

**CITIZENS' WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(CWAC)**

Wednesday, December 3, 2025, 8:00 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting – Microsoft Teams

**Legal Action Report and Meeting Minutes**

**1) Call to Order / Opening Statement:**

CWAC Chair Rory Juneman called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

**2) Roll Call:**

Those present and absent were:

**Present:**

Rory Juneman, Chair	Representative, City Manager
Hilari Varnadore	Representative, City Manager
Alan Forrest (Virtual)	Representative, City Manager
Steven Washburn	Representative, City Manager
Andrea Gerlak (Virtual)	Representative, City Manager
Claire Zucker	Representative, City Manager
Tom Prezelski	Representative, Ward 2
Lisa Shipek (Virtual)	Representative, Ward 3
Melissa Lal (Virtual)	Representative, Ward 4
Robert Jaramillo (Virtual)	Representative, Ward 5
William Ellett	Representative, Ward 6
John Kmiec	Ex-Officio (non-Voting) City of Tucson Water Department Director
James Doyle	Ex-Officio (Non-Voting) Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department

**Absent:**

Ed Hendel	Representative, Mayor
Raul Ramirez	Representative, Ward 1

- 3) Announcements**—Chair Juneman shared an amendment to quorum requirements. Previously, quorum was defined as one-half plus one of the total authorized membership. Under the revised requirement, quorum is defined as one-half plus one of the seats currently filled.

- 4) Review and approval of November 5, 2025, Legal Action Report and Meeting Minutes –**  
**Motion:** Member Washburn moved to approve the Legal Action Report & Meeting Minutes. Member Zucker duly seconded the motion. **Discussion:** Member Washburn requested a

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clarification for the record that the statement regarding preparedness referred specifically to Member Hendel, and not to the subcommittee or staff. The motion passed on a voice vote, 10 – 0.

- 5) **2026 Elections** – Chair Juneman initiated the discussion by stating that Member Washburn was nominated and accepted as Chair, and Member Ellet was nominated and accepted as Vice Chair, thereby establishing a slate of officers. He expressed his appreciation to the volunteers and then opened the floor for additional nominations. No further nominations were received. **Motion:** Member Jaramillio motioned to support Steven Washburn as Chair and William Ellet as Vice Chair for the 2026 calendar year. Member Gerlak seconded the motion. Discussion: none. The motion passed on a roll-call vote, 10 - 0.
- 6) **Adoption of the 2026 Meeting Schedule** - Chair Juneman initiated the discussion explaining the previous meeting times and dates along with staff proposal. **Motion:** Member Zucker to accept the proposed 2026 meeting dates and times to meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m. Member Ellet duly seconded the motion. **Discussion:** none. The motion passed on a voice vote, 10 - 0.
- 7) **Director's Report** - Tucson Water Director John Kmiec provided brief updates as follows:
  - a) Mayor and Council items
  - b) Potable and Reclaimed Water Demands
  - c) Large Quantity Water Users
- 8) **Colorado River Update** - Vineetha Kartha, Colorado River Program Manager, Central Arizona Project provided an update on current Colorado River system conditions, hydrology, and post-2026 policy considerations. As of end of Water Year 2025, total system storage was approximately 21.8 million acre-feet, representing about 37% of system capacity, a decline from the prior year. Snowpack conditions across the Upper Colorado River Basin above Lake Powell remain below average, with snow accumulation at 48% of the 30-year median as of December 1, 2025, raising concerns for future inflows.

Lake Powell and Lake Mead Conditions:

Lake Powell is projected to operate in the Mid-Elevation Release Tier for both WY 2026 and WY 2027, with anticipated annual releases of 7.48 MAF. Under the minimum probable hydrologic scenario, Powell elevations are projected to fall below 3,500 feet by August 2026, triggering Section 6(E) planning actions under the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). Reclamation has initiated planning and monthly coordination calls, though operational changes are not expected until early 2026 when forecasts become more reliable. Lake Mead is projected to remain in a Tier 1 shortage condition in 2026, with end-of-year elevations projected above 1,050 feet.

Drought Response and Operations:

The Drought Response Operations Agreement (DROA) was triggered under the July 2025 24-Month Study, and planning activities are ongoing. Reclamation has emphasized that all available tools will be considered before reducing releases from Lake Powell.

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#### Post-2026 Guidelines and Negotiations:

Mrs. Kartha outlined the federal timeline for developing Post-2026 Colorado River Operating Guidelines, including publication of a Draft EIS in Fall–Winter 2025, a Final EIS in Spring–Summer 2026, and a Record of Decision anticipated by Summer–Fall 2026.

Interstate negotiations are ongoing. The Lower Basin states have offered up to 1.25 MAF in reductions, while the Upper Basin has not proposed specific reductions, creating a key point of contention. Discussions with Mexico are still needed. Arizona continues to advocate for a collaborative, non-litigious path forward.

#### Potential Impacts to Arizona:

Preliminary analyses illustrate potential impacts of basin-wide reductions, including a scenario in which Arizona could face reductions of approximately 760 KAF, depending on priority assumptions and shortage-sharing frameworks. These figures are illustrative and subject to change based on ongoing negotiations and future hydrologic conditions.

Ms. Kartha concluded with a reminder that conditions remain fluid and that policy decisions made over the next year will have long-term implications for Arizona and the Colorado River Basin.

Committee members asked questions throughout the presentation. No action was taken on this item.

- 9) **Subcommittee Reports** – Chair Juneman introduced the item and explained the concerns regarding the Technical Planning & Policy (TPP) Subcommittee’s limited membership and its inability to consistently meet quorum. As a result, a proposal was presented to redistribute TPP responsibilities among the remaining subcommittees.

Ms. Rodriguez noted that there are no formal rules explicitly delineating subcommittee responsibilities. To facilitate discussion, she developed a preliminary list of TPP-related responsibilities and proposed how they might be appropriately distributed. Chair Juneman then opened the item for committee discussion.

Committee members reviewed the proposed list and discussed areas of overlap, identifying which responsibilities could be assigned to the Finance Subcommittee, the Conservation & Education (C&E) Subcommittee, or retained by the full committee. Member Zucker suggested further refinement of the distribution list, proposing that Items 1–2 be reviewed by the Finance Subcommittee, Items 3–4 be addressed by the full committee, Item 5 be considered by both as an overlap, and Items 6–15 remain within the C&E Subcommittee. The committee continued discussion regarding fiduciary responsibilities and the areas where responsibilities overlap across subcommittees. It was also noted that staff should have the opportunity to vet ideas prior to items being brought before the full committee.

**Motion** Member Shipek motioned to expand the responsibilities of C&E to include the responsibilities of TPP, rename the subcommittee Conservation and Policy subcommittee, and elimination TPP subcommittee. Member Washburn duly seconded the motion.

**Discussion:** Member Zucker requested a point of clarification of items 1 & 2 be moved into the Finance subcommittee prevue. Member Washburn requested to do a secondary motion to keep member Shipek’s motion clean. The motion passed on a voice vote, 9 - 0. **Motion:**

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Member Washburn motioned to move items 1-2 to Finance subcommittee. Member Forrest duly seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. Motion passed on a voice vote, 9 - 0.

- 10) **Member Recognition** - John Kmiec, Director, City of Tucson Water acknowledge Rory Juneman, a City Manager representative, CWAC Chair, and member from 2017- 2025 for his volunteer time and years of service to the committee and the Utility.
- 11) **Call to Audience** – None. Natalie DeRoock took an opportunity to introduce Tucson Water’s canned water initiative a sparkling water product. The canned water was introduced at the recent inauguration. Ms. DeRoock also shared information on flavors and can design before distributing to the members.
- 12) **Future Meeting / Agenda Items** – Chair Juneman opened the item up for members to share items of interest. Member Lal offered to provide feedback on her company’s recent experience on Turf removal. Member Shipek requested the One Water 2100 plan be reviewed and discussed.
- 13) **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 9:59 a.m.

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