

Citizens Water Conservation Implementation Task Force

Regular Meeting

Minutes

Monday, June 16, 2008
625 E 10th Street, Room 104

Jennifer Walker called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm. Members in attendance: Margot Clarke, Richard Hatfield, Norman Johns, Jody McDaniel, Nora Mullarkey, Rusty Osborne, Susan Roth, and Jennifer Walker.

- I. Approval of minutes from the June 2nd meeting.
 - a. Margot Clarke made a motion to approve the June 2nd minutes. Richard Hatfield seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved by all attending Task Force members.
- II. Citizen communication
 - a. No citizen communications were given at the June 16th meeting.
- III. Report on Austin Water Utility daily water pumpage and usage since revisions to the Water Use Management Ordinance took effect
 - a. Austin Water Utility (AWU) staff member Dan Strub distributed a water use graph from 2005 through June of 2008. Mondays, previously the highest consumption days for AWU, are now the lowest days of usage. Although the City of Austin has experienced record heat, according to the graph the usage has remained below that of previous years where consumption hit nearly 240 MGD in 2005 and 2006.
 - b. Task Force members requested a weekly email with usage information be distributed to the group.
 - c. Task Force members requested that this item be a standing agenda item for future meetings.
- IV. Update on proposed rule to designate outdoor water use days during Water Conservation Stage 2 as specified under Chapter 6-4, Article 2 (Water Use Management), Section 6-4-65 of the City Code. The rule provides for a once a week watering schedule for Water Conservation Stage 2.
 - a. AWU staff member Dan Strub explained that the water use triggers are set annually at the discretion of the AWU Director. The triggers for this year are

260 MGD for 3 consecutive days or 270 MGD for 1 day. The rule posting sets the watering schedule should consumption hit either one of those triggers and the City of Austin enters into Stage 2.

- b. Task Force members requested an email with City Code, Chapter 6-4-65 that describes the water use management stages (1-3) in detail.
- c. Task Force members also requested an agenda item to discuss the Drought Contingency Plan update and what associated opportunities there might be for water savings.

V. Update and timeline for remaining Water Conservation Task Force initiatives

- a. AWU staff member Dan Strub briefly discussed the retrofit ordinance that would require all multi-family/commercial customers to retrofit their toilets by 12/31/2010 and single family customers to retrofit upon transfer of property. The ordinance will also address carwashes, rain shut-off devices, and cooling tower upgrades.
- b. Other task force recommendations include the soil depth requirement and irrigation audits for large property and high use single family residences.
- c. Task Force members requested that staff bring the plumbing ordinance to the group when the process is further along.
- d. Implementation Task Force members also requested that a future agenda item include a briefing on the status of each Water Conservation Task Force recommended initiative, with timeframes for implementation and projected savings numbers with methods of quantifying and tracking the associated savings.
- e. Task Force members requested a future agenda item include discussion on the requirement for new commercial properties to install irrigation systems.

VI. Discussion of landscape rebate opportunities

- a. AWU staff member Amanda Dewees spoke briefly about potential landscape rebates (AWU does not currently have anything in place), providing a breakdown of what other cities throughout the country offer for similar programs.
- b. The potential for tying landscape rebates with irrigation system retrofits (a number of cities offer rebates only if no spray irrigation is to be used for watering) was discussed.
- c. Task Force members suggested coming back at a later meeting to discuss this item in more depth and examine possibilities for recommendations.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 18th at 5:30 pm in the Waller Creek Center, Room 104.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.