

VERDE RIVER BASIN PARTNERSHIP

FULL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SUMMARY FEBRUARY 23, 2009 2PM JEROME FIRE STATION

1. Establish quorum by roll call: quorum established.
2. Approval of the minutes of previous meeting 7/9/08: The minutes of the July 7, 2008 were approved following a point of order questioning whether the agenda had been posted sufficiently in advance of this meeting to permit any actions to be taken. Following a review of the bylaws, the Chair deemed that the posting of the agenda met the requirements of the bylaws and actions could be taken. There was no objection.
3. Reports from Committee Chairs:
 1. Coordinating Committee: Coordinating Committee chair Doug Von Gausig reported on:
 - (1) the failed effort of an *ad hoc* committee (the so-called "committee of 6" composed of three members from the Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee (WAC) and 3 members representing the Verde River Basin Partnership [VRBP]) to seek a workable basis for melding, collaboration, or coordination of the WAC and the VRBP;
 - (2) the more recent effort sanctioned by the VRBP Coordinating Committee to request that the WAC authorize its Technical Administrative Committee (TAC) to meet with representatives of the VRBP's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to explore areas of common scientific interest and how the VRBP's hydrologic scope of work might be modified to optimize coordinated scientific return between the WAC and VRBP. To this end, Von Gausig added the following item to the agenda for the WAC's Feb. 18, 2008, meeting-- ***Item 8: Discussion and Possible Action – WAC – VRBP Relations:*** *Consideration and possible action authorizing the WAC TAC to meet with the Verde River Basin Partnership's TAG to discuss ways that the VRBP might assist the WAC by obtaining Federal funding for current and future WAC projects [Clarkdale Mayor, Doug Von Gausig/Committee];*
 - (3) The decision by the WAC, based on objections of its members Springer and Flannery, at its Feb. 18, 2008, meeting to decline authorization for the WAC's TAC to meet with VRBP's TAG.

Dick Ellis requested that the minutes reflect the VRBP's desire for discussion between the TAG and the WAC TAC

2. Technical Advisory Group (TAG): TAG chair Ed Wolfe explained that in the absence of federal funding and the means to collaborate with the WAC, the TAG is temporarily dormant. However, in the hope of the VRBP's moving ahead, Bill Meyer and Ed Wolfe, of the TAG's Hydrology Subcommittee, will meet in early to mid-March with Jim Leenhouts and Don Pool of the USGS Arizona Water Science Center to review the VRBP-USGS science plan and consider updating it with respect to currency and cost since its creation in 2006.
3. Communications Committee: Communications Committee Chair Dorothy O'Brien reported that the VRBP website is now up and running on www.vrbp.org, which is actually hosted by the Verde Watershed Association (VWA). She thanked the VWA, Ed Wolfe (VWA Chair), and Diane Joens (VWA webmaster) for assistance and hosting
4. Structure Committee: Inactive; can be re-activated as needed.

4. Reports, discussion, and possible direction to the Coordinating Committee regarding the VRBP cooperating, coordinating, consolidating and/or combining with the Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee (WAC). (Doug Von Gausig)-

It was noted that the Bureau of Reclamation appraisal study for the Coconino Plateau is complete, and that the Coconino group is embarking on the second (feasibility study) phase. Yavapai County is in the first year of the initial—appraisal-level study, the primary goal of which is to explore and document whether there will be an unmet water demand in 2050.

Discussion on Direction-

Where do we go from here? Discussion as follows; themes marked by "—" are discussion points, not VRBP decisions:

--There was a general consensus that, following the outcome of the Feb. 18, WAC meeting (see above), further effort on the part of the VRBP to seek accommodation with the Prescott-area communities and, accordingly, with the WAC is, for now, fruitless. The impasse between the VRBP and the Prescott-area communities and, thus, the WAC, can be broken only when the VRBP has funding to carry out its work. The VRBP should become more proactive, aggressively argue why its work is important and the consequences for the public if the work is not done, revitalize communities and citizens to advocate for the essential federal funding, and seek to further broaden its membership.

--VRBP Studies are not specifically focused on saving the Verde River.

Clarification by TAG Chair Wolfe: the studies are designed to provide critical information to guide policy makers on water-management issues.

--Partnership should define problems, find solutions in the larger view and be more outgoing about defining and expressing these concerns and making the public aware of them. Larger focus should be on the whole area's growth, and the water demands it represents. Eventually, state laws will need to change if sustainable growth and water-management are to be addressed, Although the Prescott-Prescott Valley Big Chino pipeline is a present highly visible target, the extensive future development in the Big Chino and Williamson Valleys and the water that will be required to support it are the most pressing long-term issues.

--The following statement by Mayor Wilson of Prescott, was read:

Unless I am mistaken, I believe the Verde River Basin Partnership has committed to a path that will preclude it merging with the WAC. I wish them luck, but I believe they are making a fatal strategic error.

Under those circumstances:

- 1. I can no longer support expenditure of City of Prescott funds for you to attend any of their meetings.*
- 2. Once their position is confirmed, I will contact Senators Kyl and McCain and Representative Kirkpatrick to let them know I do not support the partnership.*

*As always, Have a Great Day in Prescott, AZ!
Mayor Jack D. Wilson*

--The question was asked whether Senator McCain understands that the WAC operates on the basis of unanimity in all its decisions, which means that any member is able to veto any possible WAC decision or action.

--The VRBP should maintain its stance as an organization representing broad-based collaboration. New members continue to be welcome.

--Elected officials don't always represent all constituents with water issues; therefore, VRBP should draw from citizens' strength and power. No other water group has a Federal law for its mandate.

--Discussion: Should we find alternative funding, other Federal funding? Should the VRBP engage in an education effort for citizens? Should it seek funding for help with public relations, public education and public needs.

--It is important to for the VRBP to seek membership from others concerned with the long-term sustainability of the Verde River such as Coconino, Gila, and Maricopa Counties.

--The Partnership must seek to extend the life of Title II and to acquire the funding it implies for studies that support well-informed water management.

Direction to Coordinating Committee-

Motion made by Steve Kling and seconded by Dick Ellis to direct the VRBP Coordinating Committee to formulate the best recommendation for continuing to put the TAC/TAG together and keep the door open, re-informing public that the offer is still open to cooperate and collaborate; furthermore, to thank the VRBP Coordinating Committee for its efforts to cooperate and collaborate with the Yavapai County WAC.

Discussion: the public record should show that VRBP is willing to collaborate and is all about scientific studies; the VRBP Charter is explicit and the VRBP won't repeat the failed exercise of the February 18 WAC meeting.

Motion passed

A request for consistent quarterly meetings was made.
A recommendation was made to attract more volunteers for communications and public relations, Georgene Lockwood and Richard Lynch volunteered.

Possible actions to be taken:, Communications Committee should prepare a press release about this meeting VRBP needs to educate and sway voters about its identity, the importance of its mission, and its critical need for funding.

Work with Senator McCain in a way that fully informs him of issues.

Motion- The full membership is to meet again in May (quarterly).
Meanwhile, the Coordinating Committee will develop an action plan.
Motion by Steve Kling, second by Tony Gioia.
Motion passed.

5. Discussion of the amendments needed in the VRBP enabling legislation to broaden its scope, extend its mandate, clarify its mission and possibly include projects that may benefit WAC by providing access to Federal funds. Possible action and direction to the Coordinating Committee regarding such. (Ed Wolfe, Coordinating Committee)

Discussion: Scope needs some modification because some studies have begun in part by the WAC. Wolfe, Bill Meyer, and Jim Leenhouts and Don Pool of the USGS will meet in the near future to consider work already underway and whether VRBP-USGS science plan needs to be modified, especially in light of work that has been undertaken by the WAC since the VRBP-USGS science plan was created in 2006. In addition, the funding

estimates need to be updated to account for increased costs since 2006. In addition, the enabling legislation (Title II) needs to be updated inasmuch as its mandate expires in November 2009.

MOTION- to ask for an amendment to our enabling Legislation to clarify that the Partnership will continue to operate as long as is required to accomplish its mission.

Motion by Tony Gioia, second by Dick Ellis

Motion passed

6. Future agenda items.

For consideration: funding opportunities and creation of a finance committee (Coordinating Committee to explore).

Dorothy O'Brien stated, for a future agenda item, that she wanted to discuss Doug Von Gausig's chairmanship and resignation from the Coordinating Committee, because she believes it is a conflict with being co-chair of the Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee.

Diane Joens indicated she would tender her resignation from the VRBP Coordinating Committee (I had been contemplating doing so for some time) because because of growing demands on her time as Mayor of Cottonwood. However, she plans to remain as Cottonwood's representative to the Partnership as the Cottonwood City Council has appointed her to represent Cottonwood on the Partnership. In addition, she will continue to donate her services for the VRBP Web site.

Then, Karen Fann stated that she would resign, because if Doug Von Gausig's chairmanship on the WAC was a conflict, then her chairmanship on the Upper Verde Watershed Protection Coalition would be a conflict.

7. Set Future meeting time and date for the next full membership meeting. The next full membership meeting will occur at 2 PM on May 18, 2009. The location is to be determined.

8. The meeting adjourned at 4:25pm