment system in 2012. He encouraged offering incentives and that neighbors work together to apply for large catchment tanks and emergency potable water reserves. Kelly suggested mini-grants. Hakenen suggested working with local hardware stores. Kenny stressed planting native species.

Public Comment

Erin Quinlin, Trinidad Resident, voiced her support for Miller's suggestion of an emergency potable water reserve.

3. Luffenholtz Watershed – Discuss water rights in the watershed and illegal use.

Committee Discussion

Kelly stated that the Planning Commission had previously determined the need to monitor water rights and document users while working with the County and State Water Resources Control

Board to investigate any potentially illegal diversions, new withdrawals, or new applications for water rights. Kenny volunteered to follow up and explained the City's water rights and riparian rights. He said it's not a high priority currently. Kelly suggested revisiting the issue in Spring.

Public Comment

None.

4. Status on Water Rate Study – Overview of what it will include and the estimated completion timeframe.

Committee Discussion

Naffah provided an overview of the report included in the packet. He stressed that the study is being funded by the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) and is projected to be completed in December. In February the City will begin the Proposition 218 process required prior to a rate increase. The rate adjustment implementation will likely begin in April 2024.

Hakenen questioned Naffah about the timeline and suggested that the City is a month or two behind schedule.

Kenny asked for clarification of the term "estimation of age." Naffah said that it refers to the "useful remaining life" of particular items. He also referenced the 2012 overhaul at the water plant. Kenny also asked if the monies used to pay Coleman to operate the water plant came from the capital improvement fund. Naffah said it was part of the reserve funds. He stated that the reserve funds have decreased to \$500,000+.

Kelly noted that the City Council and WAC have discussed the expense of having Coleman Engineering run the water plant factoring into the water rate study. Naffah said the previous rate study five years ago included a COLA of 2.5% per year, thus saving water customers up to 12.5% during that period.

Public Comment

Paula Levine, Trinidad Resident, asked about the monthly rate to run the water plant and for the City to compare that cost to hooking up to Humboldt Bay Municipal Water Department (HBMWD). She suggested the WAC gather data for the comparison.

Erin Quinlin, Trinidad Resident, discussed how HBMWD would impact Trinidad and suggested the quarry as a water storage location.

There was a brief discussion about evaluating and agendizing connecting to HBMWD. Miller stated that the City's 2012 rate study included comparative rates. Hakenen said the issue is moot

if the Council does not support it. Kelly would like direction from the Council. Naffah recalled the Council decided to revisit the issue in three-to-five years and instructed staff not to work on it until directed by the Council.

5. Update on Raw Water Storage Site Search – Status of efforts thus far from PWA, GHD, and City staff.

Committee Discussion

Naffah explained that PWA prepared a map identifying thirty-five properties as potential locations for one-two million-gallon storage tank sites. The City sent letters of interest to all thirty-five and have received replies from seven. He has visited two of the sites.

Kenny commented that even when the creek appears dry it's flowing underground. There was a discussion about drawing water when the stream is low. Kelly suggested that would effect fish and wildlife and downstream users.

Kelly asked if the raw water storage would be used for fire protection.

Hakenen asked if the storage water would be filtered or unfiltered. Phil Godwin had suggested raw filtered water. Naffah was unsure. Kenny noted that creek turbidity has improved.

Public Comment

Paula Levine, Trinidad Resident, asked for a financial estimate of costs and a comparison of fire-fighting capabilities between the City's water system and HBMWD.

Charles Garth, Trinidad Resident, shared that he collects rainwater and encouraged others to collect and store water.

Erin Quinlin, Trinidad Resident, responded to questions of turbidity.

VII. REQUEST FOR FUTURE ITEMS

- Plan B for Water Plant
- Conservation / Education
- Smart Meters
- PWA Reports
- HBMWD / Other Water Sources
- Drought Contingency Plan
- Upper Luffenholz
- Watershed Water Rights
- Summary of Water System Costs / Budget

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 P.M.

Submitted by:

Anton J. Souza
Administrative Assistant

Approved by:

Cheryl Kelly
Water Advisory Committee Chair