

Late Backup

Item #090

8/7/14

Initiated by CM Tovo

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the Central Texas drought has resulted in low inflows to the Highland Lakes, the primary source of water for the City of Austin, with the storage capacity of the Highland Lakes currently estimated to be at 39 percent capacity despite recent rains; and

WHEREAS, the prolonged drought and the success of aggressive conservation strategies have had a negative financial impact on the Austin Water Utility; and

WHEREAS, in 2011 the City Council created the Joint Committee on Austin Water Utility's Financial Plan (Joint Committee), composed of members from the Resource Management Commission, the Water and Wastewater Commission and Impact Fee Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Committee was reconvened in 2014 to provide input on strategies to manage the financial impacts associated with the prolonged drought but was not tasked with evaluating comprehensive or integrated water planning; and

WHEREAS, Council Resolution No. 20140410-033 created the Water Resource Planning Task Force (Task Force) to examine and make recommendations regarding any alternative water sources including, but not limited to, conservation, reuse, regional transmission systems and partnerships, groundwater, aquifer storage, as well as other potential sources

in the region consistent with the goals and provisions of the Imagine Austin Plan; and

WHEREAS, in July 2014 the Task Force issued its final report entitled, “Austin Water Resource Planning Task Force, Report to City Council” (Task Force Report, attached as **Exhibit A**) and recommended that the City of Austin take immediate actions to mitigate the impact of ongoing drought and to catalyze investment in a water-resilient and water-efficient economy; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force recommended that the City Council and Austin Water Utility focus on local opportunities to enhance Austin’s water supplies, including code revisions to facilitate commercial/industrial water reuse and rainwater capture and infiltration; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force recommendations included strategies identified in the Austin Water Utility’s June 2014 report to the City Council, “Drought Response Strategies Including Alternative Water Source Options” and some of these recommendations are currently underway; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to determine the best approach to increasing auxiliary water use, the City Council approved hiring CDM Smith to research regulations around the country, and this research has been concluded; and

WHEREAS, the results of CDM Smith’s report and proposed code amendments for auxiliary water use are currently under review by City staff and are scheduled for board and commission presentations beginning in August; and

WHEREAS, the response to FY 2014-15 budget question number 49 indicated that the Austin Water Utility has included an additional \$500,000 for an Integrated Water Management Plan in its FY 201 4-15 CIP Spending Plan, but additional funding may be required for an expanded scope of work; and

WHEREAS, the Watershed Protection Department's memo, "Some Environmental Implications of Proposed Alternative Water Supply Augmentation Options" summarizes potential environmental impacts of proposed options for consideration and identifies preferred strategies for supply augmentation; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force Report contains a broad spectrum of goals, policies, guiding principles, and strategies, and the City Council finds that timely implementation of the Task Force's recommendations, including specific short-term actionable strategies, would be of great benefit to ensuring availability of our water resources in the immediate future; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

That the City Manager is directed to report back to the City Council with a proposed schedule, proposed plan, and proposed budget for implementing each of the following key recommendations in Section IV of the Water Resource Planning Task Force Report, and to include a plan for a stakeholder process, no later than September 25, 2014:

1. Item 1.0 *Integrated Water Resource Plan and Independent Conservation Assessment:*

- a. The Integrated Water Resource Plan (IWRP) should be developed in accordance with this section of the Task Force Report, should include substantial and meaningful public participation, and should be undertaken with the assistance of an independent consultant with considerable knowledge and experience in water conservation, water/energy efficiency, reuse and decentralization strategies.
- b. With regard to item 1.2 *Decentralization*, the Council recommends that the perspectives of the Watershed Protection Department (WPD), through their ongoing work with the Watershed Protection Ordinance revision process, as well as the Planning and Development Review Department (PDRD) should be included in developing proposed code amendments for decentralized, on-site storm water management (on-site beneficial use of storm water) options.

2. Item 2.0 *Water Conservation and Supply Project Evaluation Matrix.*

The matrix should be developed in accordance with this section of the Task Force Report and as part of the Integrated Water Resources Plan process.

3. Section 3.0 *Water Conservation and Supply Recommendations.*

All recommendations contained in item 3.0 of the report, with further clarification of the following specific items:

- a. Item 3.1.1 *Proactive Implementation of Drought Response Stages.*

The development of an Interim Stage 3 and establishment of triggers for Interim Stage 3 and Stage 4 should be undertaken along with a public stakeholder process;

b. Item 3.1.2 *Priority Water Conservation Measures.*

i. Report back with potential water savings and proposed code for a toilet replacement program for commercial and multi-family properties.

ii. Report back on proposed code changes for gray water, rain water collection, and reclaimed water infrastructure.

The Council recommends that the perspective of WPD be included to ensure that impacts of reclaimed water use in the Critical Water Quality Zone and the 100-year floodplain are minimized.

c. Item 3.1.2 regarding engaging home and commercial builders to discourage in-ground irrigation systems, the Council recommends the perspectives of WPD, PDRD, the Impact Fee Advisory Commission, and stakeholders and the public be included. (Also reference Section VI. *Codes and Ordinances* during this process.)

d. Item 3.1.3 Strategies should be prioritized based on the highest benefit for potential future implementation.

e. Item 3.2.2 In addressing this item, include only the recommendation for enhanced off-channel storage at Lake

Walter E. Long with potential replacement of Decker Power
plant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Council recommends that the Watershed Protection
Department be included in the analysis of options identified in Part V.
Recommended Strategies for Study.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk