

Water Supply Public Meeting 9/21/2010

Joe Zebrowski,

President El Creston Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association. Located SW of the City. We're about midway through our PER to determine the feasibility of a community water system. The feasibility of our project is related to the feasibility of all the projects in this area. As we look at groundwater resources, it's important to carefully coordinate and synchronize our efforts as we seek funding. I believe this PER is providing a baseline of knowledge that's already leading to some really good discussions about how we can proceed together. Thank you.

Glenn Yocum

Utilities Committee member. Mr. Mosher -- You solicited comments on the alternatives to effluent water use. I'm assuming the last of those is the most effective, pumping it back into regular water supply.

Mosher: I don't know if it's the most cost effective, still doing analysis.

Glenn: I think in Cloudcroft, they're recycling almost all of their effluent water. Why shouldn't we do that here? We're a water-scarce area. It's much better that we use for domestic purposes rather than dumping it on grass? That would be my vote for use of effluent.

Kenny Alderete

Milliken Ranch. Thank you to the Mayor and everyone for putting this on. It's a job well done and needed for a long time. After looking at DB Stevens board, Milliken Ranch did submit a couple of RFPs but never more were we invited to the table and we never heard back. We hired an economist from UNM, and submitted to the previous administration. We're open to negotiations. It's all about the citizens of Las Vegas and a better quality of life. Thank you.

Ken Garcia: We did have an opportunity to meet with Mr. Milliken and the water rights attorney and are meeting with them again and are still open to that, as well as a number of other alternatives we're still considering.

Frank Casey:

Resident. My suggestion would be, because I've studied this for 35 years. We need to look at hydroelectric energy. That can be produced from these projects here. Everything I've heard is we have to pump. That's an exorbitant amount of electricity. We pay a huge electrical bill. I think if we could produce and use it for effluent and for water purification system. We could recycle completely and use that energy. Thank you.

Lee Einer

Resident of Las Vegas, certified permaculture designer. I'm here on behalf of the land and its people, not an organization. There's a resource not identified during this talk. Urban roof top and pavement runoff. Street runoff alone in this city, based on size of city and miles of streets, approximates 120 million gallons per year, average. We can throw roof top run off and parking lot runoff and that makes it a very conservative estimate in terms of what water is available. That water could be used to recharge our ground water and that becomes accessible for drinking water usage. There are other reasons to deal with urban runoff in terms of stabilization of the Gallinas and non point pollution. We need to look at our building code for new construction when planning a new shopping center, so runoff generated is approx. zero and make use of urban runoff. It's not hard to do, it's very low tech and low cost. The 25% loss doesn't include downstream loss of meters. That couldn't be included because it's unknown but it's not undiscoverable and not unfixable. Thank you.

Miguel Pacheco

Resident of San Miguel County & member of No. NM Stewards of the Earth. It's good to hear some innovative ideas. Why do we defecate in our water? We need to find a different way to take care of our human waste. That would be number 1. Second as far as recycling water, what type of technology do you have to filter out the thousands of pharmaceuticals and all these chemicals that we use today. As far as I understand, most of them aren't taken out of our water supply, so we're taking them back into our system. I don't think that's a good way to have a healthy community. Maybe I'm wrong. I don't know what the technology is but it doesn't seem like a good idea to be blending our drinking water with waste water. We have our state hospital here and I know there's a lot of pharmaceutical usage there as well as the population as a whole. I like the idea of alternative electricity. I don't see why we can't use solar, we have all the solar potential here. Third thing is we need to protect the water that we have. I know they're talking about drilling natural gas, methane gas. I think we could be labeled second in the nation for methane gas if we allow it. I don't know if you have been in areas in the Permian basin, San Juan basin and dealt with that problem but we don't want to deal with it here. Thank you for the time.

Bob Wesseley

UAC member. We have a wonderful opportunity here with our city council, mayor and administrative staff who are really looking at the problem overall and have the foresight to get this engineering study worked on and ultimately done. I think it's important that we pay good attention to these folks and take advantage of our current luck. One minor point, on the question of reuse, if there were a publically available description of the inflow of water to the treatment plant and the outflow of water from the effluent plant, the public could look more intelligently at the acceptability of reuse.

Catherine Montano

Thank you for coming to our community. I'm really pleased to see you here. It disturbs me very much when you try to say effluent water is safe. It's not safe. They've used that system in other municipalities in the US and it's nothing but a problem. Vegas has been bombarded with a lot of pollutants. It's interesting when you talk about the eco system and the water waste, you forgot to mention the Medite property out here. Out here is our wet lands. Our wet lands is our filtering system of our drinking water. It has been poisoned. Then you talked about a holding tank at Luna.

Ken Garcia: Mr. Mosher can you describe what the Camp Luna tank is?

Mosher : The tank at Camp Luna is a ground steel storage tank, like a big can, and gets water from the surface water treatment.

Catherine Montano

Up at Luna we have a landfill and according to Pete Maggiore chairman New Mexico Environment Dept. When we went to consult with him about water quality of this town, he said Luna was worst landfill in the state. Medite was here 12 years and putting out 800 tons of carcinogens into the air of Las Vegas. That's just the air quality. The liquid waste was being injected into our system and it was coming out at the sewer plant and it was putting tons of waste into our water waste. I feel for people that live down where Wm. Gonzales is from, it's grossly contaminated. We brought Pete Maggiore to Las Vegas to show him how contaminated our water ways are from the Gallinas River south. Here we're talking about life in this time. It's sad to know that the EPA of the federal government and out of Santa Fe did not protect this town. Our town has been grossly contaminated, and for you to come here and say you want to mix our effluent water with our drinking water, that's a no no. And then when you say we only have only so much acre feet, well I want you know that I'm an heir of the treaty of Guadalupe Hildalgo and they never put how much water we have, so you need to take care of contamination of our water ways before you do anything else. Thank you.

Ken Garcia: This is only the first of a number of meetings. We can also take comments by email to Ben Ortega at 426-3220 and bortega@ci.las-vegas.nm.us. We'll take your comments into consideration. The follow-up meeting that we're going to have will probably focus on specific areas. In other words, we may have a follow-up meeting on ground water. We may have a follow-up meeting on effluent reuse.

-END-