Ruhenstroth Water Planning Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2008

Members of the Ruhenstroth Water Planning Steering Committee met at 5:00PM at the Ruhenstroth Volunteer Fire Department Training Room. Members present were Vice Chairman Rick Oliver, Secretary Stephanie Hicks, and members Mark Gonzales, and Tom Stanley. Chairman Jim Liles, Mike Morley, and Vicki and Rob Bates were absent.

No formal agenda was posted, however, the committee discussed the following items:

1) Board of Commissioner Agenda Items.
2) Smelter Creek Drainage area.
3) Mission Statement development.
4) Well site selection list – telephone call results.
5) On site percolation test.
6) Preparation for Public Meeting.

Item I.: Stephanie presented to the committee copies of the Douglas County Board of Commissioners agenda items for the Sawmill Development and also the contract with the USGS Water Resources Division to complete a ground water nitrogen budget for the Carson Valley. Mark will scan the USGS agenda item to place on website for information. The committee discussed the Sawmill Development agreement which states that the developer will be reimbursed for a portion of the construction costs. This may be where people are misunderstanding why the County is paying the developer.

Item 2: Rick provided the committee with a copy of a map of the Smelter Creek Drainage area. This map was created by the State GIS department using the USGS Quad map. The Smelter Creek Drainage area is almost 14 square miles. The committee discussed whether Smelter Creek drained into the Allerman Canal. Since Smelter Creek is not a perennial stream, there should not be any water rights there.

Mark provided to the committee an analysis that was done by the Gardnerville Town Water Company in 1989 regarding water rights availability by priority. The surface water rights from Ruhenstroth are from 1916 which holds the lowest priority. This means that these rights would only be allowed 54% of full supply.

Item 3: The committee agreed that they were satisfied with the last version of the Mission Statement as follows:

"Known as the Ruhenstroth Water Planning Steering Committee, we are...

An ad hoc group of proactive Ruhenstroth residents concerned about the current and future health and availability of the aquifers that supply water to the Ruhenstroth community.

Our first goal is to collect, monitor, and collate aquifer data, and to provide this information to Ruhenstroth residents and county officials.

Our second goal is to identify the various water resource conservation and development options available to ensure the long term viability of the Ruhenstroth residential community water supply."

Item 4: Mark reported that he was able to confirm with 7 out of 8 people on his list for static water measurement. Unfortunately the one person he was not able to confirm with has a USGS well site. Tom was able to confirm with 4 out of 8 people on his list. Vicky provided her list to Rick and a couple people declined. Jim still has his portion of the list. The committee discussed alternate well sites on the grid based on the negative responses.

Item 5: Mark advised the committee that he would discuss with the other Assistant Fire Chief and coordinate use of the fire equipment to perform percolation tests in the stream bed. The committee discussed the process of measuring out the area and soaking the area with water the night before. The next day more water would be added to test the percolation rate. We would need to pick a flat spot on the stream bed.

Item 6: Rick provided the committee with a list of items he thought we might want to discuss at the public meeting. The list is as follows:

1) Officers and Members Introductions
2) Mission Statement reading-need for donations
3) Website for process review-can we get internet access for the meeting?
4) Measurement Plans and purposes
    a) Determine actual static water level and trends
    b) Merge data with previous well records from USGS
    c) See impacts on localized lots
    d) Compare with well redrill rates from new well logs
    e) Make educated guesses about water levels and when you'll have to redrill
5) Strategic Planning for replacing groundwater supply
    a) Infiltration of surface water in natural drainage

b) Re-activation of Carson River Water Rights for recharge- Show CR maps slides, show photos of ditch, show AP maps showing ditch lines. Show page from CR Decree.
c) Flood Retention reservoirs on Smelter Creek to catch runoff
d) Water system hookup via the county or GTWC. Source? New or existing wells wholesaled to the county.
e) Sewer system installation??? Engineered septic systems.
f) Well drilling/building moratorium???
g) Determine trends to establish baseline water levels, then monitor annually.
h) Explore all avenues for water supplies-ground water recharge from surface water or ground water, water system hookups to centralized distribution system. Treatment requirements.

6) Water System eventually
    a) Design estimates cost $12.5M in today's dollars. Components : 1 MG storage tank added, one or tow new wells, distribution pipelines, individual lot hookups. Gravity flow from storage to meet fire low requirements. Mandatory hookup.
    b) Financing- very complicated, funding, grants, median income calculations determine minimum monthly rates, hook-up fees, meters, etc.
    c) Window of Opportunity for financing through state board for financing water projects. Likelihood of approval…low taxes and many requests.
    d) Risks of deepening, rehabilitating your well, then having to hook up to a county system…you lose…you pay your money and you take your chances.
    e) How far are we from build-out? Think it's looking bad now, where will we be in ten more years? 535 lots, now over 400 well logs.
    f) Protectable rights in domestic wells-interference liability.

The committee suggested that Jim open the meeting as the chairman and introduce the members, Mark will handle items 5a, 5b and 5e.

Mark invited Doug Johnson and Doug said he would come. Rick sent Gail Davis an email to put the date in the paper but he was afraid we missed the deadline. The committee discussed and approved changing the date of the public meeting from February 22 to February 29, 2008 at 7pm. Stephanie will prepare a sign in sheet and collect names, phone numbers and email addresses at a table as residents come in the door. Stephanie will also create and post a flyer at the mailbox. Tom will come early to help Mark set up. Tom also suggested that a measuring tape be brought to the meeting to demonstrate how the static water level will be measured. Rick indicated that he would bring a slide exhibit that illustrates the process.

The committee discussed whether we should ask for donations to assist with mailings and other expenses. The committee discussed whether or not this would require us to be set up as a non-profit and open a bank account. Since we do not know what would be required, we will not collect money at this time.

The committee agreed to meet again in advance of the public meeting on February 27, 2008 at 5:00 PM at the fire station to prepare for the public meeting. The night of the meeting, all committee members should arrive by 6:00 pm. The public meeting will be held on Friday, February 29, 2008 at 7:00 PM.

Next meeting date will be Wednesday, February 27, 2008 at 5:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.