



Warm Springs Citizen Advisory Board

Approval of these draft minutes, or any changes to the draft minutes, will be reflected in writing in the next meeting minutes and/or in the minutes of any future meeting where changes to these minutes are approved by the CAB.

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Warm Springs Rural Citizen Advisory Board held **November 10, 2021**, held at Palomino Valley Volunteer Fire Department (6015 Ironwood Road, Palomino Valley)

1. *CALL TO ORDER/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM - Susan Ambrose called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The following roll call determined a quorum: Susan Ambrose, Marshall Todd, Karenne Smith, Pam Roberts, Kevin Cook, Hugh Ezell (arrived late)

Not present: none

2. *PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The pledge was recited.

3. *PUBLIC COMMENT –

Marshall Todd showed his appreciation for service members.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 13, 2021 (for possible action) -

MOTION: Marshall Todd moved to approve the minutes from the **OCTOBER 13, 2021** meeting. Kevin Cook seconded the motion to approve **OCTOBER 13, 2021** minutes. The minutes were approved.

5. PRESENTATION BY TRUCKEE MEADOWS WATER AUTHORITY – Lydia Teal introduced John Enloe, Christen Crompt, Robert S., TMWA Representative, and provided an informational handout. She spoke information about the One Water Nevada and Palomino Farms Sustainable Water Resource feasibility study. She introduced Michael Benjamin, owner of the Palomino Farms property. He stated he is committed to relinquishing development rights for the ability to restore the aquifer.

A public member asked if it's metered? John Enloe stated it is metered and monitored by the state engineer's office.

Shawna Wagner asked protections are in place to guarantee this agreement won't be changed in the future? John Enloe stated there would be a citizen advisory committee that TMWA would report to. He stated we would share the information about the amount of water used to recharge the aquifer and the amount of water taken back.

A public member asked where is the guarantee the property won't be developed in the future – Mr. Benjamin stated there would be a deed restriction in perpetuity as a conservation area or agriculture for the community.

Public member, George, asked If TMWA wants to do this, then this should be put out as a vote for Palomino Valley. He said it was a water grab. John Enloe stated The State Water Engineer

said there is a deficiency out here. George said if this goes through, they will want to meter your well. The people in Palomino Valley should have the opportunity to vote.

Marshall Todd stated this is just a study; it's not a done deal.

Mr. Benjamin stated his property is fundamentally approved for 1,800 units. He stated this is a rural area. It's critical to keep it that way. He stated he could sell it to Lennar, who would put in a golf course and homes. He said he didn't want to see that. He said his partner Brian Murphy doesn't want to do this. He said we pump 1,000s of gallons for alfalfa. He said it would dry up; it's the nature of the system. If you don't put the water back in, it will drop 100-150 feet in 4 years. We can continue to farm and allow the aquifer to drop and put in new deeper wells. He said what is being proposed is a win-win. It's the goodness to protect the valley. He said he will deed restrict the property. It's a huge commitment.

A public member stated Mr. Benjamin would sell water rights to TMWA.

Julee Osman asked if there will be eminent domain. John Enloe stated no, we have highway right-a-way.

Kevin Cook said you are either trying to resolve water issues or you are trying to resolve water issues that Reno is having. Is the feasibility identifying if there is a need out here or the City? John Enloe stated Mr. Benjamin offered his 2,500 ft of water rights which we originally declined. He stated he investigated a similar situation north of Stead. We spent \$1Million on a feasibility study to find out it wasn't going to work. He stated the City of Sparks operates the regional water reclamation plant. They are looking for more places to use their reclaimed water. He stated we are working with them on projects. He stated the concept is to bring recycled water for farm, and let the wells rest. He said we are familiar with groundwater levels. Preliminary work showed declines. The banking concept was there, and it all came together. TMWA proposed the recycled water proposal. It was all out on the table.

He asked if they wanted 1,500 homes or do you want your water table restored. In response to a public member's comment, he said it's a great question to assure future boards' intent to keep this commitment. There are benefits to the community, and we do need to get something out of it too. We will live up to our commitments.

A public member asked what the population size is in this area? Mr. Benjamin stated 2,400 residents.

Public member, George, stated he understands what they are trying to do with Palomino Farms. He said Mr. Benjamin isn't the only farm that can turn into development. Pratt owns other lands. John Enloe stated that the turf farm/ Mr. Perry's property isn't part of this but agreed to test the wells. He stated we could include them to make the same deal. The County knows you do not want to develop 1,000 homes out here and support this if they can make the 1,000 homes zoning for development go away.

A public member asked Commissioner Jeanne Herman what can she do about this. Ms. Herman stated Staff and legal counsel would handle this. John Enloe stated he is working with Mr. Smith on this project. He stated TMWA is responsible for responding to the needs of the community for reliable water supply. He stated we are using the same amount of water today as we did in 2000 because of smart use and metering. He stated the state engineer likes when

we are fixing potential problems by replenishing groundwater. By doing this, it will help everyone with no future growth and improve the water table.

Kevin Cook thanked them for coming out to communicate what they wanted to do. He asked if the feasibility study is feasible and something that would work for what you need. Are you going to move forward with the implementation, or does it require to have community buy-in. He asked what the legality of it is. John Enloe stated a 5-way agreement (Reno, Sparks, Washoe County, TMWA, and Mr. Benjamin) would take elected boards to agree. If the community wouldn't want it, then it won't go. We want you to support it.

John Enloe stated he understands there are concerns that if we brought out the waterline, it would promote development; he said he would prevent that from happening. Mr. Benjamin spoke about the other farms, LW and Pratt property is the majority of farmland in the valley. The sod farm could be developed in the future. He said through the area plan; we could propose some kind of constraint of development.

Susan Ambrose spoke about the Area Plan Update process and community involvement. She stated this wouldn't happen overnight. It's in the planning phase with community meetings.

A community member asked who performs the data collection and who owns the data. John Enloe stated TMWA hydrogeologists have been conducting the work; we are doing water quality simulations, testing, and sampling. He said we would provide the same information with the state engineer, Mr. Benjamin, and the community.

Susan Ambrose encouraged the public members to email TMWA your questions.

Kevin Murphy stated he owns property in the valley. Said he likes the proposal but doesn't like the history of the County. They can re-zone it now. They want growth and look for anywhere to put it. He said we have long droughts. He said the new developments in Spanish Springs have green lawns during droughts. They are sucking the water from here. Mr. Benjamin stated he could put a deed restriction on the property. He said most of the valley is zoned 5-10-20 acre parcels. The farms are where major developments can happen. Mr. Benjamin stated a deed restricts the property to one type of use. We would do it so it cannot be undone.

John Enloe said we would leave more water out here than we take back. We need a permit. He stated Mt. Rose fan has wells. TMWA took over that system and invested \$40Million in the last five years to fix the problem up there. We are fighting developers all the time who need to pay for it. TMWA doesn't operate like a typical government. We look at the interest of the entire region, including domestic well owners. We make sure our operations help domestic well owners instead of hurting them. We have been doing the recharge program since 1992. He said 20 people came in July and allowed TMWA to sample their wells which helps us collect data. We want to make sure there is a reliable water supply.

Huge Ezell arrived at 6:56 p.m.

Hugh Ezell stated a public member asked a question, but the response didn't answer the questions. A deed restriction doesn't mean it won't be pumped down here. He asked if freshwater would be injected. He asked if purple pipe water would be injected into the aquifer. John Enloe stated it would be blue pipe, potable water to restore the aquifer.

A public member stated he is concerned the aquifer would flow into Pyramid lake. John Enloe stated there is a big hole that won't allow it. A public member stated once agreements are made; you can't go back on.

John Enloe spoke about purple pipe – it's recycled water used for irrigation; the recharge is potable, drinking water provided to everyone in Reno/Sparks. There are two separate types. Two water qualities. The potable water is Truckee River water. A public member asked why he would pump water up here and then turn around and use it in Reno. John Enloe stated it's a reservoir in case the Truckee River goes low. It's a source to supply the City. Under the agreement, we won't take out more than we put in.

A public member stated it's a free storage area. John Enloe stated it's the same concept. It's doesn't evaporate as it does in reservoirs. It would take 100 of years to reach Pyramid.

George, a public member, asked if the board recommends that the County put this on the ballot. Susan Ambrose stated the CAB board is not taking action on this; it's information only. It's just a study. If it doesn't work out, it won't happen. George asked if this is feasible, will the County put a vote out here. Susan Ambrose stated it's of regional significance – it requires many steps.

Mike James said you don't have input when Reno/Sparks approve all these projects in Spanish Springs. John Enloe stated when developments come through us; they ask if there is a water supply, and we say yes. All the development in Spanish Springs is being provided by Truckee River water. A public member stated Truckee would go low, and there will be climate changes. John Enloe suggested he go to TMWA website to look at the projections. There are still reservoirs upstream, snowmelt, or rainwater.

A public member asked why do you need to use us for storage. John Enloe stated that we are seeing extremes in dry years and wet years. He explained water storage in wet years. The upstream reservoirs are lifesavers. TMWA has 89 municipal wells from Honey Lake to Lightning W to Verdi and Stampmill. In years where there is a lot of snowmelt, we use surface water supply; in dry wells, we run storage wells. TMWA uses surface and groundwater. This gives us the flexibility to operate to minimize the impact on any system that is stressed.

Shawna, a public member, stated well recharges for 30 years. She asked if it is possible to get information to compare then and now to see how you have been using those wells so we can trust your word.

A member of the public asked about the balance of recycled and potable and what is taken back. He asked if it will mostly be recycled and a little fresh water. He asked the formula for the treated and fresh. John stated he can work out the details and let the community know.

Hugh Ezell said this proposal is only for storage; the community won't become a TMWA service area. He said it is a water line that could be tapped into. John said we could talk to the state engineer. Hugh Ezell asked if there is a guarantee that no person in the valley will ever get a bill from TMWA. A public member said that's happening in the valley. Ms. Teal stated that they are experiencing wells drying up in Golden Valley and now have a recharge program through the County. John Enloe asked if someone wanted to hook up to the system because their well was dry or poor water quality. John said the state engineer decides that. We can let him know the concerns. We wouldn't want him to hook up if it's high pressure and not always in operations. A

public member said municipal water rights take priority over agricultural water rights. They have higher beneficial uses. John stated Mr. Benjamin's water rights are already a high priority.

Ms. Teal stated there are TMWA staff emails on the handout. She encouraged the public to email their questions.

A public member asked for FAQ on handouts. She encouraged them to email her before CAB meetings to get information. A public member stated they are light on the details. Susan Ambrose encouraged him to contact TMWA, State Water Resources, and the State Engineer.

Lydia stated we could come back with details. The public members agreed and requested TMWA to come back with more details.

6. *WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE –

7. FUTURE CAB SCHEDULE - Frequency of meetings & set date of next meeting (for possible action)

Susan Ambrose stated the Nextdoor survey results showed 56% wanted bi-monthly, 46% wanted quarterly. She asked the public members in the room and the community expressed support for bi-monthly meetings. She stated she could call a special meeting as neighborhood meetings as well.

The next meeting is in January 2022.

MOTION: Marshall Todd moved to host bi-monthly meetings. Kevin Cook seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

8. SELECT ALTERNATE SITE – Susan Ambrose introduced the item. She spoke about the ability to host larger meetings and conflicts with Fire Station uses. Marshall Todd recommended using the shooting range as the meeting since it allows for more capacity so people don't have to stand outside.

MOTION: Marshall Todd moved to move the meeting to the shooting range. Kevin Cook seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

9. WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE – Jeanne Herman stated that the most important topic had been discussed. She said she was hoping to have monthly CAB meetings because things were happening. They are wrapping up the exploration process and there will be a lot of facts. Mr. Benjamin stated the feasibility agreement was going to be 14 months it will be completed by February/March. He stated any information he requested, they have been upfront and forthcoming with providing the information. He said if you have any questions, please contact him or TMWA.

She stated we are redistricting, and the maps are online. She encouraged the public to attend the Board of County Commissioner's meeting on November 16, 10 a.m.

10. *CAB MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENT/REQUESTS –

Marshall Todd said he likes this new concept of the CAB. He said we have only had a couple of meetings in the past because they were based on development. He said he is thrilled to have a meeting. He hopes to have more of these. Let's get together and share information.

Karenne Smith asked if the community appreciated the postcards. The community members agreed. She said she would like to hear more from Senior Services. She said she is surprised by the kind of services they provide. Susan Ambrose stated we plan to have this topic come in January along with VA services.

Susan Ambrose announced this Saturday is green waste disposable day, 9-4 p.m.

A public member asked if the equestrian center could be a meeting place. Susan Ambrose stated yes; however, it's not ADA accessible.

11. *GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT –

A public member asked if there is interest in talking about wildlife or science studies in the area. Susan Ambrose stated we could have a representative from NDOW attend a future meeting. She said any area of interest can be discussed. This is your opportunity to discuss what is going on in your area.

A public member asked how someone could speak or present at the CAB meeting; Candee provided information and encouraged anyone to email the CAB email. She said we use subject matter experts for CAB meetings.

Susan Ambrose thanked the County for removing the burning man bus.

Susan Ambrose encouraged the public members to email her with CAB topics or topics of concern.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.