

CAC minutes for the meeting of January 19, 2023

CAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Alyssa Quinn, Chair, Distributor Representative
Andrew Ross, Vice Chair, Denver Citizen Representative
Nona Shipman, Secretary, Public Interest Group Representative
Alan Hassler, West Slope Representative
Lisa Mathai, Denver Citizen Representative
Jim Fitzmorris, Homebuilders Representative
Emily Meek, Suburban Customer Representative
Jim Berkley, Denver Citizen Representative
Charley Garcia, Environmental Representative
Mike Eytel, West Slope Representative

DENVER WATER BOARD MEMBERS

Craig Jones

DENVER WATER STAFF

Sara Behunek
Julie Anderson
Jim Lochhead
Ashley Denault

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Tim Flynn

Opening Remarks

5:00 p.m. – 5:10 p.m.

- Approval of January agenda - Emily moved, Jim seconded, all in favor.
- Approval of November minutes – Jim moved, Nona seconded, all in favor.
- Welcome new CAC members and member introductions.
- Public comment – no comments.

Denver Water Presentation

5:10 p.m. – 6:06 p.m.

- Jim Lochhead, CEO/Manager
 - Jim presented on Denver Water's current initiatives: capital development program, lead reduction program and rates.
 - The 2023 rate increase will result in an overall revenue increase of 5%. This structure was decided based on many factors and includes a tiered rate system.
 - Lead reduction program was originally approved by the EPA for only 3 years but was recently approved for the length of the program (15 years). This work is done at no cost to the customer. Denver Water has exceeded every expectation set on the LRP.
 - Capital development projects:
 - Denver Water has partnered on CSU's SPUR campus, specifically the hydro building, and has moved some of their operations there.
 - Denver Water is building a new treatment plant (Northwater Treatment Plant), which will be off the grid a net energy positive.

- The Gross Reservoir Expansion Project started construction in 2022. Plan to have construction completed by 2027.
 - The Secretary of the Interior has asked all Colorado River basin states to save between 2 and 4 million acre-feet in the next year. Denver Water is very involved in negotiations and strategy plannings. A memorandum of understanding has been developed and signed by hundreds of municipalities within the Colorado River basin. This MOU will do a number of things, including reducing nonfunctional turf by 30% and replace with attractive, native, drought tolerant vegetation. There is an effort to maintain the tree canopy in service areas and benefit underserved communities.
 - Charley asked if Jim is planning to stay involved after he leaves Denver Water in 2023. Jim responded that he is not sure how he plans to stay involved but would like to stay engaged.
- Julie Anderson, Chief of Staff
 - Julie presented on Denver Water's 2022 Strategic Plan.
 - Vision statement: To sustain vibrant communities that value water for future generations
 - Mission statement: To serve our customers by being a national leader in delivering clean water, operating and maintaining a reliable and resilient system and protecting water resourced in the west.
 - Strategic perspectives: Excellent operations, inspired people, trusted leader, strong financials
 - Presented future objectives for the CAC including rate structure feedback.
- Commissioner Craig Jones, Board President
 - Commissioner Jones noted that it is important for Denver Water to be a good partner in the community. Denver Water should be a resource. The new leader after Jim will need to support and help fulfill the strategic plan.
- Tim Flynn expressed gratitude for the helpful presentations.
- Lisa asked how the CAC can help support the efforts like projects involving the Colorado River. Jim responded that the CAC should identify the topics they care about and the communities they represent care about and integrate Denver Water into that.
- Alan commented that he feels this is a good time for Denver Water and the West Slope to collaborate with current negotiations going on and the power that Denver Water has. Jim agreed that the Colorado River issues are a state issue, not just a west slope issue. The river will dictate where we end up eventually.
- Tim Flynn asked what Jim sees as the biggest obstacle with addressing Colorado River concerns. Jim responded that there are a lot, but one of them is to get away from individual priorities and transition in a way that still supports large cities, communities and industry. The federal government needs to apply real pressure and there needs to be a coming together of the river basin states.

CAC Business

6:07 p.m. – 6:28 p.m.

- Nominations and appointment of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.
 - Alyssa is currently the Chair, Andrew is the Vice Chair, and Nona is the Secretary.
 - Positions are for one-year terms per they bylaws, but there is no limit to how long a person can stay in a position.
 - Alan nominated Alyssa Quinn as Chair of the Citizen Advisory Committee, Jim seconded, all in favor.
 - Alyssa nominated Andrew Ross as the Vice Chair of the Citizen Advisory

- Committee, Jim seconded, all in favor.
 - Jim nominated Nona Shipman for Secretary, seconded by Alan, all in favor.
- Member Updates
 - Jim commented that he enjoyed learning about Denver Water's efforts to transition landscaping and that this could be an interesting community issue.
 - Alan said that in the West Slope perspective, this is a highly unusual winter. Snowpack numbers are going up, but the snow structure is very different throughout the West Slope. There are daily avalanche warnings. Several counties have unusually thin ice cover.
 - Alyssa said that Denver Water, Colorado Springs Utilities and Northern Water approached Colorado WaterWise about creating a native landscape guide and website, funded by a CWCB grant. This will be a useful tool for the public.
 - In line with these other points, Nona mentioned the future of landscaping panel that will be included at the Watershed Summit on June 22 at Denver Botanic Gardens.
 - Ashley added that Denver Water is in preliminary conversations around increasing efficiency and conservation promotions and marketing. Will not be using "Use only what you need". Alyssa encouraged Denver Water to use Live Like You Love It.
 - Alan asked if Denver Water is working on cash-for-grass initiatives. Ashley responded all options are on the table amongst a lot of other ideas.
 - Charley added that he took his grass lawn last year and would have liked to see an incentive in Denver to do this.
 - Tim asked if Julie's PowerPoint could be distributed. Ashley will check to make sure that's okay and will also send out updated CAC information to members.

CAC Work Session

6:28 p.m. – 6:41 p.m.

- 2023 work planning discussion
 - The committed discussed ideas and topics the CAC would like to be a part of and/or learn more about, including:
 - 2023 rates.
 - Colorado River plan
 - Denver Water's water efficiency plan update
 - Denver Water's new marketing and public communication plans around water efficiency/conservation.
 - Information that can be dispersed to communities, such as Colorado River problems.
 - Landscape transformation
 - Maybe one or two tours of different places; Gross Reservoir, SPUR campus
 - Two Forks, Charley is part of the South Platte Task Force discussing this.
- Ashley is developing a CAC SharePoint site.
 - This will be used to share materials and links. Materials will also continue to be emailed out. Email Ashley if you'd like to help and review the SharePoint development. Emily offered to help.

Adjourn

6:43 p.m.