

Consortium Technical Committee Meeting Summary



NOVEMBER 4, 2020 CALLED TO ORDER: 1:34 PM ADJOURNED: 2:54 PM

QUORUM PRESENT - YES - 13 MEMBERS

MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM/VIDEOCONFERENCE

Approval of September 2, 2020 Meeting Summary

Brian Stahl made a motion to approve the September 2, 2020 Consortium Technical Committee (CTC) meeting summary. Mike Grimm seconded the motion. The CTC unanimously approved the September 2, 2020 CTC meeting summary as presented. (13:0:0)

Introductions

Rebecca Geisen, Consortium Managing Director, introduced Gabriel Solmer, Portland Water Bureau (PWB) Director. Gabe became the new PWB Director in August after Mike Stuhr retired. Gabe has been with PWB for five years – first as the Communications Director, then Deputy Director and now Bureau Director. Gabe provided a bit of her background and thanked CTC members for the opportunity to introduce herself and say hello.

Rebecca welcomed Delora Kerber, Public Works Director for the City of Wilsonville. Wilsonville is the newest member of the Regional Water Providers Consortium. Rebecca and Bonny met with Delora and Martin Montalvo earlier today to talk about the Consortium and its programs.

Consortium staff and CTC members thanked Brian Stahl for his support and work with the Consortium. This meeting was Brian's last CTC meeting. He will be retiring at the end of the year.

City of Tualatin Emergency Water Supply Plan

Jeff Fuchs, Public Works Director for the City of Tualatin gave a PowerPoint presentation on the City of Tualatin's Emergency Water Supply Plan. Jeff shared that the City of Tualatin began working on their Emergency Water Plan in 2019 and upon completion will become the emergency response chapter in their Water Master Plan scheduled to be completed in early 2021.

Jeff gave a brief overview of the City of Tualatin's water supply and system. The plan includes a catastrophic earthquake as the emergency scenario that renders the distribution system inoperable and cuts off the water supply from the City of Portland. Workshops were held with emergency responders and CERT team members to learn about roles after a catastrophic emergency; to get input on the number and characteristics of emergency water distribution sites; and to identify potential emergency water distribution. Out of the workshops came a proposed water system recovery plan – how to bring the water system back on after a catastrophic event. Jeff outlined the four phases in the recovery plan and the water system improvements necessary to increase water supply resiliency. Next steps include integrating the plan into the Water Master Plan; identifying improvement projects (i.e. seismic valves at reservoirs); procuring supplies needed for repairs (e.g. spare pipe, collars); procuring emergency supplies (e.g., blivets or tanks); and finishing the Emergency Water Supply Strategy.

A question/answer session followed. CTC members thanked Jeff for his presentation.

Emergency Drinking Water Framework Plan

Rebecca mentioned that the UASI-funded Provision of Emergency Drinking Water Framework Plan consultant was selected, and the project awarded to Hart Crowser. A final scope of work is in development and work is scheduled to begin in December.

Rebecca noted that the success of this project will be dependent on Consortium members participating in the study and providing input and guidance in the Plan. A multidisciplinary task force will be assembled to advise the consultant and Rebecca as the Project Manager on identifying broader stakeholder groups, and review workshop and Plan deliverables. Rebecca advised that she is looking for a couple of water provider volunteers to be part of the task force. Jeff Fuchs and Carrie Pak volunteered to participate on the task force. Rebecca noted that there will be many opportunities for others to participate and contribute to the project.

Director Report

October Board Meeting Debrief – Rebecca asked for feedback/input on the Board meeting – format, presentation, engagement, etc. CTC members were very complimentary of the format and thought Board member engagement was at an all-time high. It was noted that the Board members seemed to really appreciate the presentations and overall, it was a great example of collaboration and relationships. Rebecca mentioned that the presentations were recorded and will be made available.

UASI Grant Funds – Rebecca reported that the Consortium was awarded about \$65,000 of 2019 UASI reprogramming funds to purchase super-quiet generators for the regional water distribution and treatment systems.

ORWARN Shared Worker Addendum – Rebecca reminded CTC members that the ORWARN Shared Worker Addendum is completed and encouraged those members interested to consider signing onto the addendum. Consortium staff finalized the standard operating procedures for the addendum and developed tracking sheet templates for responding and receiving agencies.

PSU Population and Household Estimate and Forecast IGA – Consortium staff will begin working with Portland State University to renew the Population and Household Estimate and Forecast IGA. The new Agreement will incorporate new 2020 census data information.

AWIA Brown Bag – Rebecca reminded CTC members that in September the Consortium hosted a virtual brown bag presentation on AWIA requirements. Clackamas River Water, Portland Water Bureau, and Tualatin Valley Water District shared their experience putting together risk assessments and emergency response plans, valuable resources and lessons learned. The presentations were recorded and sent out to Consortium members and are available on the member page of the Consortium’s website.

Annual Rate Survey – A suggestion was made to add a question to the annual rate survey that asks about proposed rate increases. CTC members discussed how the wording or context of the question could be structured to achieve getting useful information; e.g., use dollar amount not percentage of increase, add average ccf per customer usage. It was noted that collecting useful rate information can be challenging because water providers often have different fiscal years. Rebecca advised that she will put together some possible question(s) and send out to members for review and consideration.

Suspension and Resumption of Customer Payments and Shutoff Survey Results – Rebecca reminded CTC members that a survey was recently sent out of behalf of the Oregon Water Utility Council (OWUC) and the Consortium to collect state-wide information from water providers on their current service disconnection and collection policies. Survey results have been consolidated and Rebecca shared them at this meeting. Twenty-three water providers from nine counties in Oregon responded to the survey. Survey respondents were asked if they suspended collections/shutoffs during the pandemic; if so, have they resumed collections/shutoffs; and if not, when they anticipate resuming collections. Other survey questions included number/percentage of customers participating in payment assistance programs; communication methods used about payment assistance; and any additional information to share. Rebecca advised that she will send the survey results out to both Consortium and OWUC members.

Annual Report PowerPoint Presentation

Rebecca mentioned that Consortium staff has almost completed the FY 2019-20 Annual Report and this year a PowerPoint presentation has been developed to complement the report that can be used by individual entity Board members or staff to share with their Boards/Councils/Commissions. Rebecca asked for CTC volunteers to review the PowerPoint before sending it out to the Board. Delora Kerber, Kari Duncan, and Brian Stahl volunteered to review the PowerPoint and provided feedback/comments.

Program Updates

Bonny Cushman, Consortium Program Coordinator advised that in addition to the Consortium Annual Report, Bonny has put together a separate media campaign report that takes a deeper dive into the various campaigns and provides more detail on the breadth and scope of the campaigns. Bonny will send this additional report out when the annual report goes out.

Bonny reported that the school assembly program is not likely to happen this year. With school being exclusively remote and one of the vendors no longer able to fulfill their contract, it was decided that this program would be put on hiatus for the year. Instead, focus has shifted to planning and supporting a likely virtual Children's Clean Water Festival (CCWF). A subcommittee will begin work in the next few weeks to identify the Consortium's role in the CCWF and how the Consortium can best support that program.

Bonny noted that she will begin work on selecting media partners for the coming year. Bonny commented that she is grappling with figuring out if the Consortium should stay with their current partnerships or move to new media partners. The Consortium has partnered with KATU television and Alpha Media radio for the past three years. In the past, the Consortium has rotated media partners about every three years but with the pandemic and workload capacity, it might make sense to stay with the current partnerships where there is already established PSAs, working relationships and news stories that can be utilized. Moving to a new media partner, especially at this time, could prove challenging. Bonny advised that if the Consortium decides to move to a new media partnership, she would look strongly at KPTV. The Consortium's emergency preparedness messaging campaign is housed at KPTV so there is an established relationship. There would also be opportunity to conduct a focus group to look at Consortium messaging and provide feedback, but new conservation PSAs and news stories would need to be developed.

CTC members were supportive of whatever direction Consortium staff thought best. It was noted that there is no reason to change media partners just for the sake of changing and that given the unusual and unprecedented times doing what is easier, more straightforward may be prudent.

Bonny concluded that KUNP has a couple more indoor conservation stories that will air in December focused on getting ready for winter and checking your toilets for leaks.

FY 2021-22 Budget and Workplan

Rebecca noted that at their October meeting, the Consortium Board was supportive of the budget concepts and direction presented. Rebecca advised that at the January CTC meeting, she hopes to have personnel costs from the City of Portland and CTC members will be asked to brainstorm possible messaging topics. Rebecca explained that she added a one-time cost of \$10,000 to the budget for the Provision of Emergency Drinking Water Framework Plan that is being funded by the RDPO. Rebecca said there were some tasks in the Consultant's scope of work that there was not budget for but would add value to the project. She noted that it would be nice to have funds potentially available to complete some of those tasks to allow for a more comprehensive plan. CTC members supported the addition of funds.

Meeting Attendees:

David Winship – City of Beaverton

Todd Heidgerken – Clackamas River Water

Greg Robertson – City of Forest Grove

Andrew Degner – City of Gresham

Niki Iverson – City of Hillsboro

Kari Duncan – City of Lake Oswego

Sarah Jo Chaplen – Oak Lodge Water Services

Edward Campbell and Gabriel Solmer – City of Portland

Brian Stahl – Rockwood Water PUD

Jeff Fuchs – City of Tualatin

Carrie Pak – Tualatin Valley Water District

Mike Grimm – West Slope Water District

Delora Kerber – City of Wilsonville

Rebecca Geisen, Bonny Cushman, Riley Berger and Patty Burk – RWPC Staff

Next CTC Meeting: Wednesday, January 6, 2021 via *Zoom/videoconference*.