

REGIONAL WASTEWATER RECLAMATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT



PIMA COUNTY
WASTEWATER RECLAMATION

FISCAL YEAR 2018/2019



RWRAC Mission....

To review and make recommendation on policies and regulations relating to wastewater reclamation; the Department's short and long range capital improvement needs; proposals concerning rate structure formulation; and proposed State and Federal legislation relating to wastewater reclamation issues; and to support and sponsor community programs and projects to provide information and education to the community regarding wastewater reclamation in Pima County.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Jackson Jenkins, *Director*

The Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (RWRD) is committed to upholding the department’s mission statement to protect the public health, safety, and the environment by providing quality service, environmental stewardship, and renewable resources. Over the past year, the Regional Wastewater Reclamation Advisory Committee (RWRAC) received monthly updates on a variety of topics that showcased RWRD’s commitment to maintaining these standards. The RWRAC was kept informed and held discussions on everything from department operations and projects, to the RWRD

Financial Rate Workbook to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This year, the RWRAC also received presentations on other significant topics, such as RWRD’s Security and Emergency Preparedness, the Sonoran Institute “Living River” Report, the County Legislative Agenda update, and the Pima Association of Governments (PAG) 208 Plan. Each year, the RWRAC also receives Division updates from the Deputy Directors to hear about each Division’s operations and activities and the RWRAC is given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the related matters for

each Division. The Financial and CIP Subcommittees also continue to meet separately from the full committee to allow a more thorough review and discussion in each respective area.

I am truly thankful to work for such a great utility and am proud of the tremendous results that are achieved daily by all of the RWRD staff. I am certain that RWRD and the RWRAC will continue to work collaboratively in the upcoming year and I appreciate each member’s commitment and dedication to this committee.



FROM THE CHAIR

Corin Marron, *Chair*

The RWRAC was established to act as an official advisory body to provide advice and guidance on wastewater management matters, which include policy, financials, and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The RWRAC takes the roles and responsibilities of the committee seriously and as is done every year, ensured the financials and CIP were reviewed and evaluated, and saw to it that their input was provided on both of these important matters. The RWRD and the Finance and Risk Management Department staff reviewed the RWRD 2019 Financial Plan with the RWRAC and reported that the department is in good financial standing and the debt service ratio remains at or near 1.3

through FY 2025. In April, the RWRAC unanimously voted to support the 2019 Financial Plan. With regards to the CIP, both the full committee and the CIP subcommittee received updates and presentations highlighting the major projects, as well as an overview of the CIP budget and long-term planning. Throughout the year, the RWRAC also received updates and presentations on a variety of other important RWRD related issues and projects.

This year, we welcomed two new members, Scott Oldendorph and Steve Foley. Both gentlemen represent Supervisor Ally Miller for District 1 and have proven to be great assets to the committee and I look forward to working with each of

them in the coming year.

I am also pleased to announce that I will continue to serve as Chair for FY 2019/2020, alongside Matt Matthewson as Vice-Chair. We are honored to accept these positions and am confident that it will be another productive year. I truly appreciate the continued support we receive from staff and the efforts made to ensure the committee is successful in achieving the responsibilities we are tasked with. The RWRAC shares in the department’s mission and is dedicated to continuing to provide valuable input to contribute to the important matters that effect our community.

RWRAC MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: JULY 2018 - JUNE 2019

July 2018: No meetings were held.

August 2018: Director **Jackson Jenkins** began the meeting with the Director's Update. The Department is currently fast-tracking the Twin Peaks Project, which involves installing a gravity sewer line in the Dove Mountain area. The developers involved will be paying premium connection fees for the project that is set to begin next month. The Biogas Project is still under discussion as the Department explores which technology will provide RWRD the most value. The Department is also investigating fiscally advantageous technologies for the Nutrient Recovery Project (Struvite) that would include savings by reducing the Department's need for purchasing ferric chloride and polymer.

The Financial Subcommittee, voted unanimously to recommend that the Department hold public meetings to potentially eliminate the Winter Quarter Average (WQA) for non-residential users. **John Lynch** recommended that the full RWRAC dedicate October's meeting to discussing the potential of reducing the categories of high strength users and modifications to the residential sewer user fee rate structure.

September 2018: The RWRAC held two special public meetings regarding the proposed modifications to the billing methodology for non-residential users from WQA to actual usage. Deputy Director **Jeff Prevatt** gave an overview of the justification for the proposed changes, and addressed questions from the public at both meetings.

Following the special public meeting on September 27, the RWRAC held its regularly scheduled meeting. RWRAC members discussed the feedback they received during the two special public meetings. **Shaun McClusky** made a motion to remove multi-family users from the RWRAC's previous recommendation to bill all non-residential users by actual usage rather than WQA. The motion passed on a 6 – 3 vote.

Deputy Director **Eric Wieduwilt** gave a presentation on proposed ordinance revisions currently underway. These changes include: 13.20 Sanitary Sewer Construction and Connection Fee; 13.28 Mt. Lemmon Connection Information Update; 13.32 Mt. Lemmon Conservation Fee adding an operation surcharge and language clarification; and 13.24 User Fee Modification.

October 2018: Director Jenkins began the meeting with the Director's Update in which he updated the RWRAC on the Mt. Lemmon Homeowner's Association informational meeting of the proposed revisions to the Pima County Code (PCC) related to the Mt. Lemmon Water Reclamation Facility. Director Jenkins also relayed his intention to move forward with outreach regarding proposed PCC changes towards the end of the year.

Ray Munoz, Tucson Water New Area Services Supervisor, and **Richard Sarti**, Tucson Water New Development Section Manager, gave a presentation on the cost and process involved in installing a new water meter.

Director Jenkins informed the RWRAC that the Department would be postponing any further recommendations to the

Board of Supervisors (BOS). The Department plans to redefine the problems involved with the current billing methodology and consider available data and constituent feedback before proposing additional options. Director Jenkins encouraged RWRAC members to submit questions or comments regarding billing topics to the Department for consideration during internal discussions.

Shaun McClusky made a motion to rescind the proposed recommendation to the BOS to modify billing methodology for the non-residential classes' sewer user fee by billing based on actual water usage rather than WQA. The motion passed unanimously.

November 2018: Director Jenkins began the regularly scheduled RWRAC meeting with an update on various Departmental projects currently underway. The Nutrient Recovery Project (Struvite) is still in the design stage but is expected to be in operation by summer of 2020. The Biogas Project is in the design stage as the Department continues negotiations with Southwest Gas. The Anammox Project is in the pilot phase in partnership with the University of Arizona and is being researched for viability.

The RWRAC reviewed a draft of the 2019 Work Plan, which lays out a schedule of discussion topics for the Committee by month. Committee members made suggestions of further topics of interest to be incorporated into the Work Plan.

During the RWRAC special public meeting, Program Coordinator **Mary Valencic** gave a presentation on the proposed ordinance revisions to the PCC regarding the Mt. Lemmon Water Reclamation Facility. Director Jenkins took questions from members of the public and addressed their concerns. The RWRAC approved the proposed ordinance revisions, including minor suggested edits, with a vote of 6 to 1, with one member abstaining.

December 2018: The CIP Subcommittee held a meeting to review the Five-Year CIP projects, as well as the proposed Five-Year CIP Plan for FY 2019/20. Matt Matthewson stated the CIP Subcommittee members felt the current proposal was comparable to previous CIP budgets and project lists, consistent with the last Five-Year plan, driven by department policy. The CIP Subcommittee unanimously voted to recommend to the full committee that they support the department's Five-Year CIP Projects and Plan.

January 2019: Director Jenkins began the meeting with the Director's Update. He informed the Committee on the Department's intention to put before the BOS revisions to the PCC regarding Mt. Lemmon Sewer Connections and Mt. Lemmon Conservation Fees. After public input, the proposal to add an operational surcharge, currently set at \$0, was removed from the proposed amendments and the current proposal.

The RWRAC recognized its newest member appointed by District 1, **Steve Foley**. Mr. Foley was presented with a Philabaum glass award in appreciation for his willingness to volunteer his time on the Committee. Mr. Foley has an extensive background in storm water and hydrology and brings a wealth of knowledge to the Committee.

RWRAC MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: JULY 2018 - JUNE 2019

CIP Subcommittee Chair **Matt Matthewson** introduced the proposed FY 2019/2020 Five-Year CIP Budget to the Committee. **Adam Bliven**, Program Manager, gave a presentation over changes that had occurred to the budget after CIP Subcommittee's initial approval. The Committee then moved to approve the revised budget, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Michelle Campagne, Director, Finance and Risk Management Department, presented an overview of the 2019 Rate Workbook. Ms. Campagne explained the Department is in good financial standing with a 1.3 debt service ratio.

February 2019: During the Director's Update, the RWRAC recognized a member appointed on behalf of District 1, Mr. **Scott Oldendorph**. A previous RWRD employee, Mr. Oldendorph was presented with a Philabaum glass award in appreciation for his willingness to volunteer his time on the Committee.

Claire Zugmeyer, an ecologist with the Sonoran Institute, gave a presentation on the Living River Report, a joint initiative of the Sonoran Institute and Pima County and a baseline study on the Lower Santa Cruz River with inspiration from years of research on the Upper Santa Cruz River. This particular project aims to assess the wetland conditions created and affected by effluent.

Eric Wieduwilt followed with an overview of the Technical Services and Engineering Division, including the variety of duties it accomplishes and the far-reaching implications of the important work it performs.

March 2019: Director Jackson Jenkins began the meeting with the Director's Update. He updated the Committee on the Department's three technology projects: Biogas, Nutrient Recovery, and Anammox.

Deputy County Administrator of Public Works **Carmine DeBonis, Jr.** discussed the county's legislative agenda for the 2019 state legislative session adopted by the BOS.

Mead Mier, Watershed Planning Lead of Pima Association of Governments (PAG) and **Greg Hitt**, Program Manager, presented the PAG 208 Plan with the required five year update with the purpose to streamline and align with ADEQ, maintain a minimum 20-year horizon, and update conditions, facilities, issues, progress, and future actions. The PAG is a



Director Jackson Jenkins presents newly appointed RWRAC member Steve Foley with a Philabaum in appreciation for volunteering his time.

designated planning agency under section 208 of the federal Clean Water Act and, as such, is responsible for regional water quality planning throughout Pima County excluding tribal lands.

Jean McLain announced June 24, 2019 as the anticipated celebration to begin the downtown flow of reclaimed water into the Santa Cruz River.

April 2019: Director Jenkins began the meeting with the Director's Update. He updated

the Committee on several of the Department's ongoing sustainable projects. Director Jackson also reported on RWRD's Personnel and Key Performance Indicators and advised the Committee that RWRD's fiscal year 2019/20 budget hearing will be on May 15, 2019.

Eric Wieduwilt presented the text amendment to PCC 13.20 and noted the goal was to update the language so it is clearer for customers to understand. The Committee supported the revisions to move forward with the PCC 13.20 text amendment.

Adam Bliven updated the Committee on several of the CIP projects. He said RWRD is scheduled to be just at the \$44.3 Million approved by the BOS this fiscal year.

May 2019: Director Jenkins reported to the Committee the Department's overall status is good. The Department has a culture of continuous improvement and looks at technology as another avenue to help improve our costs in performance. He also reported the BOS approved the 2019/20 fiscal year tentative budget on May 22, 2019. Director Jenkins brought up personnel and tariffs as two concerning issues. Personnel is a big part of RWRD's business and there is



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high turnover and high retirement demographic. The good economy has a strong job market so the competition for available applicants is difficult. Director Jenkins addressed the Committee on how tariffs placed on goods and materials can potentially affect our business as a consumer of many materials. The Department has begun working with Pima County Procurement to contact the vendors and contractors to verify increases in the cost of goods. Some of the Department's providers of goods increased by two to three percent. The Department will ensure we have the right skill set and continue to address the tariffs with Pima County

See "HIGHLIGHTS" Page 6

DEPARTMENT AWARDS

RWRD is proud of the important work it contributes to the community and has been recognized nationally, statewide, and locally for its excellence and groundbreaking impact. The following are the awards received for FY 2018/19:

National Association of Clean Water Agencies:

- *Platinum Peak Performance Award* went to Green Valley WRF for excellence in permit compliance.
- *Platinum Peak Performance Award* went to Mt. Lemmon WRF for excellence in permit compliance.

AZ Water Association:

- The Sabino Creek Force Main and Lift Station Project from the Conveyance Division-CIP Group received the *Project of the Year Award*.



Deputy Director Jeff Prevatt, Program Manager Barbara Escobar, and WateReuse President Paul Jones II pose with the WateReuse Transformational Innovation Award.

Metropolitan Pima Alliance:

- The Southeast Interceptor Sewer Augmentation Project was selected for the *2018 Projects of the Year* in the Public Projects category.

Annual WateReuse Symposium:

- The AZ Pure Water Brew Challenge Project won the *Transformational Innovation Award* for its leadership, creativity, and persistence in supporting recycled water.

Arizona Forward Environmental Excellence Awards:

- The AZ Pure Water Brew Challenge Project received the *Crescordia Award* the highest award given in the Governor's Award for Arizona's Future category..

AVEVE-WonderWare World Conference:

- The Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Team won the *Innovation Award* for their deployment of Simple Network Monitoring Protocol, a radio telemetry system that provides 2-way SCADA communications via RF (radios) to all County pump stations..

Employee Combined Appeal Program (ECAP)

Campaign:

- RWRD received the *Copper Award* for raising more than \$20,000 of the \$319,858 total raised County-wide. Awards were given for top-performing Departments with the highest level of improvement both in per capita donations and employee participation.



WW Instrumentation Process Control Supervisor David Adamovich and Program Coordinator Larry Sawicki represented the RWRD SCADA Team in Dallas, TX at the AVEVA-WonderWare World Conference when accepting the award for Innovation.

American Public Works Association Arizona State Chapter:

- The North Rillito Interceptor Rehabilitation Project received the *State Chapter Project of the Year Award* in the Environmental Category for projects between \$5 and \$25 million. This particular project involved over 10 miles of sewer rehabilitation and affected various neighborhoods and constituents.
- The Job Order Master Agreement: Wastewater Conveyance System Project received the *State Chapter Project of the Year Award* in the Environmental category for projects more than \$75 million.

The *Project of the Year Awards* recognize outstanding engineering excellence and achievement in the following categories: water system, water treatment plant, wastewater system, wastewater treatment plant, and water reuse.

American Public Works Association Southern Arizona Chapter:

- The Sabino Creek Pump Station Project received the *Project of the Year Award* for Environmental category less than \$5 million.
- The Southeast Interceptor Sewer Augmentation Project received the *Project of the Year Award* for Environmental category for projects \$5 to \$25 million.
- The State Prison Bar Screen Project received the *Project of the Year Award* for Structural category for projects less than \$5 million.



On behalf of RWRD, Project Manager David Badger accepts the AZ Water Association Project of the Year Award at the AZ Water 92nd Annual Conference Awards Reception.

Procurement during planning.

Community Relations Manager **Caroline Vargas** updated the Committee on the goals and objectives of the Community Relations Office. She explained to the Committee the importance of community engagement as it relates to the needs and education of the public by increasing public understanding of the value of wastewater infrastructure as a utility service. The Grease Campaign, Construction Career Days, Social Media, and Citizens Water Academy were highlighted in the presentation to demonstrate RWRD's commitment to increasing communications with customers, strengthening relationships with partners and stakeholders, and promoting RWRD's vision and mission.

June 2019: Director Jenkins reported to the Committee that RWRD has come to an agreement with Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (DMAFB), and has resolved the connection fee issue. Historical records for DMAFB's water usage from the 1970s indicate a higher water usage than today. RWRD agreed to use this data as their highest usage capacity and until they hit the capacity there will be no sewer connection charges. Director Jenkins also updated the committee on the Continental Ranch Pump Station. With the completion of the diesel-driven bypass back-up emergency pump installation, antiquated parts continue to be replaced and repaired. Additional infrastructure repairs are needed therefore a request for an addition \$1 million dollars will go to the BOS for approval.

City of Tucson Water Director **Tim Thomure** followed by

discussing the successes of the Tucson Heritage Project on June 24, 2019 with the discharge of reclaimed water into the Santa Cruz River.

Compliance and Regulatory Affairs Office (CRAO) Program Manager **Barbara Escobar** updated the Committee on CRAO's responsibilities. CRAO ensures RWRD always meets the compliance standards, whether they are local, state, or federal particularly the Clean Water Act. CRAO employees work 365 days a year and have completed approximately 48,000 different analyses and 17,000 sample containers per year. The Permitting and Water Management, Industrial Wastewater Control, Laboratory and Data Management units work collaboratively with one another, as they are an important link between the monitoring requirements, efforts, and the informed data analyses for assessing and reporting the quality of the water.

Program Manager **Richard Miranda** followed with a robust presentation on RWRD's effort on emergency preparedness as a critical infrastructure. He emphasized RWRD's Emergency Preparedness and Security Response's mission statement to ensure the protection of RWRD's personnel and critical wastewater infrastructure by effectively planning, preparing, and responding to all emergencies to maintain a continuity of operations for RWRD's wastewater systems.

REGIONAL WASTEWATER RECLAMATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Regional Wastewater Reclamation Advisory Committee (RWRAC) was established by the Pima County Board of Supervisors in 1986 to act as its official advisory body on wastewater management matters. Each appointed member serves a four (4) year term.

<u>Ally Miller</u> District 1	<u>Ramón Valadez</u> District 2	<u>Sharon Bronson</u> District 3	<u>Steve Christy</u> District 4	<u>Richard Elías</u> District 5
Steve Foley Scott Oldendorph**	Armando Membrila* Mark Taylor***	John Lynch* Claire Zucker	Bill Katzel Charles Matthewson***, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Rob Kulakofsky Ann Marie Wolf**
Citizens' Water Advisory Committee		Arizona Water Association		Ex-Officio
Jean McLain		Asia Philbin**		Jackson Jenkins, <i>Director</i> , RWRD
Environmental Planning Advisory Committee				Timothy Thomure, <i>Director</i> , Tucson Water
Corin Marron*, <i>Chair</i>				

* Financial Subcommittee member ** Capital Improvement Program Subcommittee member

REGIONAL WASTEWATER RECLAMATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS: FY 2019/2020

August 22, 2019	November 21, 2019	January 23, 2020	April 23, 2020
September 26, 2019	December 19, 2019	February 27, 2020	May 28, 2020
October 24, 2019		March 26, 2020	June 25, 2020

General Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department activities can be viewed on the Department's website: www.pima.gov/wastewaterreclamation

To view agendas and minutes from the Regional Wastewater Reclamation Advisory Committee visit the Department's website and click on the right sidebar button:

Boards, Commissions & Committees

Regional Wastewater Reclamation Advisory Committee meetings are held monthly on the fourth Thursday (with the exception of July, November, and December due to the holidays) at 8:00 a.m., at the Water Campus, 2955 W. Calle Agua Nueva, Tucson. **Times and dates are subject to change.**

Committee Coordinator: Veronica Lopez - Phone: (520) 724-6561, Email: veronica.lopez@pima.gov