



**City of Davis
Utilities Commission Minutes
Remote Meeting
Wednesday, July 20, 2022
5:30 P.M.**

Commissioners Present: Gerry Braun, Andrew Cullen (Acting Chair), Linda Deos (Chair) - arrived at 7:00p.m., Steve Gellen, Lorenzo Kristov, Emma O'Rourke-Powell (Alternate), Elaine Roberts-Musser, Johannes Troost

Commissioner(s) Absent: None

Council Liaison(s) Present: None

Staff Present: Stan Gryczko, Director - Public Works Utilities & Operations
Adrienne Heinig, Assistant to the Director

Also in Attendance: Greg Clumpner, NBS

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Acting Chairperson Cullen called meeting to order at 5:31pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

E Roberts-Musser moved to approve the agenda, seconded by G Braun. Approved by the following votes:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Kristov, Gellen, O'Rourke Powell, Roberts-Musser, Troost

Noes:

Absent: Deos

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commission Members, and City Council Members

- E Roberts-Musser provided seven articles for Commission review:
 - The Southwest is bone dry. Now, a key water source is at risk (*Politico*)
 - Making Water Affordable for Low-Income Households (*Public Policy Institute of California*)
 - How San Diego secured its water supply, at a cost (*AP*)
 - California lawmakers mull buying out farmers to save water (*AP*)

- California's First-of-a-Kind Microgrid for Wastewater Treatment (*Microgrid Knowledge*)
- Court says California utilities commission must obey the state Public Records Act (*Los Angeles Times*)
- Commentary: Four Strategies for Managing California's Crucial Watershed (*Public Policy Institute of California*)
- A Heinig mentioned the report in the Commission packet presented to the City Council on the status of the City's water supplies.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Consent Calendar

A. Utilities Commission Minutes – May 18, 2022

B. Urban Forest Management Plan

C. Climate Action and Adaptation Plan Update

D. Potable Water Supplies Update

Prior to the approval of the Consent Calendar, E Roberts Musser made a motion to move the Consent Calendar absent Item 5B, seconded by E O'Rourke Powell. Prior to the vote, a substitute motion was made by G Braun to move the Consent Calendar absent Items 5B and 5C, seconded by S Gellen. Approved by following votes:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Kristov, Gellen, O'Rourke Powell, Roberts-Musser,
Troost

Noes:

Absent: Deos.

Item 5B (*Urban Forest Management Plan*): Pulled for a discussion to consider the appointment of a commissioner to attend Tree Commission meetings when the Urban Forest Management Plan is on the agenda.

Brief commission discussion included the following:

- The importance of educating the public on the requirements in the care of trees in the City's urban forest, including what happens if trees need pruning. It was noted that members of the community can be concerned about being asked to care for City trees on their property and the associated issues with those trees (leaf drop, water needs, etc.)
- The expenditure of water resources in the short term not representing an adequate return of investment, and the necessity of taking into account the heat island effect and prevention of groundwater evaporation. It was noted that better understanding of how planning takes into account water expenditures is needed.

- Concerns about how the Tree Commission would evaluate the health and risks of a tree and if there are clear records of utility line/pipe conflicts that may exist around trees. Staff indicated that planting discussions include locating utilities.

After the brief discussion on Item 5B, A Cullen moved, J Troost seconded, to appoint Elaine Roberts Musser as the representative of the Utilities Commission for the discussions of the Urban Forest Management Plan. Approved by following votes:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Kristov, Gellen, O'Rourke Powell, Roberts-Musser,
Troost

Noes:

Absent: Deos

Item 5C (*Climate Action and Adaptation Update*): Pulled for a request for an update from the Commission subcommittee.

Brief discussion included the following:

- The unanticipated length of the process, with a few extensions of milestones throughout the project.
- Metrics that have been requested but have not been provided yet.
- The need for concrete steps for implementation.

No public comment was received.

6. Regular Items

A. Sewer System Capacity Fee Update.

The item was introduced by S Gryczko. He provided a brief presentation on the process so far, to update the City's sewer system capacity fees for new connections to the sewer system, including previous Commission discussions and updates made in the most recent report provided to the Commission.

Commission discussion included the following:

- Clarification that the sewer connection fee is a one-time fee, and an example of a situation when ratepayers would have to cover future costs (if a community had estimated larger growth than occurred).
- Clarification that capacity fees cannot include the State Revolving Fund loan.
- Explanation in the difference of the fee amount between the two assessments. Decommissioned Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)

assets were removed from the calculations, the new WWTP carries less cost outside of the outstanding debt.

- In response to a question about the capacity of the WWTP, staff indicated that the City is undergoing a capacity assessment. Current estimates indicate a 10-year horizon to make significant capacity improvements. The assessment will include the number of EDUs that can be added before new construction for expanding capacity would be needed. Current developments underway (e.g. Bretton Woods) have already been accounted for in planning.
- Concern around the increase in the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and if the increased capacity is accurately reflected in fees. Staff indicated there are ongoing discussions with the Department of Community Development and Sustainability to better understand the rules and regulations around ADUs.
- The need to plan for changes in water use and the impact that has on wastewater processes (e.g. when there is a significant increase or decrease in water use). Staff indicated that water conservation practices have had impacts on wastewater operations. Decreased water use leads to increases in strength of contaminants in wastewater, which impacts the amount of treatment needed. With the ongoing drought, issues like this are occurring across the State.
- In looking to adjust the City's sewer capacity fee, there is a need to review the data and reassess if the fee is adequately capturing the costs of all customers. Specific to this item was the discussion of by-the-bed rentals. Staff indicated that with data, assessments can be conducted and the fees adjusted if a significant enough impact is shown.

MOTION: to recommend the adjustment to the sewer capacity fees as provided in the report to council for approval.

Moved by E Roberts-Musser, seconded by G Braun. The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Kristov, Gellen, O'Rourke Powell, Roberts-Musser,
Troost

Noes:

Absent: Deos

L Deos joined the meeting at 6:54pm

MOTION: Request that City Council ask staff to assess the data from by-the bed multifamily properties to understand the impact and make any necessary adjustments to sewer capacity fees.

Moved by J Troost, seconded by S Gellen. The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Kristov, Gellen, O'Rourke Powell, Roberts-Musser,
Troost

Noes:

Abstain: Deos

Absent:

No public comment was received on this item.

G Braun left the meeting at 7:00pm.

B. Community Resilience Subcommittee Update.

The item was introduced by L Kristov. He outlined the request of the subcommittee to receive support from the full Commission based on the experience of E Roberts Musser and S Gellen speaking to the Finance and Budget Commission (FBC). He said that in a number of discussions on resilience hubs, it appears the Commission is fully supportive of the approach, and if that is the case, allowing the subcommittee to speak on behalf of the Commission would be of value.

Commission discussion included the following:

- Attendance at a recent webinar for grant funding around resilience hubs, indicating \$75 million available, and they are currently evaluating the criteria to be used to evaluate applications. It was stated that applications would be accepted by the first of the new year (2023). It was also mentioned the awards would likely be in two phases, with \$25M in the first phase and \$75M in the second. Money would likely be distributed in June or July of 2023. It was noted there was no statutory requirement that low income communities only could apply. It was stated that it would be prudent for the City to start thinking about the project in advance of the funding to be ready by the deadline of January 2023.
- The need to ensure communications with partners, to see how the City can work with the District, University etc.
- With money also allocated in the federal budget, the key takeaway for the City is to be ready with a plan. It was reiterated that City Council had directed staff to work on the resilience hub concept, and there was still no

clear staff person assigned to the effort. Expressing understanding around staff workload and challenges with resources, the need for dedicated staff support was expressed. Staff indicated that discussions were ongoing to determine how and with whom the project would move forward.

- Urgency in readying for the application process for a resilience hub was outlined, including the potentially significant discussions around the determination of details of what building might be used, what capacity needed, and what functions to provide, among other topics.

MOTION: The Utilities Commission provides authority for the Community Resilience Subcommittee to speak on behalf of the Utilities Commission regarding resilience hubs.

Moved by E Roberts-Musser, seconded by J Troost. The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: Cullen, Deos, Kristov, Gellen, O'Rourke Powell, Roberts-Musser,
Troost

Noes:

Absent: Braun

No public comment was received on this item.

7. Commission and Staff Communication

A. Long Range Calendar

The item was introduced by S Gryczko. In discussions of upcoming items, it was agreed by consensus of the Commission that a recess would be taken in August. Upcoming items for discussion include the solid waste cost of service study, and updates on stormwater projects. Staff also indicated that with recent loans to the stormwater fund from the water fund, assessments of capital improvements necessary within the stormwater utility would move forward.

No public comment was received on this item, and no formal action was taken.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:17 p.m.