

CITIZENS' WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CWAC) MINUTES

January 12, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

Webex

Public Participation through call in number (listen only)

1-720-650-7664

Access code: 146 834 1694

Members Present: Janet Marlow (Chair), Angie Binder (Vice-Chair), Tom Coker, Richard Eason, David Patterson, William Gondrez

Absent: Jay Campbell.

Staff Present: Nancy Freed, Marshall Brown, Greg Baker, Jo Ann Giddings, Elizabeth Roberts, Rory Franklin, Brian Davis, Mike McHugh, Mary Dawson, Jessica Roode

Visitors Present: Brandy DeLange, Mike Spatter

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The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

**1. Elections – 2021 Chair and Vice-Chair**

Nominated and approved J. Marlow for CWAC Chair.

Nominated and approved A. Binder for CWAC Vice Chair.

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**2. Approval of Minutes – November 10, 2020**

The November 10, 2020 minutes were approved.

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**3. Introductions/Public Invited to be Heard**

Introductions of the attending committee meeting participants were made for new CWAC members, with terms beginning February 15, 2021: Brandy DeLange and Mike Spatter.

There were no members of the public present for the meeting.

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**4. New/Old Business**

None.

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## 5. Communications Update

G. Baker stated that Aurora Water is currently waiting for responses back from the forest service about a permit to complete technical work at Whitney Reservoir and the Sate Engineer's Office to hear back about both in the next couple of weeks.

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## 6. Service Line Warranties

M. Brown began by introducing B. Davis, a representative from HomeServe USA, to the committee and outlined the areas of service line responsibility for the city versus the customer when it comes to repairs on home water distribution and sewage systems. He stated that for those stretches of the water lines that are not supported by the City, there are companies which offer warranty service options for the public. Per M. Brown, Aurora Water has informed the public periodically of the existence of such coverage plans. These plans can be accessed by the customer by going directly to service provider or in the case of some companies such as HomeServe, through a partnership with local municipalities, cities, and water providers which affords a lower cost plan for their service areas.

M. Brown requested that the committee consider the information provided in the presentation in order to provide feedback on a possible partnership with a company such as HomeServe or the continuation of the current process of public notification about the services.

B. Davis presented information on the National League of Cities (NLC) service line warranty program. He highlighted the lower cost plan the public would receive with a city partnership, the coverage limit and the lack of annual or lifetime coverage limits, deductibles and service fees, though there was an \$8,500 per incident limit. The work would be completed by licensed technicians from a pool of pre-vetted and selected local contractors. B. Davis advised that a partnership with the City of Aurora would entail two to four mailings a year from the City of Aurora to Aurora residents. In the City of Aurora envelope would be a letter from the City stating their participation in the voluntary HomeServe NLC warrant program and a business reply card for HomeServe. All mailing costs would be covered by HomeServe. A low-income assistance escrow fund would be established and available for Aurora residents for purposes such as the payment of water or repair bills.

A. Binder asked, how does the program work in multi-family properties?

B. Davis responded, if the residence has a dedicated water and sewer line the service is available. In the case of condominiums or apartment complexes there is not a product available to provide coverage.

R. Eason asked, if in-home plumbing was included in the coverage?

B. Davis advised, the coverage can be included if the customer would like it included in their service package.

J. Marlow asked, is there a contract the customer would need to sign to be a part of the coverage?

B. Davis stated, there is no contract. The customer can start and stop service at any time and there are no pre-existing condition clauses. In addition, when a household signs-up for service, there is an initial thirty day wait time before coverage begins.

G. Baker asked, how do you conduct marketing for this product and what is expected from the partner cities?

B. Davis advised, that they would request a mailing list of the city's owner-occupied addresses that would be utilized for mailings. If a listing was not available, HomeServe would be able to garner the information from other sources. Basic marketing is approximately three to four letters per year and would include the City of Aurora envelop, a note card and a HomeServe offer letter. In addition, HomeServe would provide any requested materials for press releases or press conference.

J. Marlow, is the service offered as a stand-alone coverage without a connection to a city?

B. Davis responded, yes, it is offered separately. The difference would be seen in the cost of the coverage with the stand-alone agreement being about double the cost of a City participant agreements due to economy of scale.

R. Eason asked, who would control how the escrow fund would be used?

B. Davis stated that its completely customizable. HomeServe would make the City aware of the amount of money available in the fund each month and the City would decide who their point of contact would be for the account and where those funds would be allocated. The contact would advise HomeServe where the money needed to go, and they would pay that company the determined amount.

D. Patterson asked, does the pricing policy stratify depending upon the number of individuals who participate?

B. Davis responded, that pricing is not dependent upon the number of participants and there is no threshold that needs to be met. Cost is based upon the age of a city's existing infrastructure.

R. Eason asked, do we know what the average street cut costs?

N. Freed stated, that they could work with Public Works to get the information and provide it at later meeting.

M. Brown also advised, that it would be a very broad range that is based upon the extent of a cut that would need to be made into the street.

R. Eason asked, would the coverage include the cost of a street cut?

B. Davis stated, yes.

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## **7. Watersheds/Forest Health**

M. McHugh and M. Dawson presented on Aurora's watershed health and public education programs.

Per M. McHugh, Aurora's watershed collection system is comprised of five areas that stretch across the South Platte, Arkansas and Colorado river basins and into three national forests, they

are: Prairie Waters, the Colorado River, Upper Arkansas River, Upper South Platte River, and the Lower Arkansas River Exchange. In order to ensure Aurora’s water supply is clean, there is a need to invest in preventative forestry practices to maintain the health of its headwaters. In doing so, such efforts will reduce the expense and necessity of suppression and recovery efforts. Mitigation strategies include handling issues such as the infestations, drought, fire, and urban stormwater runoff in conjunction with our watershed partners. Proactive efforts to manage such issues assist with the production and storage of clean water, and the regulation and control of the timing of runoff. As a result, Aurora participates in programs such as, the Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI), the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), and the Southwest Wildfire Impact Fund (SWIF). Currently, the barriers to increasing the general pace and scale of forest health treatments in Colorado include limited funding, a lack of coordination between public and private lands and a decreasing number of people with the necessary forestry expertise.

M. McHugh indicated that Aurora is funding its watershed activities by including watershed restoration and protection in its operations budget. The city also works with partners by matching contributions with in-kind or cash contributions, and through education programs to expand the understanding of forest health issues. These partnerships also extend to forest health research, policy and outreach with federal and state agencies, counties, fire districts, non-profits and homeowners associations. Per M. Dawson, Aurora Water conducts several public outreach and education programs based upon Aurora’s watersheds and the effects that types of natural events and personal behaviors have on the water systems locally and downstream. Most education programs currently in place are directed towards students and teachers, such as “Climate Change and Water,” for high school students and “Forests to Faucets,” for teachers. These programs focus on climate change science (i.e. carbon dioxide and drought levels, water quality, effects of forest fires) and the social/economic effects it has on Aurora’s water supply. Future programing goals include establishing a “Citizens’ Water Academy” for the general public along with expanding outdoor watershed programing in partnership with established environmental organizations and groups such as the Coalition for Upper South Platte (CUSP) and Coalitions and Collaboratives (COCO).

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## **8. Discuss CWAC Quarterly Report to WPC in January**

G. Baker provided a general overview of the quarterly report for new committee members. G. Baker requested J. Marlow add an item to the next meeting for providing a brief introduction for the new members of the CWAC rules, functions and request for topic reviews on their behalf.

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## **9. 2021 Volunteer Agreements**

G. Baker advised that the 2021 volunteer agreement is located at the end of the packet sent out for this meeting and requested that committee members complete and e-mail the form to him.

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**10. Review/Verification of 2020 Attendance Records**

J. Marlow confirmed that everyone had reviewed the attendance records attached to the CWAC packet for the current meeting. G. Baker advised that if there are any errors, members should contact him via e-mail in order to correct any issues.

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**11. Review Follow-Up Questions Generated at this Meeting**

A. Binder asked, can staff reach out to other cities that are participating in the service line warranty program to find out what their experiences have been with the service?  
G. Baker advised that he can gather that information and that he will attempt to gather some anecdotal information about the number of water line breaks in the city.

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**12. Confirm Next Meeting – Tuesday, February 9, 2021**

J. Marlow confirmed the next committee meeting date with the CWAC members.

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**13. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

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Janet Marlow, Chair  
Citizens' Water Advisory Committee

  
Submitted by Jessica Roode  
Administrative Specialist, Aurora Water

Adopted: 1/12-2021