

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE WATER FINANCE BOARD

Monday, November 27, 2017

1:00 p.m.

State of Utah Senate Building, Kletting Room, 350 N. State Street

Members Present:

Phil Dean, Chairman

David Damschen

Jon Bronson

Laura Briefer

Evan Curtis

Eric Millis

Juliette Tennert

Staff Present:

Miranda Jones, Finance Specialist

1. Call to Order

Chair Phil Dean called the meeting to order at about 1:10 pm.

a. Approval of minutes

Motion: Jon Bronson moved to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Committee Business

Chair Dean distributed data provided by Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) providing additional detail on water demand projections given to the board at a prior meeting.

Karry Rathje from WCWCD discussed Washington County's water conservation efforts.

2. Water Project Review Criteria and Outcomes

Jon Bronson, board member and representing Zions Public Finance (the State of Utah's municipal advisor under SEC regulations), presented on the steps, tasks, and expected outcomes of the pending financial review of large water development projects.

The board discussed subsidizing water projects, intergenerational effects, and the likely effect on households and Utah's economy as a whole.

Treasurer Damschen noted that 'leveraging state funds' could be misconstrued as maximizing the amount of state funds, as opposed to getting the greatest result from available state funds. The Treasurer wanted to ensure that the focus is on getting the greatest result from available state funds.

Laura Briefer mentioned federal WIFIA funding. The board shared the sentiment that they should study the issue further at a future meeting.

Marie Owens from the Division of Drinking Water mentioned the importance of understanding elasticity studies. The board supported studying this topic in further detail in the coming year.

3. Review of the Executive Water Finance Report to the Governor

The board discussed language regarding comparability of water prices, especially relative to affordability and nondiscretionary use. The board also discussed how Utah's prices compare to other states.

Todd Adams noted that when speaking of better water data, the report could further expound and refer to specific types of data (financial, supply, demand, etc.).

Jon Bronson noted that the section regarding population projections could note that there is broad-based acceptance of the population projections.

Jon Bronson and Todd Adams discussed water metering and metering infrastructure.

Treasurer Damschen noted that it might be worthwhile to include a specific recommendation about reducing the amount of state and local debt untaken by beginning now to set aside cash funding for projects by increasing water rates in municipalities that are seeking state-financed water.

Laura Briefer mentioned the backlog of projects needed to replace aging infrastructure, and that this expected need will already increase rates.

4. Other Items/ Adjourn

The board discussed holding the next meeting on January 19th, 2018 in Salt Lake City and discussed a March meeting in Washington County.

Evan Curtis moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.