

**CITIZENS' WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(CWAC) Conservation & Education Subcommittee**

Wednesday, June 1, 2026, 1:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

Legal Action Report and Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order / Opening Statement:

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Those present and absent were:

Present:

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|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Lisa Shipek (Chair) | Representative, Ward 3 |
| Raul Ramirez (Virtual) | Representative, Ward 1 |
| William Ellet (Virtual) | Representative, Ward 6 |
| Claire Zucker (Virtual) | Representative, City Manager |

Absent:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Andrea Gerlak (Virtual) | Representative, City Manager |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|

3. Announcements – None

4. Call to the Audience – None.

5. **Review and approval of April 22, 2026, Legal Action Report and Meeting Minutes -

Member Zucker moved to approve the Legal Action Report & Minutes. Member Ellet duly seconded the motion. The motion passed on a voice vote of 4 – 0.

6. CWAC FY24-25 Conservation Annual Report Memorandum— James MacAdam, Administrator, Tucson Water, Staff provided follow-up on how staff is responding to CWAC subcommittee recommendations that were transmitted with the annual report to Mayor and Council, covering Storm to Shade and the Conservation program

Storm to Shade – response to two recommendations

- Staff confirmed they already reference a pedestrian/bicyclist fatalities map when selecting GSI projects noted its limited decision value because most fatalities occur on arterials/major collectors, and Storm to Shade projects generally do not function as traffic calming/mitigation (though they may have marginal influence in some cases).
- Staff agreed and proposed a future agenda item (fall/winter) to share lessons learned on GSI care and irrigation during drought, including work underway

on a more sophisticated GIS-based irrigation management approach for irrigated assets (led by Storm to Shade staff). A suggestion was raised to also share these practices more broadly with maintenance contractors as a platform/forum.

Conservation – response to three recommendations

- Staff noted this is primarily a Mayor & Council budget decision, highlighted a prior ~\$750K/year bump and that staff are continuing/transitioning certain programs from grant-funded to ongoing. Staff also emphasized persistent unmet demand (examples mentioned: rainwater harvesting and low-income emergency repairs).
- Staff discussed current limits on implementing the drought response plan with existing resources—specifically that mandatory audits at scale may not be feasible even with significantly more funding. Staff indicated the drought plan will be revised in the fall and brought back to CWAC for discussion, with a commitment to be transparent about what measures are practical and high-value.
- Staff stated rigorous evaluation is ongoing and offered to return as a separate agenda item to outline program evaluation processes, including measurement of “wet water” impacts pre/post rebate or audit, and reference to prior stakeholder-informed technical work embedded in One Water 2100 (originating from conservation planning work and stakeholder sessions).

7. **Conservation Incentive Updates: Comm & MF Turf, MF Low-Income Retrofits, Res. Rainwater Harvesting & Res. High-Efficiency Toilets** - Valeria Galindo, Public Information Specialist, Tucson Water, and Irene Ogata, Project Manager, Tucson Water. Mrs. Galindo provided an update on the High-Efficiency Toilet Rebate program, noting the current structure (\$100/toilet, 2-toilet limit; eligibility tied to older homes and high-efficiency fixture requirements) and that participation is being constrained largely by customers purchasing non-qualifying fixtures—resulting in 450+ denials (about 90% non-qualifying)—plus barriers like an unfriendly/limited product list, higher plumbing labor costs, and limited retail availability; staff are responding with updated website lists, improved in-store signage, and more targeted outreach using audit data, while also evaluating near-term policy adjustments such as increasing the rebate, allowing re-application after 10 years, and reverting the list standard to WaterSense/1.1 gpf, and longer-term options like direct install or bulk pricing.

Mrs. Ogata provided a parallel update on the Residential Rainwater Harvesting (RWH) Rebates, highlighting the post-2023 process revamp and improved tracking, including 662 installations since 2023 (tank-only, basin-only, and combined systems) and quantified benefits (trees supported and gallons of basin/tank storage), but noted the program is operating within a \$300k annual rebate budget and has paused new pre-approvals as of March 15, 2026; staff are also assessing policy refinements (e.g., lowering per-property

maximums and sizing limits, requiring completion within a fiscal year) and leveraging grants/partners (TCB/WIFA through 2026; SERI collaboration).

8. **Zanjero Program** - Angel Vega, Water Services Supervisor, Tucson Water provided an overview of Tucson Water's Zanjero Program, including its origins and its current role as a customer-facing conservation and compliance resource. The presentation explained that the modern program was established in 1996 to respond to customer concerns about CAP and to provide free individualized water-use surveys, and that today the Zanjeros function as highly trained conservation specialists and "water ambassadors" who combine technical expertise with customer service to resolve high-use concerns. Staff described the core service—Water Efficiency Checkups (audits)—available to Tucson Water residential and commercial customers (generally one audit per year), typically lasting 1–2 hours, with free minor devices (showerheads, aerators, toilet flappers as needed) and a post-visit electronic report; audits were cited as saving residential customers about 2,000 gallons/month per audit, with each Zanjero completing roughly 9–12 audits/week. The team also uses meter data tools (40 days of hourly consumption data) to identify usage patterns, and reported audit volumes and common drivers of high use—especially irrigation system issues and toilet-related problems—along with education and recommended corrections. In addition to audits, Zanjeros support water waste code enforcement (registered with Tucson City Court and emphasizing education first), conduct rainwater harvesting rebate site inspections to verify installation and code compliance, and participate in public outreach events across the community.
9. **Future Agenda Items** - The subcommittee breaks in July and August and the Chair asked members to propose priority agenda items for when meetings resume. The Chair requested an item on Large Quantity Water Users before the September Mayor & Council meeting and asked staff to suggest additional future agenda topics; the Chair also requested a Colorado River item, which staff stated will be provided at the full committee level. Member Ramirez asked about flows at the Heritage Project, A-Mountain, and ADEQ wells; the request will be forwarded to the appropriate staff. Lastly, the committee agreed to reschedule the June 24 meeting, and a Doodle poll will be sent to identify a new date.
10. **Call to the Audience** – None.
11. **Adjournment** at 3:09 p.m.