MEETING SUMMARY
Ogden Valley General Plan Water Sub-Committee
Meeting #2

January 28, 2014
2:00 – 4:00 pm
Huntsville Library Auditorium

Participants

Bill White, Huntsville Town
Ron Gleason
Ted Mickelsen, Jones & DeMille Eng.
Ross Hansen, Division of Water Rights
Scott Richardson, Huntsville Town
Miranda Menzies, Wolf Creek Water & Sewer
Kenton Moffett, Ogden City
Dennis Shaw, Eden Water Works
Pen Hollist, Liberty Pipeline Company
Brandon Thueson, Weber Fire District
Mark Anderson, Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
Janae Wallace, Utah Geological Survey
Mike Lowe, Utah Geological Survey
Stefan Kirby, Utah Geological Survey
Dana Shuler, Weber County Engineering
Charlie Ewert, Weber County Planning

Consultant Team (Logan Simpson Design)
Jim Carter
Krissy Nielsen

1. Follow-up on last month's action items

Krissy Nielsen noted that the documents submitted in response to the action items from the Committee's last meeting that were attached to the meeting agenda include: a brief description of water quality; a description of the replacement water policy of the Weber Basin Water Conservancy District prepared by Mark Anderson; and a description of the hydrogeology of the Ogden Valley prepared by Miranda Menzies. Please see the attached documents provided for this agenda item.

Dialogue

- The group consensus is that water quality is not a limiting factor for additional development, but that additional development could threaten current high water quality if not well managed.
- The group discussed water quantity, noting the differences among physical water, water rights, water service and water infrastructure. The consensus is that there currently is abundant physical water* in the Ogden Valley and water rights to divert as much as 33,000 acre feet annually. That water, if all converted to culinary uses, could support between 40,000 and 60,000 residential units in the valley. The group feels that policies should not encourage conversion of water use to culinary purposes in order to continue the agricultural operations that contribute to the character of the valley. Administrative constraints would make 100% conversion impossible in any event.

  *Abundant physical water is mostly in the form of surface water in Pineview Reservoir, and the constraints (legal/water rights and engineering) on using this for culinary purposes are not defined at the moment.
- Replacement water and exchanges are a method for a "Petitioner" to transfer water rights it owns to the WBWCD in exchange for a water right to be exercised on or near the petitioner's property by drilling a new water well. High-capacity water wells are difficult to site and complete in the valley due to hydrogeological constraints and the administrative process to gain authority from the State Engineer to construct a new well.
- Culinary water service is provided by as many as 83 individual water companies in the valley. Each company has a limit on the number of customers it can serve, based on its public water system certification. Wolf Creek Water & Sewer reports it is currently serving 1,378 customers out of an authorized 1,589 capacity, and so has another 211 units available. Eden Water Works is serving 450 customers out of a capacity of 700, leaving 250 units available. Huntsville Town is serving 444 customers out of a capacity of 678, with 234 units available. Apart from authorized capacity, water service companies are limited by the capacity of their water sources, and several have experienced deliverability problems in the past, despite having fewer customers than their authorized capacity.

- Water service is also constrained by geography (finite service areas) and by groundwater hydrology (high-capacity water wells are not a given in many areas of the valley)
- Water service has also been constrained by the cost of infrastructure (wells, diversions, treatment facilities and pipelines).

2. Update on Miranda's research

The committee reviewed the Hydrogeology of Ogden Valley report prepared by Miranda Menzies, and in light of the dialog, identified the main water supply issues in the Ogden Valley. They include:

- The overall water budget of the valley (inflow, consumption, and outflow) is not well understood.
- The hydrogeology of the valley offers a limited number of areas where new high-capacity water wells are likely to be successful.
- The administrative approval process for new high-capacity wells is expected to become more difficult, as the best "target" areas are small and generally already have water wells.
- The proliferation of small water companies places the County at risk of having to repair or replace failing systems.
- The proliferation of individual wells and septic systems has the potential to adversely affect both existing and new water sources.

Given the constraints and based on currently available information, it was estimated by the group that groundwater might support a total of 7,000 - 9,000 units in the Ogden Valley. The group generally agreed that water policies should encourage water service from existing companies rather than new companies; require that new water sources be developed and tested or that the developer obtain a will-serve commitment from an existing water provider before property is platted; and conduct a basin-wide water study to quantify the valley's water budget and identify potential groundwater source areas.

3. Mike Lowe and Stefan Kirby from Utah Geological Survey

Mike and Stefan presented a proposal, the Hydrogeologic Study of Ogden Valley, Weber County, Utah, with Emphasis on Development of a Water Budget, to:

(1) "Characterize the hydrogeology of the Ogden Valley drainage basin as it pertains to the occurrence and flow of groundwater, with emphasis on delineating the thickness of the valley-fill aquifer and determining the water-yielding characteristics of fractured-rock aquifers in the study area.

(2) Develop a water budget for the drainage basin that includes components of recharge and discharge.

It was discussed and determined that this study is crucial for Ogden Valley moving forward. Prior studies are out of date and only considered the Valley floor. This study will use new technology and consider the entire Ogden Valley.

Weber County is working to secure funding to move forward with the study. The study timeline would be July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017 (two years). In reference to the General Plan preparation, Mike and Stefan reported that they may be able to have some preliminary information ready September. Moving forward, it was determined that the General Plan will consider water availability, but will not use it as an ultimate constraint. As soon as the preliminary information is available from Utah Geological Survey, the draft plan will be revisited to ensure it follows the general baseline information provided.

4. Next Steps and Adjourn

The committee is willing to act as a resource to the General Plan Update process to vet water related content and ideas through.