

CITY OF MOAB
WATER CONSERVATION AND DROUGHT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2021

The Water Conservation and Drought Management Advisory Board held its regular meeting on the above date. Consistent with provisions of the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act, Utah Code Ann. §54-2-207(4), the Water Conservation and Drought Management Advisory Board Chair has issued written determinations supporting the decision to convene electronic meetings of the Board without a physical anchor location. Due to the health and safety risks related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and considering public health orders limiting in-person gatherings, the Water Conservation and Drought Management Advisory Board will continue to hold meetings by electronic means. An anchor location was not provided. An audio recording of the meeting is archived at <http://www.utah.gov/pmn/index.html>. A video recording is archived at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XmlPE2J2YU>.

Regular Meeting—Call to Order and Attendance:

Water Board Chair Jeremy Lynch called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM. Participating remotely were Water Board Members Arne Hultquist, Kyle Bailey, and Mike Duncan. Water Board Member Kara Dohrenwend was absent. City staff participating remotely were Assistant City Manager Carly Castle, Public Works Director Levi Jones, Recorder Sommar Johnson, and Deputy Recorder Kerri Kirk. City Engineer Chuck Williams joined the meeting at 2:09 PM. Members of the public participating remotely were Eve Tallman and Steve Getz.

Approval of Minutes: January 13, 2021

Discussion: Board Vice Chair Hultquist requested three corrections to the minutes from January 13, 2021, which were emailed to Assistant City Manager Castle and Board Chair Lynch.

Motion: Board Chair Lynch moved to approve the minutes with the recommended changes by Board Member Hultquist. Board Member Duncan seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed 4-0 with Board Members Hultquist, Duncan, Lynch, and Bailey voting aye. Board Member Dohrenwend was not present for the vote.

Board and Staff Reports:

Board Vice Chair Hultquist reported having a nice discussion with Utah Division of Water Rights Regional Engineer Marc Stilson and UGS about more groundwater monitoring. He said, hopefully, in the next month or two, we'll have a groundwater monitoring plan available that we can consider funding for the wetlands.

Board Member Duncan inquired about getting Kolm, Gardner, UGS, and others together for the MAWP meeting in March. Board Vice Chair Hultquist confirmed there is a state of the science for groundwater discussion on the MAWP meeting agenda for March. He said it is the third Wednesday of the month at 1 PM.

Discussion Regarding Appointment of New Water Conservation and Drought Management Advisory Board Members:

Board Chair Lynch stated there are three applicants for the Board: Eve Tallman, Steve Getz, and Beth Malloy. He said Tallman and Getz are present for the meeting, and Malloy may join the meeting later on. Assistant City Manager Castle said each applicant will be interviewed individually by the Board. She said one vacancy is for the county seat. She said Getz lives in the county currently, and Malloy may be moving near the golf course, which would put her in the county as well. She said Tallman lives in the city limits.

Board Vice Chair Hultquist requested introductions before the interviews. Getz was brought into the meeting, and the Board and City staff introduced themselves. Assistant City Manager Castle inquired about Getz's interest in being on the Board. Getz shared his background and interest in the Moab area's water.

Board Member Duncan said there are two broad areas of interest for the Board: producing an updated water conservation report and aquifer capacity. Getz said he reviewed the 2016 conservation report, which seemed pretty comprehensive. He said he reviewed the meeting minutes for the last few months to see what issues have been focused on.

Assistant City Manager Castle inquired about Getz's experience and expertise. Getz provided his background with aquifers and surface water rights. He said the issues with aquifers include: recharge rate, amount of storage, establishing monitoring systems, and how much reserve is necessary. He expressed concern about the number of new applications for water rights. Board Vice Chair Hultquist said there will need to be a conversation about the history of the last three years and where the water rights stand currently.

Assistant City Manager Castle inquired about Getz's education background. Getz said his degree is primarily environmental chemistry and he founded his own lab in 1986. There was discussion about water chemistry and discerning between multiple aquifers.

Getz inquired about the water rights for the discharge from the sewer plant. Board Vice Chair Hultquist said the state owns the water coming out of the wastewater treatment plant. There was a discussion about the water requiring a second treatment plant and distribution system before it could be reused. The Board thanked Getz for applying and proceeded to the next applicant.

Tallman was brought into the meeting, and it was determined that introductions were not necessary. Assistant City Manager Castle inquired about Tallman's interest in being on the Board. Tallman shared her background and interest in being on the Board. Tallman inquired about whether growth can be limited based on water. Board Member Duncan inquired about additional suggestions to pacify residents who are mad about the increasing water demand from commercial locations.

Tallman inquired about the status of hiring a new sustainability director. Assistant City Manager Castle said there have been some candidates and the next steps are being taken. Tallman said the water conservation education effort will benefit from the sustainability director's assistance. Board Chair Lynch thanked Tallman for attending the meeting and for her application.

Board Chair Lynch confirmed that Malloy had not joined the meeting yet. He requested leaving ten minutes at the end of the meeting to determine Board member recommendations.

Water Conservation Plan Update:

There was discussion about the schedule and potential assignments for the water conservation plan update. Assistant City Manager Castle reviewed which parts of the plan will be generated by City staff and which parts need collaboration with the Board. There was discussion about the plan items, which Board Members would be assigned to specific items, and the timeline to discuss the topics at upcoming meetings. Board Member Duncan requested a reminder two weeks prior to the next meeting about drafting the items he volunteered for.

Draft Shortage Contingency Plan Ordinance:

Discussion: Assistant City Manager Castle introduced this topic, and said it authorizes the City Manager to develop a water shortage contingency plan with the assistance of staff, the Water Board, and City Council. She requested input from the Board regarding warnings, fines, and the appeals board.

Board Vice Chair Hultquist said a water shortage contingency plan is necessary for an immediate shortage or public works infrastructure disruption. He said that, during a drought, the City will have to cut back on water use systematically. He suggested the Division of Water Rights should be included in the plan, because they can direct the City during a shortage to conserve water.

There was a discussion about the fines and appeals board process which protects City staff and the public by having three members of the Water Board as independent objective members of the appeals board.

Board Member Duncan mentioned three large entities who may have an issue with conservation: Grand Water & Sewer Service Agency (GWSSA), Moab Irrigation Company, and the City. He said distributing the conservation problem equitably is an issue.

Board Vice Chair Hultquist expressed concern about conservation and said he would like to start teaching conservation habits. He said the ordinance would only apply to municipal water users from the City. Assistant City Manager Castle said the conservation plan update includes valley-wide conservation efforts, including coordination with GWSSA and the Moab Irrigation Company.

There was discussion about how this ordinance would be beneficial for the emergency action plan, and how to prioritize uses under different shortage scenarios.

Motion: Board Vice Chair Hultquist moved to recommend to the City Council to approve this ordinance that gives them the opportunity to develop a contingency plan. Board Member Duncan seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed 4-0 with Board Members Hultquist, Duncan, Lynch, and Bailey voting aye. Board Member Dohrenwend was not present for the vote.

Discussion Regarding Appointment of New Water Conservation and Drought Management Advisory Board Members:

Board Vice Chair Lynch requested Southeast Utah Health Department Environmental Director Orion Rogers give a presentation at the next meeting about graywater. He also requested that Roslynn McCann speak at the next meeting about the graywater system she is using.

Board Member Duncan said the two interviewed candidates are very strong candidates. Board Vice Chair Hultquist said Getz and Tallman have the background necessary for this position and have a will to serve.

Motion: Board Chair Lynch moved to recommend to the City and to the Mayor to appoint Eve Tallman and Steve Getz as our two new Water Board Members. Board Member Duncan seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed 4-0 with Board Members Hultquist, Duncan, Lynch, and Bailey voting aye. Board Member Dohrenwend was not present for the vote.

Adjournment: Board Member Bailey inquired about a new water tank. Public Works Director Jones said it is on the capital improvement plan. Board Chair Lynch adjourned the meeting at 3:36 PM.