

**MINUTES  
CARBONDALE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
WORK SESSION  
CARBONDALE TOWN HALL  
AND VIA ZOOM  
JULY 19, 2022**

Mayor Bohmfalk called the Board of Trustees Work Session to order on July 19, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

Present:

Mayor	Ben Bohmfalk
Trustees	Colin Laird
	Lani Kitching
	Erica Sparhawk
	Chris Hassig
	Luis Yllanes
	Marty Silverstein

Staff Present:

Town Manager	Lauren Gister
Town Clerk	Cathy Derby
Public Works Director	Kevins Schorzman
Utilities Director	Mark O'Meara
Town Attorney	Mark Hamilton
Assistant Town Attorney	Susan Gray

**WATER DISCUSSION**

Mayor Bohmfalk explained that residents often approach Board members asking if there is enough water whenever they see a new development. He stated the purpose of this discussion to determine if we need to reduce water demand, use, and consumption. If so, what type of usage do we need to change: indoor, outdoor, seasonal, year-round? Also, he asked if climate change is being factored into our water usage planning.

Kevin stated that his presentation will describe the operation of the Town's water and waste water plants. Kevin made the following points:

**Potable Water**

- The Town has three water treatment plants, 2 water tanks and underground piping that make up the distribution system
- The three treatment plants have a combined capacity to treat up to 5 million gallons/day
- Consumption is trending downward – the trend is attributed to the green building code and efficient plumbing codes and fixtures
- The plants produce 300 million – 350 million gallons per year

### Waste Water

- The waste water plant doesn't have a way of returning water to the system from which it was removed – however, the water that was removed from the system is treated and reintroduced to the river to be used downstream
- In winter approximately 80% of the water produced is returned to river; in summer 48% of the water is returned to the river

### Ditches

- Ditches allow the Town to operate a smaller potable water system
- Ditch flows are adjusted downward as the Crystal River recedes during the summer and fall

### Water Rights

Attorneys Mark Hamilton and Susan Ryan explained the town's water rights. Water rights are a priority-based system – wells and aquifers are generally part of the priority system.

Discussion ensued.

Mayor Bohmfalk stated that in Figure 2 in the packet it shows that the production of 2.55 cfs of water doesn't cover the demand in a drought year. He asked if the Town has enough water for growth projections? Kevin answered that the total physical supply doesn't reflect the Town's water rights portfolio. The Town has an additional 2.97 cfs under the Carbondale Ditch that can be diverted through the municipal water system.

Trustee Kitching noted that lately the peak run off is occurring in May rather than in June and is attributed to climate variations. The consequence is a shortened recreational season.

Trustee Kitching gave an overview of her water memo which is included in the packet. She explained that at last year's water work session the Board asked for research on what other towns are doing to reduce water consumption. Cortez was identified based on their climate resilience work. Trustee Kitching included a chart in the packet that compares the characteristics of Carbondale versus Cortez. She also looked at water usage in the Roaring Fork Valley communities. In comparison to Basalt and Glenwood, the Town is doing a good job with its water usage. Trustee Kitching stated that Carbondale residents have done a commendable job of cutting back on water usage.

Trustee Kitching reviewed the goals to help make the community water resilient:

1. The BOT should fully understand regional climate implications and legal associations to guide local responsible and actionable water use initiatives
2. Reach agreement between the BOT and staff that Carbondale's water supply and management thereof are to be characterized as a healthy ecosystem
3. Prepare an informational leaflet for the community on ways to remember using household graywater for small scale irrigation of flower beds, vegetable gardens

4. Draft guidelines to substitute cool-weather turf
5. Determine if adopting a water usage-oriented rate structure would improve conservation

April Long, Executive Director of the Ruedi Water and Power Authority, commended Carbondale for talking about water and thinking about if we have enough water to grow. Yes, with growth there is a trade-off – do we want to take more water out of the river? She asked is there a way to return water that isn't then used downstream? She questioned if the Town has considered a non-diversion agreement or Colorado Water Trust Agreement? Mark answered no because there has to be a decrease in water usage.

A citizen asked the town to consider a turf buy-back program where you pay residents to decrease the turf on their property.

Trustee Sparhawk asked if the lease program is permanent? Mark answered that there are a variety of mechanisms – there are short-term leases.

Mayor Bohmfalk stated that the goal of tonight's discussion was to identify how stable and secure our water rights are considering growth and if we should reduce demand. It sounds like we don't need to reduce demand but we probably should because it's the right thing to do.

#### Next Steps:

- Ask staff to bring us efficiency measures in the future
- Consider how we can reduce our own water use and set an example for the town
- Look at the possibility of a turf buy-back program rather than drilling a new well
- Future analysis to increase ditch access
- Look at efficiency measures rather than increase supply

Trustee Hassig asked if there is a hierarchy of water rights for beneficial uses (i.e. food production) Mark answered no. He asked if the Town has a program to protect our water quality? Mark answered that the Town can establish water protection within five miles of the town. Mark O'Meara told the Board that the town has a rigorous water testing program and spikes would show up

The Board asked if we have a ditch inventory? Mark answered yes, but it's not 100% correct.

Trustee Hassig stated he is interested in seeing an update on Figure 2 – moving ditch water to the potable water system. He would like to see the town use water more effectively. He suggested planting more trees to cool the urban landscape and consider a turf buy-back program.

## **HOUSING MEMO/LODGING TAX**

Trustee Laird explained that his housing memo outlines the steps and conceptual items to create an affordable/community housing plan for the town. The plan is broken out into short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals. The Regional Housing Study identified a gap in the lower AMI. Most of the housing that has recently been built is geared toward people who make a lot of money. The housing market is not meeting our needs. Currently there are only six units for sale under \$1 million. The cheapest unit is \$565,000 and you would need to make \$180,000 to afford it. The median income for Garfield County is \$85,000 which would enable a person making that amount of money to afford a \$255,000 residence.

Trustee Laird suggested creating a small committee to help with affordable housing – he sees them becoming potential advocates.

Trustee Laird gave an overview of the goals for years 1-3:

- Develop a conceptual design and financing plan for the Town Center site
- Explore creating a funding question for the November ballot dedicating the revenue to Town Center housing and affordable housing in general
- Explore development neutral programs to support the creation of affordable housing and help community members access affordable housing
- Examine policies to support affordable housing by the private market in addition to inclusionary zoning
- Explore funding possibilities to help area trailer park residents to buy their parks and make them permanently affordable
- Work with regional housing group on regional funding and financing sources for affordable housing

### Longer Term Goal:

- Talk to elected officials regarding supporting legislation to enable a Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) on the sale of a piece of land or home

Discussion ensued.

Trustee Kitching informed the Board that in 2010 an affordable housing committee was formed and they made recommendations to the Trustees in 2016. She commented that we already have staff, the Garfield County Housing Coalition and Regional Housing Authority. What else happens at the town level? Trustee Laird stated that it's harder for locals to participate on the Authority or Coalition. Having people who live in our housing units would be helpful.

Trustee Sparhawk suggested consolidating information on finding rentals. She asked if we should require new businesses to own a housing unit? Should we relax boarding house regulations – it would be great for senior housing.

Trustee Silverstein stated that the Board should put a STR tax question on the November ballot.

Heather Henry suggested that the Board should figure out housing goals before going to the voters. She told the Trustees that the Regional Housing Coalition will be conducting interviews with its member municipalities to identify their top priorities. She likes the idea of helping trailer park resident purchase the parks they live in.

Trustee Kitching asked if the incentives for ADU's have been exhausted? We should evaluate the current ADU rules – 70% of town residents cannot have an ADU because they are in PUDs.

Mayor Bohmfalk asked do we want to establish a housing task force? We would need to give them a short time frame to establish goals, or the BOT could dedicate meeting time for housing discussions over the next six months.

Next Steps:

- Establish the role of a housing task force, staff and the BOT and put it in an action chart
- Schedule housing discussions once a month
- Confirm the STR tax percentage for the November ballot at the next meeting

**ADJOURNMENT**

The July 19, 2022, joint work session adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

APPROVED AND ACCEPTED

ATTEST

  
Cathy Derby, Town Clerk



  
Ben Bohmfalk, Mayor