



**AUSTIN WATER OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
August 20, 2020**

The Austin Water Oversight Committee convened in a regular meeting on Thursday, August 20, 2020 via videoconference.

Chair Paige Ellis called the committee meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Committee Members in Attendance:

Council Member Paige Ellis, Chair, Council Member Leslie Pool, Vice Chair, Council Member Ann Kitchen and Council Member Alison Alter

Committee Members Absent:

None

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:

There were no speakers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve the minutes of the May 13, 2020 Austin Water Oversight Committee

The minutes of the May 13, 2020 meeting were approved on Council Member Alter's motion, and Council Member Pool's second, on a 4-0 vote.

BRIEFINGS

2. Director's Report
 - Upcoming recommendations for Council action
 - Zebra mussel mitigation
 - Polymer project
 - Texas Water Development Board loan updates

Austin Water Director Greg Meszaros reported that Council will be considering an item next week for an engineering contract for Austin's aquifer storage and recovery project. He also reported on progress towards having all raw water intake piping free of zebra mussels. A new polymer system to manage high turbidity from floods will go into service this fall at the Ullrich plant, followed by systems for the Davis and Handcox plants in 2021. An item will be brought to Council this fall to approve another Texas Water Development Board loan installment with more loans planned, primarily for wastewater plants.

3. Discuss potential on-site water treatment methods for Tesla site

Council Member Pool introduced two guest presenters: Tesla representative Richard Suttle and Clean Water Action Texas Director David Foster. Richard Suttle reported that Tesla has purchased the Austin Green PUD, a 2,100 acre former sand and gravel mining site along the river that is being reclaimed. The site is in Austin's ETJ and in the service areas for Austin Water and SouthWest Water. Mr. Suttle reported that Tesla is very interested in using reclaimed water and wants to work with the City on upgrades. Plans for drainage and runoff capture were also discussed. Initial building plans are outside the floodplain. David Foster spoke of the need to be mindful of future water supply in light of potential mega droughts. Mr. Foster recommended that Tesla follow Austin's Water Forward plan by having dual plumbing and a water budget that quantifies anticipated water use and on-site water generation.

4. Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Update

Rick Coronado, Austin Water Assistant Director of Operations presented an update on Austin Water's Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) program, rebranded as "MyATXWater". Contracts with Aclara and WaterSmart have been executed. Austin Water properties are being analyzed for installing data collection units that are needed to transmit data from the meters to Austin Water's database and billing system. Installation of 5,000 meters will start next month in pilot areas, with advance notifications through multiple communication strategies. Expanding customer outreach now includes a new website and virtual meetings, with a customer portal launch this spring. Full city-wide roll out anticipated to start late summer or early fall of 2021. Randi Jenkins, Austin Water Assistant Director of Customer Experience addressed questions about customer outreach.

5. Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Project Overview

Kevin Critendon, Austin Water Assistant Director of Environmental, Planning and Development Services presented an overview of Austin Water's aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) project that will use a natural aquifer to store water underground. It will provide drought resilient storage of river water collected during wet periods and can serve as an emergency backup supply during upsets. Long-term goal is to store 60,000 acre feet of water by 2040 with about \$370 million in project costs spread over 15 years. Feasibility studies will include an emphasis on affordability, equity and the importance of being a good neighbor. First phase will include desk top modeling and field testing for site evaluation, with a contract for this phase coming to Council next week. Second phase will be design and installation of a pilot facility, followed by final design and full-scale implementation in phase 3.

FUTURE ITEMS

The following future items were discussed:

- Proposed Multi-Family Customer Assistance Program
- Water Forward implementation updates
- Wildfire mitigation work by Austin Water Wildlands Conservation Division

ADJOURN

Chair Ellis adjourned the meeting at 11:53 a.m. without objection.