

07.19.2022

Framework Planning – Meeting Summary

Attendance:

Advisory Council: Liz Seacrest for Anna Wishart, Brittney Albin, Chittaranjan Ray, David Cary, Eliot Bostar, Elizabeth Elliott, Glenn Johnson, Holley Salmi, Jeanne McClure, Jerry Obrist, Katie Wilson, Kennon Meyer, Lori Seibel, Lynn Rex, Marc LeBaron, Martha Shulski, Michon Morrow, Richard Meginnis, Sean Flowerday, Susan Seacrest, TJ McDowell, Todd Wiltgen, Trish Owen, Tut Kailech

Absent: Andrew Dunkley, Tom Beckius, Donna Garden

City Staff: Erika Hill, Jocelyn Golden, Steve Owen

Consultants: Andrew Hansen, Ben Day, Brian Chaffin, Haley Engstrom, Jamie Carson, Jeff Henson, Stacey Roach, Terry Cole Fairchild, Tessa Yackley

Summary:

1. **Welcome** – Susan Seacrest
 - a. Will serve as primary point of contact for council members.
 - b. At start of each meeting will answer any questions.
 - c. Meetings will not be recorded. Due to the collaborative nature of the council work attendance via zoom will not be an option.
2. **Introduction** – Brian Chaffin
 - a. Consultant and City staff introductions
 - b. Rules for Engagement
 - i. The deliberation process will be collaborative
 - ii. Everyone perspective is valued and respected
 - iii. Listen to understand not debate
 - iv. Be concise
 - v. Be hard on the issues – soft on the people
 - vi. Avoid right-wrong paradigms
 - vii. Everyone should have an equal opportunity to participate
 - viii. Respect start and finish times
 - ix. Provide your full attention
 - x. Full participation is critical
 - xi. Don't wait to ask questions
 - c. Agenda overview
3. **Goals for the Meeting** – Brian Chaffin
 - a. Knowledge leveling. Bring all council members to a minimum level of understanding of current water system and future needs.

- b. Alternative evaluation process. Explaining the framework planning process to choose criteria with an example of how this process worked in the past with a similar large-scale project.
- c. Selection and prioritization of alternative criteria. Provide an example set of criteria for this project and work through additional criteria identification and prioritization.
- d. Understanding the whys. Bring all council members to an understanding of why each criterion is important and its intended meaning. Make certain all council members have a full understanding of project need and why we're here. Ensure consultants and City gain deep understanding of why criteria were selected and why important.

4. Project – Brian Chaffin

- a. The overall project is to identify and validate a high confidence second water source alternative. The first stage is the work of the Mayor's Water Source Advisory Council – identify the best alternative and make a recommendation to the Mayor's Office by January 31, 2023. The second stage will consist of validating the alternative that has been selected by the Mayor and could involve drilling test holes, performing pipe loop studies, etc. It is likely the Advisory Council will see a much-reduced role during the validation stage but could still be asked to meet on a limited basis. Timing for the project is good for a couple of reasons. 1) There is ample time to analyze and make decisions before the projected capacity shortfall around 2050. 2) ARPA funding in the amount of \$20 million has been allocated for this project and could be used to assist with costs of validation work and beyond. Time limits do exist for ARPA funding which can and should drive some urgency for the Council's work. Funds must be allocated by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 31, 2026.

5. Understanding the Need – Steve Owen and Ben Day

- a. History- Steve Owen
 - i. 1883: Lincoln Water System (LWS) has its first well in Lincoln and began supplying customers.
 - ii. 1932: Second source of water supply with Platte River wellfield.
 - iii. 1935: Iron and manganese removal.
 - iv. 1993: New Treatment Plant and wellfield expansion using collector well technology.
 - v. 2014: Additional collector well installed.
 - vi. 2018: Additional collector well installed for drought resiliency.
 - vii. 2035: "Just in Time" 5th collector well.
 - viii. 2042: "Just in Time" 6th collector well.
 - ix. 2048: Second source of supply (2020 Master Plan)
 - x. Redundancy and Resiliency are top priorities for the City.
 - 1. Natural and human caused events.
 - 2. Meet expected level of service to customers.
 - 3. Economic development.
 - xi. Questions:
 - 1. Why are we considering collector wells?
 - a. They are high-capacity wells. These are not subject to drawdown concerns like regular wells are. Regular wells are prone to not function well with excess drawdown when the river

flows at a slower rate. Drawdown is the maximum lowering of the groundwater table caused by pumping. It is measured as the difference between the initial level of water in the well before pumping and the static level of water after pumping.

2. What are our facts?
 - a. In the 2014 master plan, we are looking at return periods. We are using 2012 as a benchmark return period. River levels experienced in the 2012 drought was approximately a 100-year return period. In that time frame (40 years) we could experience a 40-60% chance of levels we saw in 2012. Note: Reference was made to 40 years but should be corrected to a 50-year planning period.
 - b. The Lower Platte River Consortium which LWS is a member of has looked at alternatives to increase flows in the lower Platte River. The expense and cost for increased flow rate is significant.
3. Has all data has been filtered through climate change?
 - a. Climate change was considered in the 2020 Master Plan Update and the demand projections include the impacts of climate change.
- b. Supply options considered - Ben Day
 - i. We will take information from previous master plans and use to define capacity goals moving forward.
 - ii. Potential solutions
 1. 2006 study:
 - a. Missouri (MO) River, other aquifers, Platte River at Schuyler.
 2. 2014 master plan:
 - a. Short-term Supply Options
 - i. Expand existing well field.
 - ii. New well in high plains Ogallala aquifer-blue river basin.
 - iii. Aquifer storage and recovery.
 - iv. MUD interconnect.
 - v. Water reuse option.
 - vi. Conservation
 - b. Mid-term
 - i. Expand existing wellfield maximize capacity.
 - ii. Surface water reservoir.
 - c. Long-term
 - i. MO River
 - ii. Platte River
 - iii. Questions:
 1. Reservoir option between Lincoln and Omaha?
 - a. It will be a concern how the reservoir may impact the current wellfield. This will be analyzed.
 - b. Evaporation issue will be considered.

6. Project Evaluation Process – Andrew Hansen

- a. Workplan
 - i. June: Project chartering
 - ii. July: Planning framework development
 - iii. August: Feasibility
 - iv. September: Coarse Screening
 - v. October: Fine Screening
 - vi. November: Final Review
 - vii. January: Report
- b. Evaluation criteria example project was provided.
 - i. Criteria is meant as a tool, not to determine a winner. It's for prioritizing and leading into more substantial discussion.

7. Consensus – Brian Chaffin

- a. Consensus will be used to make decisions. It is not a simple majority vote.
- b. Levels of consensus consist of the following:
 - i. I can say an unqualified 'yes' to the recommendation. I am satisfied that the recommendation is an expression of the wisdom of the group.
 - ii. I find the recommendation perfectly acceptable.
 - iii. I can live with the recommendation; I'm not especially enthusiastic about it.
 - iv. I do not fully agree with the recommendation and need to register my view about it. However, I do not choose to block the recommendation. I am willing to support the recommendation because I trust the wisdom of the group.
 - v. I do not agree with the recommendation and feel the need to stand in the way of this.
 - vi. I feel that we have no clear sense of unity in the group. We need to do more work before consensus can be reached. (Kelsey 1991)
- c. Consensus on Council decisions will be done by asking the group where each stand on the level of consensus scale. This will be done by facilitator verbally asking for show of hands for all that are at level 1, level 2, etc. If all are at level 4 or higher, will consider consensus achieved and move ahead.

8. Determining Evaluation Criteria – Jeff Henson

- a. Potential Criteria
 - i. Long term viability
 - 1. Looking at each source and determining if it's a good option.
 - ii. Operational flexibility
 - 1. Is the water available when the city wants to use it? Can the city operate as the city needs or wants to?
 - iii. Governance
 - 1. How important is autonomy?
 - iv. Implementation risks
 - 1. Water quality, blending water, treatability of raw water.
 - v. Time to implement
 - 1. How long will it take?
 - vi. Permitting requirements
 - 1. What are required? EPA permitting collector wells.

- vii. Environmental stewardship
 - 1. Which projects will have impact on the environment?
- viii. Water rights
 - 1. Nebraska interprets this as - first in town first in right. One has higher security of water rights if they get to a source with less competition.
 - 2. What it means: should we get a very bad drought and older users have secured access. Later users may not be able to get access in event of disaster.
- ix. Socioeconomic factors
 - 1. Affordability
 - 2. How much are we charging and how could that impact each home or lower socioeconomic tier.
- b. Questions/Answers and Comments
 - i. Reliability was suggested as a replacement for viability.
 - ii. Transparency and affordability were suggested as replacements. We should make it a focus to find wording that is clear and understandable for the public.
 - iii. With operational flexibility are you referencing government laws?
 - 1. We want to know if there are limitations to when the City can have access to the source.
 - iv. Do we have the right to use eminent domain? Litigation? To use eminent domain do we need city permission from a city? Do we need private party permission for eminent domain?
 - 1. Answers will be provided at future meeting – requires consultation with subject matter experts.
 - v. How does a recommendation like this go forward or maintain its momentum with future political administrations?
 - 1. We will have consensus as a council on the recommendation.
 - 2. Final decision rests with the mayor.
 - 3. Groundwork will already be completed, and the long-term decisions will be set.
 - 4. It will be a difficult train to stop once we get this going forward.
 - vi. What is the difference between surface water rights and groundwater rights?
 - 1. Answers will be provided at future meeting – requires consultation with subject matter experts. A water rights expert may be included at a future meeting.
 - vii. What is the overall cost of the project and what is borne by the clients? What is the structure of rates for Lincoln water? Is that even in our scope to make that decision. Impact on low-income residents (large or no impact).
 - 1. Some of this can be analyzed as part of the alternative evaluation process. Other details such as rate structures may not be part of the analysis.
 - viii. No ability to evaluate socioeconomic impact. We should change this criterion to be cost.
 - 1. Set a frame to apply to this as we weigh options. Difficulty in evaluating this consistently, we can consider what options are available and what are sustainable.

- ix. We are using today's information to evaluate the options for 40 years down the road, we need to think about what tone we want to set for the future.
- x. What if our recommendation gets a hard stop by MUD? Will we provide two recommendations?
 - 1. We will not have a final answer until closer to the end of this process but will communicate clearly and early to the Council.
 - 2. Expectation: The Advisory Council will submit a primary recommendation to the Mayor's Office.
- xi. Governance should be our top priority. The other criteria can change if no one in this room has any say. We still have a viable long-term voice. We want to maintain our ability to adapt to the future.
- xii. Why is cost not a criterion we talk about. Do you have an expectation we are helping you sell? What is your expectation of us going forward?
 - 1. Become the voice of the decision of this Council. Be able to help explain it to the community.
- xiii. How much of these criteria will be on cost of regional water system, governance of the regional water system? Who will oversee this regional water system? The Council should consider regionalization as a criterion to be added.
- c. Additional Criteria the Council would like to consider:
 - i. Reliability
 - ii. Affordability/cost
 - iii. Replace socioeconomic factors with cost.
- d. First vote- Vote for all that you feel are important to be considered.
 - i. Reliability
 - ii. Cost/Affordability
 - iii. Implementation challenges
 - iv. Operational flexibility
 - v. Governance
 - vi. Socioeconomic factors
 - vii. Environmental stewardship
 - viii. Water rights
 - ix. Permitting requirements
 - x. Time to implement
- e. Second vote - Vote for the five criteria most important to you. These were the top criteria separated by a large number of votes from the remaining choices.
 - i. Reliability
 - ii. Governance
 - iii. Cost / affordability
 - iv. Operational flexibility
 - v. Implementation challenges
 - vi. Environmental Stewardship
- f. A consensus check was performed and confirmed on establishing the final six criteria to be used going forward.

9. Scoring Approach – Jeff Henson

- a. Top six factors will be looked at and weighted by consultant team.
- b. Any final ideas or words the Council would like nested:

- i. Reliability
 - 1. Consider future
 - ii. Governance
 - 1. Regionalization potential
 - iii. Cost/affordability
 - 1. Socioeconomic
 - iv. Operational flexibility
 - v. Implementation challenges
 - 1. Permitting
 - 2. City water rights
 - 3. Community acceptance
 - 4. Time to implement
 - vi. Environmental stewardship
- c. Nesting will be reviewed and utilized in creating the final criteria definitions.
- d. Criteria definitions and proposed weightings will be presented to the Council at beginning of the next meeting for concurrence.

10. Closing – Brian Chaffin

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