

**REGIONAL WASTEWATER RECLAMATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RWRAC) MEETING  
Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**Thursday, February 25, 2021**

**8:00 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Steve Foley, Alison Jones, Bill Katzel, Scott Kolt, Rob Kulakofsky, Matt Matthewson, Armando Membriola, Scott Oldendorph, Asia Philbin, Mark Taylor, Ann Marie Wolf, Claire Zucker

**Members Absent:** Corin Marron

**Others Present:**

Melanie Alvarez (PAG), Mandy Armenta (FRMD), Laura Arnold (RWRD), Marla Berry (RWRD), Jeff Biggs (Tucson Water), Adam Bliven (RWRD), Julie Brixen (FRMD), Victoria Buchinger (PCAO), Craig Cannizzaro (Westland Resources), Isai Centeno (FRMD), Kim Challender (BOS – District 1), Barbara Escobar (RWRD), Mike Gerstenberger (RWRD), Andrew Greenhill (Tucson Water), Jackson Jenkins (RWRD), John Kmiec (Tucson Water), Veronica Lopez (RWRD), Sarah Metz (FRMD) Julie McWilliams (RWRD), Michele Milensky (FRMD), Jeff Prevatt (RWRD), Xavier Rendon (FRMD), Jaime Rivera (RWRD), Mary Valencic (RWRD), Eric Wieduwilt (RWRD), Claire Zugmeyer (Sonoran Institute)

**A. Call to Order / Roll Call**

**ACTION:** Matt Matthewson made a motion for Ann Marie Wolf to serve as the Chair until the Regional Wastewater Reclamation Advisory Committee (RWRAC) Chair or Vice-Chair are able to join the meeting. Mark Taylor seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ann Marie Wolf, Acting Chair, RWRAC, called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Veronica Lopez, Program Coordinator, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (RWRD) took roll call and a quorum was present. Scott Oldendorph, Chair, RWRAC, joined the meeting and took over as Chair.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Oldendorph welcomed and introduced new member, Ms. Alison Jones to the committee. Ms. Jones is newly appointed and serves as the Citizens Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) representative.

**C. Call to the Audience** – There were no comments from the audience.

**D. Safety Share**

Jackson Jenkins, Director, RWRD, reminded everyone to be cautious and safe while outside during high winds. Mr. Oldendorph suggested getting a COVID-19 vaccine if you have an opportunity to do so.

**E. Approval of Minutes** – Meeting Minutes for January 28, 2021

**ACTION:** Matt Matthewson made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from January 28, 2021. Rob Kulakofsky seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

## **F. Discussion/Action**

### **1. Sonoran Institute “Living River” Report**

Claire Zugmeyer, Ecologist, Sonoran Institute, gave a presentation on “A Living River – Charting Santa Cruz River Conditions, Northwest Tucson to Marana.” Sonoran Institute is a conservation non-profit, which was founded in Tucson, and they have been working along the Santa Cruz River along the watershed since 1990. The Santa Cruz River is a living, flowing river and the foundation of community health and prosperity. The Living River Report was first published in 2008. These reports track improvements on the conditions of the Santa Cruz River. Ms. Zugmeyer gave an update on the ammonia concentrations from 2013 to 2019 and discussed how the ammonia levels are back down to one milligram per liter. Ms. Zugmeyer explained the increase of aquatic invertebrate and fish diversity found in the river since 2013. Ms. Zugmeyer discussed the data on the increased recharge and the peak floods. Ms. Zugmeyer also discussed the various outreach events that were held over the past year, as well as upcoming events.

Going forward, the Living River Report will be expanded to include the downtown Heritage Project. A collection and analysis of trash data will also be researched. Mr. Jenkins asked how the Heritage Project activity is going. John Kmiec, Interim Director, Tucson Water, stated approximately 800 gallons per minute is being released into the river and flows up to St. Mary’s Road.

### **2. Director’s Report**

#### **a. Canoa Ranch Development / Arivaca Junction**

Mr. Jenkins provided an update on the continued development at Canoa Ranch and how RWRD has been working with the developer and the Arizona Department of Transportation to secure a location for a sewer line along the frontage road.

#### **b. Meetings with the new Pima County Board of Supervisors (BOS) Members**

Mr. Jenkins stated he and the Deputy Directors have met with the new BOS members in which they gave an introduction to the department and provided updates on current matters. Mr. Jenkins stated these meetings were well received.

### **3. 2021 Rate Workbook Review**

Michele Milensky, Division Manager, Finance and Risk Management Department (FRMD), presented on the Rate Workbook. Ms. Milensky stated there are no significant changes to the financial projections and no there is no need for rate increases at this time. Ms. Milensky stated the rating agency ratio is stable. Staff is in the process of starting the sewer obligations defeasance for 2012. A 10-year debt schedule will be presented at next month’s meeting. Ms. Milensky announced RWRD now has a double A rating with the rating agencies. Mr. Jenkins suggested showing the pay-as-you-go concept in future slides or graphs. Ms. Milensky continued to go over the workbook and stated the expected debt over the next few years will be approximately \$40 million. Mr. Matthewson asked if the debt service ratio is still 1.30 and Ms. Milensky stated it is. Ms. Milensky will confirm information related to the debt service ratio with the FRMD Director and give an update at the next meeting.

### **4. Financial Subcommittee Report**

Mark Taylor, Member, RWRAC, requested that staff schedule a subcommittee meeting for next month and confirmed that Asia Philbin will fill the vacancy on this subcommittee.

### **5. CIP Subcommittee Report**

Mr. Matthewson stated the CIP Subcommittee will meet in June.

**6. Fiscal Year 2020/21 Expense and Revenue Summary**

Mandy Armenta, Administrative Support Services Manager, FRMD, provided the Fiscal Year 2020/21 Expense and Revenue Summary for Period 7. The total operating and maintenance projection is \$82.9 million, which is slightly above budget. Ms. Armenta reported the Department is slightly under for projected revenues, but overall everything looks good for this Fiscal Year.

**7. CWAC Report – Meeting Report and Tucson Water Activities**

Ms. Jones introduced herself to the committee. Mr. Taylor stated the focus of the CWAC has been the proposed differential rates that are being considered for unincorporated Pima County. Mr. Taylor stated at CWAC's next meeting, the committee will have an opportunity to provide their comments on this proposal. Discussion ensued. Ms. Wolf suggested placing this item on next month's agenda for discussion.

**G. Future Agenda Items**

- Tucson Water Proposed Differential Rates

**H. Call to the Audience** – Mr. Oldendorph asked if it was known when meetings can be held in person. Mr. Jenkins stated at this time the County has not given approval to hold in-person meetings.

**I. Adjournment**

**ACTION:** Bill Katzel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rob Kulakofsky seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 a.m.