



City of St. Helena
Ad Hoc Water/Wastewater Exploratory
Committee
Regular Meeting
City Hall Main Conference Room, 1088
College Avenue, St. Helena
Friday, June 7, 2024 @ 3:00 PM

PLEASE NOTE: Any person who wishes to speak regarding an item on the agenda or make a comment under the "Oral Communication" portion of the agenda may do so, but please observe the time limit of four minutes. Members of the public and other parties are welcome to email their comments to publiccomment@cityofstheleena.org.

Page

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
Chair: Paul Dohring, Mayor
Vice Chair: Billy Summers, Council Member
Members: Gary Matak and Garry Rose
Staff Liaison: April Mitts, Asst. City Manager
3. PUBLIC FORUM:
An opportunity for the public to directly address the Committee on items of interest to the public that are not listed on the agenda. Any person addressing the Committee should provide his or her name and address, and limit comments to four minutes. **Because of restrictions imposed by the Brown Act, the Committee may not engage in substantive discussion, nor take action on matters not described on the agenda.**
4. REPORTS BY STAFF AND COMMITTEE:
Reports by staff and/or committee on items of general interest. ***Brief questions for clarification may be posed and answered, and Committee may request that items be placed on a future agenda. Except under certain circumstances, the Brown Act prohibits any other discussion or action by the Committee.***
5. CONSENT CALENDAR:
Members of the Committee or the public may ask that any items be considered individually for purposes of considering alternative action, for extended discussion, or for public comment. Unless that is done, on motion may be used to adopt all recommendation actions.
 - 5.1. Committee Meeting Minutes of May 6, 2024 3 - 9
[050624 Meeting Minutes](#)
6. SCHEDULED MATTERS:
 - 6.1. Review, discuss and finalize recommendation to City Council. 11 - 19
[Attachment 1 - 060724 Paul Dohring](#)
[Attachment 2 - Analysis provided by Garry Rose](#)
[Attachment 3 - Committee Proposal 1 from Garry Rose](#)
[Attachment 4 - Gary Matak](#)

7. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular Committee meeting is scheduled for TBD, City Hall Main Conference Room, 1088 College Avenue, St. Helena.

This agenda was posted at City Hall, 1088 College Avenue, St. Helena on June 4, 2024.

April Mitts, Asst. City Manager

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the meeting, please contact City Hall at (707) 968-2742. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28 CFR35.102-35.104 ADA Title II). However, City staff will attempt to assist at any time with accessibility.

City of St. Helena
Ad Hoc Water/Wastewater Exploratory Committee
Regular Meeting
City Hall Main Conference Room, 1088 College Avenue, St. Helena
Monday, May 6, 2024 @ 4:00 PM

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1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

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Vice Chair: Billy Summers, Council Member

Members: Arlene Corsetti, Gary Matak and Garry Rose

Staff Liaison: April Mitts, Asst. City Manager

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5. CONSENT CALENDAR:

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5.1. Committee Meeting Minutes of February 1, 2024

Ayes: 5
Nays: None
Minutes Approved

6. SCHEDULED MATTERS:

6.1. Review and Discuss Duty/Topic Matrix and Draft Structure Prepared by Committee Members Corsetti and Rose

The following was distributed to the exploratory committee for discussion and deliberation:

1. Duty/Topic Matrix from April Mitts – Attachment 1
2. Commission Proposal 1 from Arlene Corsetti – Attachment 2
3. Commission Proposal 2 from Garry Rose – Attachment 3
4. Notes from Garry Rose – Attachment 4

The committee discussed the various options and came to unanimous agreement on the following:

There are certain areas which a committee may be beneficial.

1. Duties and scope should align with City Council Goals and staff workplan.
2. Minimize the effect on staff.
3. Would need to add value.
4. Expertise would be required of committee member qualifications.
5. Have an initial trial basis.
6. Predetermine how to judge the success of the trial period.

Additionally, the committee agreed to provide the following to April Mitts approximately 1 week prior to the next meeting. These items will be used to facilitate the next discussion of what to include in the report back to the full City Council:

Suggested trial timeframe and reasoning.

1. Brief sentence or two to acknowledge that the focus of the committee will be consistent with City Council Goals and staff workplan
2. A list of metrics to judge the success of the committee during the trial period.

6.2. Set Future Meeting Dates and Target Deadline

Staff Lisian April Mitts will send a doodle poll out to all committee members to select two more dates for the committee to meet before a report is submitted to the City council

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

April Mitts, Asst. City Manager

	Duties/Topics
1	Annually, the City Council reviews and updates the taskforce assignments
2	Oversight of enterprise operations including: financials, budgets, CIP, rates, and operational issues
3	Pursue opportunities for grants and funding
4	Advise on Water and Wastewater rates during rate study process
5	Provide additional resources for financial advice to staff
6	Technical Guidance - Develop a streamlined process for evaluation of technical details and inputs from suppliers regarding proposed solutions. - Evaluation for merit, projects and proposals meet their intended performance targets (both financially and technically)
7	Recommend to the City Council acquisition, disposition, or repair of facilities, equipment, and supplies related to the Water and Wastewater systems
8	Help structure the process for reporting CIP project and project status/updates
9	Recommend to the City Council plans, rules, and regulations pertaining to the above, including fixing rates, charges, or other payments
10	At the direction of Council, make studies of long-range plans such as: (1) securing sources of domestic water supply that can include all water sources, water reclamation, storage, and conservation; (2) water issues such as recapture and conservation; and (3) infrastructure to accommodate #1 and #2. Take the long term view and make recommendations to City Council
11	Provide a forum for Rate payers to ask questions and voice concerns
12	Advisory Board to the City Council on all matters pertaining to the Water and Wastewater Enterprises
13	Be there as a group to bounce things off of
14	Stormwater - someone to look at how to recapture stormwater and find a solution and better ways of doing things
15	Be another set of eyes that are more focused on a particular problem - allows a filter and allows the City Council to let the committee look at the issue and go through a process for recommendation.
16	Philosophy of taskforce: does not look backwards, but looks forward. Not a place where people can come rehash the past problems, but looking to things going forward. Not criticizing. Focus on long-term planning and not overburdening staff.
17	Work with other Napa County and City organizations to look at best practices for the conservation of water
18	COUNCIL GOALS AND STAFF WORKPLAN
18a	2.300 Exploration of solar on water/wastewater infrastructure
18b	2.614 Develop Recycled Water Master Plan
18c	2.615 Explore use of tertiary water (resulting from treatment at the WW plant) to expand the amount of potable water by further treatment and/or mission with water as the reservoir
18d	2.1100 Explore limits on City's capacity to provide water to City residents beyond the existing RHNA cycle (part of Safe Yield and Water Neutrality?)
18e	3.110 Update Water Neutrality Policy and Safe Yield Analysis
18f	3.500 Review Current Water Allocations During Phase II and Phase III Water Emergencies for Recommended Changes
18g	3.600 Review Current Penalty Structure for the Phase II and Phase III Water Emergency
18h	3.700 Develop and Refine Incentive Programs (Leak Repair, Gray Water, Customer Assessment Services, other rebates/incentives (enhancements and help for low income and/or seniors)
18i	3.810 Evaluate and pursue additional water sources (e.g. alternative municipal well, Sites Reservoir in Colusa County, Adventist Health Wells, Rector Dam surplus water, etc.)
18j	3.900 Investigate feasibility of using recycled/reclaimed wastewater for either groundwater recharge or for mixing with our domestic water supplies.

St Helena Water and Wastewater Commission

The city council shall establish a St Helena Water and Wastewater Commission (herein the Commission). This Commission oversees all matters pertaining to Water and Wastewater. The purpose of the Commission is to assist the St City Council in decisions regarding the quality, affordability and sustainability of water and wastewater services for the City of St Helena.

The Commission shall serve as an advisory body reporting directly to the City Council and shall be composed of five (5) regular voting members and (1) alternate. A minimum of three (3) regular members shall have relevant professional competency and one (1) member shall be a ratepayer residing outside of the city limits. The term of a Commission member shall be four (4) years with staggered terms to ensure continuity. The Commission will meet a minimum of ten times a year.

Why a permanent Water and Wastewater Commission

- To give voice to Ratepayers questions and issues
- To provide continuity to the running of the Water and Wastewater Enterprise
- Provide consistent oversight to the Water and Wastewater Enterprise financials, CIP, rates and operational adequacies
- Provide a group to look into future water issues such as recapture and conservation
- Provide an additional resource for technical and financial advice to the City Council and Staff
- Provide institutional knowledge to compensate for the changing City Council members or changing city staff
- Provide increased interface and communications with other water/wastewater organizations and boards

St. Helena Water & Wastewater Visionary Commission

The city council shall establish a St. Helena Water and Wastewater Visionary Commission [hereinafter Commission]. The Commission contemplates all matters pertaining to Water and Wastewater, present and future. The purpose of the Commission is to assist the St. Helena City Council in decisions regarding the quality, affordability and sustainability of water and wastewater services for the City of St. Helena.

The Commission shall serve as an advisory body reporting directly to the City Council and shall be composed of five (5) regular voting members and one (1) alternate. A minimum of three (3) regular members are encouraged (shall have) relevant professional competency and one (1) member shall be a ratepayer residing outside of the city limits. The term of a Commission member shall be four (4) years with staggered terms to insure continuity. The Commission will meet a minimum of ten times per year.

Permanent Water and Wastewater Commission

- An advisory ONLY citizen's commission reporting to the City Council.
- "Permanent", provides for long term continuity for long term issues, and promotes a feeling of relevance for those volunteering their time to serve on the commission.
- "Commission" indicates a sense of permanence.
- Creates an official, responsible citizen to City Council interface.
- Allows early, proactive citizen engagement of important issues.
- Potentially a flexible framework for citizen input.
- Hopefully creates ways to interact with younger citizens and with the minority communities.
- Able to serve as the backbone of future Utility Rate Study Committees.
- Allows for consolidation of the Water Advisory Board
- Leverages the local financial, technical, legal, development, and conservation expertise of local citizens at little or no cost to the city.
- Provides a resource for the City Council and the city staff.
- Works in a collaborative manner with the City Council and city staff with mutual respect.

Garry's Personal Comments

From City Council and city staff, I sense uncertainty, bordering on fear of this proposed Commission. It is important to remember that this proposed commission is advisory only. It is comprised of people who are volunteering their time to attend perhaps a 2-hour meeting once a month. It is important that the commission be an ongoing permanent commission, so that the current and former members feel that their participation is appreciated, and their work is influential, and that ad-hoc or one-time reports are not relegated to a shelf to collect dust. Ongoing water and wastewater issues demand ongoing engagement. The people appointed to this commission will be talented and engaged local citizens no less important than City Council members or city staff. These talented members will not be there to complain, but to offer sound advice and insight on issues related to the water and wastewater enterprises. They will be there to help the city of St. Helena on matters that are difficult for city staff and City Council to focus on.

Since no one knows what such a commission will ultimately be like, why not envision an engaged, useful, positive entity. Plan for success and with careful implementation you will get success. Instead of expending energy always trying to prevent bad things, we should be trying to encourage good things. Why would the City Council and city staff resist creating such an important commission?

From Paul Dohring

May 31, 2024

Re Discussion Topics for June 7th Water & Wastewater Exploratory Meeting

A. Scope and Duties of the St. Helena Water & Wastewater Committee

The Committee would be charged with assisting the City Council in ensuring that the City's residents and businesses are provided with an adequate, economical, and potable supply of water and a stable, economical, and environmentally safe system of wastewater collection and treatment. The Committee would serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council on matters pertaining to water and wastewater, present and future, as directed by the City Council and aligned with City Council goals and objectives and city staff's workplan and capacity. These matters could include policy formation/updates related to:

- The protection, integrity, use and reuse of the city's water resources;
- The quality, affordability and sustainability of water and wastewater services;
- Development and implementation of programs that achieve City Council goals and objectives relating to water supply management, water demand management, and wastewater management;
- The fiscal health of the water and wastewater enterprises; and
- Attendance and reports on relevant countywide commissions and committees.

Based on the adopted City Council Goals and current staff workplan, it is anticipated the Committee would focus its initial term in the following areas:

- Water supplies and distribution;
- Water demand and conservation management;
- Wastewater treatment and collection;
- Water quality; and
- Citizen input and education.

B. Trial Timeframe and Reasoning

The initial term of the Committee should be at least twenty (20) months and should meet a minimum of ten times. The Committee will need sufficient time to develop a rapport with staff and the community, to review and understand enterprise operations, staffing, physical assets, and capital improvement plans, and to conduct research as assigned by the City Council and to develop recommendations for staff and City Council review.

C. Judging the Success of the Committee

Did the Committee attract enough qualified candidates with a diversity of relevant expertise?

Did the Committee advance the current goals and objectives of the City Council?

Did the Committee and staff develop a productive working relationship based on mutual respect and trust?

Did the Committee assist staff in information gathering?

Did the Committee's focus, efforts, productivity and time requirements align well with staffing capacity?

Did the work and the contribution of the Committee outweigh the necessary staff time devoted to the Committee?

Did the Committee become an accepted vehicle for citizens to provide input regarding the water and wastewater enterprises?

Did the Committee become an accepted vehicle for citizens to receive accurate and useful information regarding the water and wastewater enterprises?

ANALYSIS

St. Helena is facing:

- Outdated infrastructure
- demands from state and county governments
- threat of water shortages due to
 - potential growth
 - drought
 - prior policy decisions
 - and combinations of the above

These issues are complex, on-going, and not easily solved. Each issue is related to others and solutions subject to unintended consequences. Staff shortages, budget shortfalls, and lack of public confidence puts additional stress on elected officials and city staff.

Establishing a Water and Wastewater Committee would check off bullet point eight of the St. Helena Mission Statement (**Facilitating full civic participation and ongoing communication**) and allow the Committee to provide a resource for and advice to the City Staff and City Council regarding items from the City Council Goals Objectives. A cooperative relationship with City Staff and City Council should also improve public confidence.

The success of a St. Helena Water and Wastewater Committee is dependent on the members of the Committee, but also importantly on support from the city staff and City Council. No matter how well a committee performs or how important the information they provide the staff and City Council, if the staff and Council are not fully supportive it is doomed to failure. Success depends on competence, commitment, and compatibility.

ST. HELENA WATER AND WASTEWATER COMMITTEE



SUBMITTED BY | W&WW AD HOC COMMITTEE | JULY 1, 2024

ST. HELENA WATER AND WASTEWATER COMMITTEE

The City Council shall establish a St. Helena Water and Wastewater Committee [hereinafter Committee]. The Committee explores matters pertaining to the Water and Wastewater Enterprises. The Committee collaborates with the City Council and City Staff and advises the City Council on decisions regarding the quality, affordability, sustainability of water and wastewater services and related utility matters for the City of St. Helena.

The Committee shall serve as an advisory body reporting directly to the City Council and shall be composed of five (5) regular voting members and one (1) alternate. A minimum of three (3) regular members shall (be encouraged to) have relevant professional competency and one (1) member shall be a ratepayer residing outside of the city limits. The term of a Committee member shall be four (4) years with staggered terms to ensure continuity. The Committee shall meet a minimum of ten times per year.

POSSIBLE TRIAL PERIOD

The length of time for a “trial period” is difficult to establish. Given that the committee is comprised of volunteer citizens, meeting once a month on long-range and on-going issues, a minimum of 2 years would give such a committee the necessary time to establish itself and become comfortable with the tasks at hand. If one of the tasks involves preparation for the next utility rate study, then 2 years is an absolute minimum. It seems as if the current rate study has recently finished, but keep in mind that the process started in 2021. If the next one starts in 2026, that is only 2 years and a few months from now.

SCOPE OF COMMITTEE

This committee will be a resource and offer advisory opinions for both City staff and City Council. The emphasis will be positive leveraging of financial and technical expertise of the citizens of St. Helena as it applies to the Water and Wastewater portion of Public Works and the associated enterprises. This expertise is difficult to provide for full-time city staff employees, but it is possible that this committee or specific committee members can provide answers to questions that city staff cannot answer, but do not justify immediate involvement of consultants.

The scope of the committee can be summarized by portions of the City of St. Helena Mission Statement and appropriate line items from the City of St. Helena City Council Goals Objectives.

- Bullet point eight (8) of the city of *St. Helena Mission Statement* reads
 - **Facilitating full civic participation and ongoing communication**
- Following are intersecting bullet points of the *City of St. Helena City Council Goals Objectives* and potential scope for a Water and Wastewater Committee. (see following pages 1 and 2)
 - **Items:**
 - 2.300, 2.600, 2.1100**
 - 3.100, 3.200, 3.300, 3.400, 3.500, 3.600, 3.700, 3.800, 3.900**
 - 7.700**

SUCCESS METRIC

The best metric is if the Committee is useful. To ensure success, the Committee, City Council, and City Staff must collaboratively work to achieve the mutual goals. Without a commitment to success by all parties, success is not possible.

CITY OF ST. HELENA – VISION STATEMENT

The city of St. Helena will strive to be economically sustainable, and continue to be family-friendly, diverse and safe community which prudently manages its financial and human resources, continues to upkeep and improve its infrastructure, ensures its water security, provides a full range of housing, business, cultural and recreational opportunities and embraces and retains its historic, small-town character, beautiful natural environment and high quality of life.

CITY OF ST. HELENA – MISSION STATEMENT

The city of St. Helena is dedicated to serving the needs and desires of our citizens by:

- Maintaining and improving our short and long-term economic stability
- Offering excellent professional services to all customers
- Establishing, improving and maintaining City infrastructure
- Maintaining and encouraging an environmentally sustainable community
- Preserving and embracing the historic, small-town, rural character of St. Helena
- Expanding and improving recreational services and facilities and cultural opportunities
- Encouraging a wide range of innovative, well-designed housing available for residents of all ages and income level
- **Facilitating full civic participation and ongoing communication**
 - Strengthening partnerships with the private, non-profit, and public sectors

Vision and Mission statements adopted by the City of St. Helena City Council on April 12, 2016, Resolution No. 2016-47.

CITY OF ST. HELENA – CITY COUNCIL GOALS OBJECTIVES

The following City Council Goals Objectives intersect with proposed Water and Wastewater Committee Objectives.

Goal 2: Infrastructure & Environment

- 2.300 Exploration of solar on water/wastewater infrastructure.
- 2.600 PUBLIC WORKS DIVISIONS Projects – sewer, and engineering.
- 2.1100 Explore limits on City's capacity to provide water to City residents beyond the existing RHNA cycle.

Goal 3: Water Security

- 3.100 Update Water Supply Policies.
- 3.200 Water Contract Review.
- 3.300 Commence compliance review of projects with Condition of Approval requiring water neutrality.
- 3.400 Review concrete recommendations from recent county processes related to our water resources (LAFCO, Municipal Service Review, the Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee, the Napa County Drought Contingency Plan, etc.) and determine how we can use the information to inform our decision making.
- 3.500 Review current water allocations during Phase II and Phase III water emergencies for any recommended changes.
- 3.600 Review and evaluate current penalty structure for the Phase II and Phase III water emergencies.

PAGE I

- 3.700 Develop and Refine incentive programs for Leak Repair Program, Gray Water Incentive Program, Customer Assessment Services/Water Audits, and More Rebates/Incentives (enhancements and help for low income and/or seniors)
- 3.800 Regional water strategies.
- 3.900 Investigate feasibility of using recycled/reclaimed wastewater for either groundwater recharge or of mixing with our domestic water supplies.

Goal 7: Organizational Effectiveness & Service Delivery

- 7.700 Adopt outside-in operating mentality (look at it from the customers perspective).

General

The view is that this committee is an added resource to the City Staff as well as to the City Council. It is comprised of highly skilled professionals in technical or business disciplines that will provide insight into the challenges at hand. It is expected that these resources will be made available to City Staff and over a trial period will develop detailed task assignments improving effectiveness of the Department and also providing feedback to the community (as directed by the City Council).

Time and Trial Reasoning

1. This committee is provided as a resource to the City Staff and City Council providing business, finance and technical breath.
2. The committee will need time to get to know the City Staff and how best to work within their working-day environment. Together with the City Staff, they will develop the most effective working process.
3. A set of goals or objectives will evolve, and committee resources will be assigned. In this case one would expect committee members to be assigned to specific tasks with their points of contact with the City Water Department.
4. The expectation is that the City Staff will provide technical leadership and will develop committee resource allocations. Committee members in this instance may serve as consultants or mentors.
5. The concept is working together using committee members as a resource will improve outcomes.
6. The processes developed shall be approved by the City Council.
7. The process will take at least 2 years for a trial period.

Breath of the committee – Achievements

1. Successfully assist the City Staff in resolving issues as assigned and developed.
2. Assist in managing outside contractors as an independent assessment technically reporting to the City Staff, while also reporting to the City Council.
3. Evaluate long-term needs and develop plans to assess them. For example, future contracts for Lake Hennessy or other water sources, or water rate assessments.
4. Assist in rapid problem resolution. Catching the issues early increases efficiency (better solutions at far lower costs).
5. Become a trusted resource to City Staff and the City Council.
6. Provide solution excellence.
7. Increase effectiveness of the Department; Meet schedule at or below cost budgets.

Success criterion

1. Department objectives are met on time and at or below budget.
2. City Staff develops a team mentality, using committee members as an assisting resource.
3. Tasks or issues are clearly defined so that they can be resolved with appropriate actions.
4. Outside contractor performance is improved.
5. General Department ambiance is improved.
6. If a final evaluation pole rating is used, it should be no higher than 25% in developing final assessments (I don't like poles!)
7. Committee members are considered a part of the staff (by the City Staff) and are regularly asked for insight and support. As an example, committee member are assigned supporting tasks by the city staff leadership. Clearly these assignments are approved by the City Council.
8. The general water system improves.
9. Public approval increases.