

Martinez, Ruben

From: Caro Gonzalez
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 10:00 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Kennedy, John J.; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Williams, Felicia; Rivas, Jose
Subject: Agenda Item 8 - I Support a More Sustainable Water Plan for Pasadena

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Dear Councilmembers-

I encourage you to pass a motion that would place a pause on approval of the Water System and Resource Plan, pending staff's modification of the plan that aligns with Council's policy directives regarding the need to be specific about how to arrest the Raymond Basin's decline curve and a clear commitment to a procedure and timeline for the adoption of a budget-based pricing rate structure.

The Council should reserve approval of the WSRP pending their assessment on the adequacy of staff's report back.

I recommend that the following principles be adopted as City policy:

Support for the City's plan to address investment to replace or repair the aging delivery infrastructure (pipes, reservoirs).

Oppose projects that may cause further decline of the Raymond Basin.

Seek full transparency regarding the quality of the City's water supply.

Be responsive to the residents' environmental and equity justice concerns.

Adopt a clear expectation for a timeline to implement conservation rates, known as Budget Based Pricing (BBP).

Water conservation is key to achieving a stable, reliable water supply in Pasadena. The WSRP did not provide specifics on how to arrest the ongoing decline curve at the Raymond Basin. The plan also provides sparse and unconvincing specifics about how it intends to achieve water conservation goals.

Now is the Council's opportunity to guide the City's broad water policy. The next opportunity may not come around for another five years.

Thank you for considering this request,

10/04/2021

Item 8

Martinez, Ruben

From: Lois Brunet <
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 10:12 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Kennedy, John J.; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Williams, Felicia; Rivas, Jose
Subject: Agenda Item 8 - I Support a More Sustainable Water Plan for Pasadena

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Thank you for considering this request,

Lois Brunet
Program Director, Pasadena Audubon
617-429-1912

Our Mission: "To bring the excitement of birds to our community through birding, education and the conservation of bird habitats"

10/04/2021
Item 8

Martinez, Ruben

From: Mario Mariotta IV <
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 10:26 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Kennedy, John J.; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Williams, Felicia; Rivas, Jose
Subject: Agenda Item 8 - I Support a More Sustainable Water Plan for Pasadena

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I recommend that the following principles be adopted as City policy:

- Support for the City's plan to address investment to replace or repair the aging delivery infrastructure (pipes, reservoirs).
- Oppose projects that may cause further decline of the Raymond Basin.
- Seek full transparency regarding the quality of the City's water supply.
- Be responsive to the residents' environmental and equity justice concerns.
- Adopt a clear expectation for a timeline to implement conservation rates, known as Budget Based Pricing (BBP).

Water conservation is key to achieving a stable, reliable water supply in Pasadena.

Thank you,

Mario Mariotta

10/04/2021
Item 8

Martinez, Ruben

From: Wesley Reutimann <\[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 11:05 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Kennedy, John J.; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Williams, Felicia; Rivas, Jessica
Subject: Agenda Item 8 - I Support a More Sustainable Water Plan for Pasadena

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Dear Councilmembers,

As a local constituent who cares deeply about the health and sustainability of our green city, **I encourage you to pass a motion that would place a pause on approval of the Water System and Resource Plan, pending staff's modification of the plan that aligns with Council's policy directives regarding 1) the need to be specific about how to arrest the Raymond Basin's decline curve and 2) a clear commitment to a procedure and timeline for the adoption of a budget-based pricing rate structure.**

The Council should reserve approval of the WSRP pending its assessment on the adequacy of staff's report back.

I recommend that the following principles be adopted as City policy:

- **Support for the City's plan to address investment to replace or repair the aging delivery infrastructure (pipes, reservoirs).**
- **Oppose projects that may cause further decline of the Raymond Basin.**
- **Seek full transparency regarding the quality of the City's water supply.**
- **Be responsive to the residents' environmental and equity justice concerns.**
- **Adopt a clear expectation for a timeline to implement conservation rates, known as Budget Based Pricing (BBP).**

Water conservation is key to achieving a stable, reliable water supply in Pasadena. The WSRP did not provide specifics on how to arrest the ongoing decline curve at the Raymond Basin. The plan also provides sparse and unconvincing specifics about how it intends to achieve water conservation goals.

Now is the Council's opportunity to guide the City's broad water policy. The next opportunity may not come around for another five years.

Thank you for considering this request,

Wes Reutimann
Pasadena 91103

10/04/2021
Item 8

Martinez, Ruben

From: Leandra Woods <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 11:27 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; Masuda, Gene; Kennedy, John J.; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Williams, Felicia; Rivas, Jose
Subject: Agenda Item 8 - I Support a More Sustainable Water Plan for Pasadena

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Dear Councilmembers- I encourage you to pass a motion that would place a pause on approval of the Water System and Resource Plan, pending staff's modification of the plan that aligns with Council's policy directives regarding the need to be specific about how to arrest the Raymond Basin's decline curve and a clear commitment to a procedure and timeline for the adoption of a budget-based pricing rate structure. The Council should reserve approval of the WSRP pending their assessment on the adequacy of staff's report back. I recommend that the following principles be adopted as City policy: Support for the City's plan to address investment to replace or repair the aging delivery infrastructure (pipes, reservoirs). Oppose projects that may cause further decline of the Raymond Basin. Seek full transparency regarding the quality of the City's water supply. Be responsive to the residents' environmental and equity justice concerns. Adopt a clear expectation for a timeline to implement conservation rates, known as Budget Based Pricing (BBP). Water conservation is key to achieving a stable, reliable water supply in Pasadena. The WSRP did not provide specifics on how to arrest the ongoing decline curve at the Raymond

10/04/2021
Item 8

Martinez, Ruben

From: Robert Kurkjian <
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 11:44 AM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Sullivan, Noreen
Subject: City Counsel October 4 Meeting - Comments

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Comments regarding the WSRP and Water Conservation

October 4, 2021

Water resource use is one of the most serious issues facing Pasadena. By changing how we manage water, we can have one of the most impactful environmental programs in California. While the Water Supply and Resource Plan (WSRP) addresses some of Pasadena's water concerns, it does not adequately address the decline of the Raymond Basin groundwater levels, water conservation, or efficient water usage.

Many studies have shown that regular lawn mowing generates CO₂ which outweighs the carbon storage potential of grass, thereby transforming lawn grass to a carbon source and not a carbon sink. In Pasadena, it is estimated that approximately 60% of water used by residents is for irrigation. Not only does this squander a precious and finite resource, but it has negative environmental impacts, as well.

By properly managing water resources in Pasadena, water use can be significantly reduced, CO₂ emissions can be lessened, and the ecology can be improved. By implementing better water pricing mechanisms, instituting planned water conservation measures, and replacing grass with native plants, Pasadena can realize numerous and immediate environmental benefits including the following:

1. Reduce Pasadena's water usage. This is becoming increasingly important during the historic drought and ongoing and worsening climate change-induced weather patterns.
2. Decrease the rate of depletion of groundwater of the Raymond Basin. Groundwater levels have been in decline for decades, and status quo is unsustainable.
3. Reduce CO₂ emissions by reducing regular lawn maintenance and vehicle emissions. Transportation is responsible for approximately 50% of the greenhouse gas emissions, according to Pasadena's Climate Action Plan.
4. Reduce energy usage for transporting water.
5. Restore Pasadena's ecology. Native plants can help restore Pasadena's ecology by providing habitat for insects, and improving the soil, water, and air quality.
6. Eliminate or reduce the need for leaf blowers. Leaf blowers are a nuisance, increase CO₂ emissions, impact air quality, and increase dust.

Simply replacing residential lawns with native plants in Pasadena, can have the largest impact to reducing water use, and will have the added benefits of improving the ecology and fighting climate change.

I am a commissioner on Pasadena's Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC), and have worked on hundreds of water/environmental projects in the US and internationally for more than 30 years. In my opinion, the WSRP does not adequately address water issues, does not provide appropriate data to evaluate or arrest the decline of the Raymond Basin groundwater levels, nor does it properly address water conservation. Furthermore, the EAC submitted two letters (one to PWP and one to the City) clearly outlining similar concerns.

I urge the City to fully evaluate groundwater and import water data for the next 10 years, and conduct an full engineering evaluation in order to make science-based decisions to properly manage Pasadena's water.

Robert Kurkjian, PhD
Environmental Scientist/Chemist
Resident of Pasadena

Martinez, Ruben

From: ()
Sent: Monday, October 04, 2021 3:58 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Cc: Gordo, Victor; Madison, Steve; John Kennedy; Masuda, Gene; Wilson, Andy; Hampton, Tyron; Williams, Felicia; Rivas, Jessica
Subject: Public Comment - Council Meeting 10.04.21 Item 8. WSRP

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RE: Public Comment, Agenda Item 8 – 2020 WSRP

Please pass a motion that would place a pause on approval of the 2020 Water System and Resource Plan (WSRP), pending staff's modification of the plan that aligns with Council's policy directives.

- Public outreach on the 2020 WSRP was seriously inadequate; the manner in which PWP manipulated the "Stakeholder Panel" was deeply flawed and disingenuous;
- WSRP must be specific about how to arrest the Raymond Basin's decline curve;
- Replacement of aged and deteriorated water infrastructure must be accelerated;
- WSRP must commit to a clear procedure and timeline for the adoption of a budget-based pricing rate structure.

The Council should reserve approval of the WSRP pending their assessment on the adequacy of staff's report back.

I recommend that the following principles be adopted as City policy:

- Support for the City's plan to address investment to replace or repair the aging delivery infrastructure (pipes, reservoirs).
- Oppose projects that may cause further decline of the Raymond Basin.
- Seek full transparency regarding the quality of the City's water supply.
- Be responsive to the residents' environmental and equity justice concerns.
- Adopt a clear expectation for a timeline to implement conservation rates, known as Budget Based Pricing (BBP).

Water conservation is key to achieving a stable, reliable water supply in Pasadena. The WSRP did not provide specifics on how to arrest the ongoing decline curve at the Raymond Basin. The plan also provides sparse and unconvincing specifics about how it intends to achieve water conservation goals.

Now is the Council's opportunity to guide the City's broad water policy. The next opportunity may not come around for another five years.

Genette Foster
Pasadena 91106

10/04/2021
Item 8

Comments Prepared by Councilmember John J. Kennedy, experts in the field and concerned residents of Pasadena.

Presented at Pasadena City Council on October 4, 2021 for submission into the Council minutes and as an attachment for the 2021 Water System Resource Plan at adoption.

The Council is presented with a proposed 25-year, \$425 million water system and resource plan. Council's choice comes down to approve, disapprove, or pause for refinement and reconsideration.

Another way forward:

- Put a pause on the approval of the WSRP.
- Articulate Council's supply and demand policies.
- Have staff report back to Council on how they intend to meet the policies.
- Reserve approval of the WSRP pending assessment on staff's report.

Motion

The Council must place a pause on approval of the WSRP pending staff's modification of the plan that aligns with Council's policy directives. The policies are intended to focus staff's attention to be clear and specific about

- (1) their intention to arrest the Raymond Basin's decline curve and
- (2) a procedure and timeline for adoption of a budget-based pricing rate structure.

Discussion

It is wise to place a 60 or 90 day pause on approval of the plan. *(The plan was completed in May, 2020, and revived in December 2020).*

The pause would allow staff time to make proposed modifications to the WSRP so that it aligns with the policy objectives that the Council articulates tonight.

We recommended principles that if adopted:

- Signal support for the City's plan to address investment to replace or repair the aging **delivery** infrastructure (pipes, reservoirs).
- Do not support projects that may cause further decline of the Raymond Basin.
- Seek full transparency regarding the quality of our water supply.
- Be responsive to the residents' environmental and equity and environmental justice concerns.

- Set expectation that staff present a timeline to adopt conservation rates, known as Budget Based Pricing (BBP).

When staff returns with adjustments to the plan, the Council would determine how those commitments match up with the articulated policies. If they match up well, Council could then get closer to approving the plan.

- The ‘pause and report back’ approach is preferable to approving a 25 year plan that proceeds in absence of Council’s policy guidance.
- The ‘pause and report back’ approach is preferred over sending it back to the drawing board absent guidance.
- Although the WSRP does not directly bind the City financially, it is nonetheless, a very important matter.
- Now is the Council’s opportunity to guide the City’s broad water policy. The next opportunity may not happen for another five years.

Background

It is the City’s obligation and intention to directly address both the **supply** and **demand** issues.

- On the **supply** side, there are only two primary topics - the Raymond Basin and MWD.
- On the **demand** side, aside from addressing an 8% system-wide leak rate, there is one primary issue, namely the need for much greater water conservation, particularly with regard to outdoor watering.

The WSRP comes to the City at a time when our city is experiencing the twentieth year of a climate crisis-driven megadrought, leaving Pasadena’s only two sources of water **supply** (the basin and MWD) in great stress.

Climate change is bearing down on our water supply

The **Metropolitan Water District of Southern California** supplies 65% of Pasadena’s demand. The Met’s supply is a blend of water from the Colorado River and the Sierras. This supply has been impacted by global heating that caused far less snowpack with the limited runoff being quickly absorbed by the already parched land in the West. This has resulted in a condition where critically important reservoirs are dwindling down to dangerously low levels.

The Raymond Basin

The Raymond Basin is Pasadena’s local water supply, meeting 35% of the city’s demand. The basin’s production capability is limited by rules that determine the

amount that the City can pump within a **safe yield** formula that was designed to avoid even further drops in the basin's declining groundwater level.

- Many residents have only recently realized the extent of the severe over-drafting of the Raymond Basin. A description of the draw-down issue is found in the December 2018 Zanjero Report. **The findings of the Zanjero Report are not incorporated as keystones in the WSRP. Please include the 2018 Zanjero Report as an attachment.**
- We have witnessed somewhat disturbing, often dismissive, and generalized staff rejections in response to concerns raised when articulated by the Environmental Advisory Commission and others in the community regarding the basin's decline curve, and the lack of a robust commitment to water conservation.
- The WSRP touts a robust stakeholder process, including how they engaged about a dozen high school students. Yet staff did not invite key stakeholder - the Raymond Basin Management Board to weigh in.
- Staff has inserted language this past week in the Agenda Report where staff commits to work closely with the Raymond Basin Management Board. This is commendable. However, it must be noted that Pasadena has a seat on that Board and the City receives over 40% of the allocated water from the Basin. Given that, we must expect staff to be consistent in its commitment to take a more pro-active role with the Board. When staff interacts with the Board, are they working from a plan to arrest the decline curve? Or is staff presenting proposals to pump even more water out of the aquifer? Answers are needed!

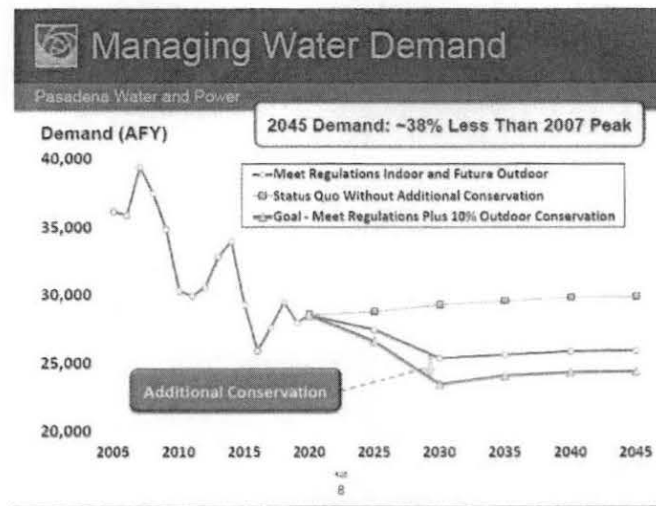
Water Conservation

Water conservation is the essential key if we are serious about achieving a stable, reliable water supply. Regrettably, just as the WSRP did not provide specifics on how to arrest the decline curve at the Raymond Basin, the plan provides sparse and unconvincing specifics about how it intends to achieve water conservation goals.

It is important to underscore that over 60% of residential water in Pasadena is used to irrigate outdoor spaces. Many urban areas are preparing for an additional dry year by implementing new water rate structures which would encourage more drought resistance and permanent water conservation while keeping urban water utilities financially solvent. This makes it an opportune time for the Department to prepare for additional dry years and future droughts.

- The WSRP states an intention to go beyond anticipated state regulations that would require reductions in water demands in the face of dwindling supplies state-wide, because it is the responsible thing to do.

- However, take a careful look at slide 8 in staff's presentation. It appears that the Department's proposal for a water conservation level by 2045 is not sufficient. That target would only get Pasadena back to roughly the same demand level that the City experienced in 2016. Is that an accurate reading of staff's WSRP goal?



- The State Water Resources Control Board has determined that a budget-based water rate structure is an effective way to achieve water conservation. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/drought/pricing/
- The effectiveness of budget based pricing appears to be an increasing opinion within California's water industry. Does staff agree with that? Is there a staff representative who can describe to the Council what budget based pricing is?
- Has relying on incentives for voluntary conservation been as effective as what can be expected with budget-based rates?
- There are social and environmental justice inequities embedded in our existing water rate structure. These inequities must be identified and resolved through budget-based rates. Is that a fair assessment?
- The City Council was told in March 2019 that the only obstacle to water conservation rate re-design improvement was the need to develop a new water billing system. At that time, staff targeted completion of the Customer Information System, in three years - which would have been March 2022.

https://pasadena.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=25&clip_id=4523

See Agenda item 9 that begins at 2:02:15 (about 15 minutes) with the discussion of the schedule beginning at 2:07:50.

- The topic of the scheduling of updated water rates was discussed again at the MSC this past Tuesday, September 28. At that meeting, it is my understanding that staff said that it is not their intention to

initiate budget-based pricing occur as initially targeted to coincide with the completion of the CIS, which will be completed in December – ahead of schedule. Staff said that consideration of the topic would not begin for three years.

- Are we to understand that staff's new target for budget-based pricing will be in 2025? Why has staff determined that they will not address the issue when the CIS is ready, as originally targeted? Can this process be expedited?
- The bottom line is that we need a commitment from staff to attach sufficient urgency to review water rates with the goal to achieve major steps forward for water conservation, especially regarding outdoor watering.

Perchlorate

- Nothing is more important to our city than the job of protecting the health and safety of our community.
- I'm encouraged by the commitments in the WSRP to address water quality issues through treatment instead of blending with imported water, particularly with regard to perchlorate.
- The State recently revised regulation of perchlorate based on advancements in testing technology and will become more stringent in 2024. The Department must be an "early adopter" and implement those revisions as soon as possible, with full disclosure as an operating principle.

Policies

It may have been inadvertent, but perhaps by design that the two looming supply and demand issues were deemed to be nearly outside of the scope of the WSRP. Although staff may have been reluctant to address these big policy issues, the City Council has the obligation to provide that guidance.

We need a clear Council policy that states that water conservation is the preferred approach to address our supply and demand issues. The Council must signal its expectation that both the Raymond Basin topic and budget-based pricing is addressed by staff at the earliest opportunity.

Notes

The State role

- The WSRP plans that the City would meet, and go 10% beyond the State's water conservation regulations. This may sound aspirational or meritorious. However, meeting state regulations is required - it is not a choice up to the City to elect whether to meet legal regulations.
- Although indoor water use can be addressed through appliance standards, there is not a direct role to be expected from the State regarding the regulation of outdoor water use. Water agencies recognize that they have an incentive to address water conservation if they intend to be successful when applying for State grant money. The State is unlikely to grant money to a water agency that does not meet State water conservation goals and regulations. Furthermore, a bad image would result if a City was among those agencies that were denied funding for lack of a progressive approach to water conservation.

Some numbers

- The basin has lost 250 feet since the 1944 adjudicated judgment that was intended to arrest the decline of the basin.
- Pasadena's allocation of the Raymond Basin's safe yield is just over 10,000 acre-feet. The water is essentially free. The cost is about \$500 acre-foot for electricity and other expenses to pump.
- That 10,000 acre-feet is inclusive of Pasadena's allocation adhering to the Basin Board's voluntary 30% cut from the generous 1955 judgment it agreed to take 10 years ago.
- The Water Division brings in about \$70 million per year.
- Pasadena's demand is roughly 28,000 acre-feet per year.
- Subtract the basin's supply of 10,000 acre-feet from the 28,000 acre-foot demand. That leaves 18,000 acre-feet to be purchased from **the only other water supplier – the MWD**. At over \$1,000 per acre-foot, Metropolitan Water District water costs Pasadena roughly \$20 million per year.
- Does staff operate under the premise that they are doing the ratepayers a great financial service by continually pumping from the basin? If so, can staff quantify the level of positive financial impact they believe they are achieving by continual draw down of the basin?

The Council must adopt a policy stating that it is unacceptable to continue pumping the basin that is in sharp decline, on its way to bedrock. To address this,

Pasadena must take the appropriate leadership role to ensure that the Raymond Basin Management Board defines a safe yield that is truly sustainable.

At the same time, the Council require staff to commit to adopt budget-based pricing to achieve a level of water conservation that would allow the City to back off on its existing level of pumping.

As a matter of policy, the Council must acknowledge that methods other than budget-based pricing will be insufficient to meet the goal of protecting the City from further drawdown of the basin and worsening water impacts driven by global heating.