



*Public Notice Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02*

## **ARIZONA MUNICIPAL WATER USERS ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT BOARD**

### **MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA**

***Wednesday, August 13, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.***

**This meeting will be held as a Hybrid meeting.  
Attendance in person is welcomed; Others may join via Zoom.**

**Access this [Link](#) to join via Zoom. Meeting ID 815 3667 5632**  
(Option to join by phone: 602-753-0140, same Meeting ID as above)

- A. Call to Order**
- B. General Business—Items for Discussion and Possible Action**
  - 1. Approval of the Minutes for the June 11, 2025 Meeting
  - 2. Next Meeting Date: September 10, 2025 @ 10:00 a.m.
  - 3. Post-2026 Colorado River Operations
- C. Member Reports**
- D. Executive Director's Report**
- E. Future Agenda Items**
- F. Adjournment**

\*The order of the agenda may be altered or changed by the AMWUA Management Board. Members of the AMWUA Management Board may attend in person or by internet conferencing.

More information about AMWUA public meetings is available online at [www.amwua.org/what-we-do/public-meetings](http://www.amwua.org/what-we-do/public-meetings), or by request.

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## **Arizona Municipal Water Users Association**

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**MANAGEMENT BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
June 11, 2025  
HYBRID MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Kirk Beaty, Avondale, Chair  
Melinda Whittington for David Burks, Peoria, Vice Chair  
Jeremy Abbott for John Knudson, Chandler  
Jessica Marlow, Gilbert  
Ron Serio, Glendale  
Barbara Chappell, Goodyear  
Nicole Petker for Chris Hassert, Mesa  
Troy Hayes, Phoenix  
Gretchen Baumgardner, Scottsdale  
Tina Sleeper for Tara Ford, Tempe

**AMWUA STAFF PRESENT**

Barry Aarons, AMWUA	Tyenesha Fields, AMWUA	Warren Tenney, AMWUA
Michelle Barclay, AMWUA	Caitlyn Hall, AMWUA	Sheri Trapp, AMWUA
Paul Bergelin, AMWUA		

**A. Call to Order**

Kirk Beaty called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**B. General Business – Items for Discussion and Possible Action**

1. Approval of the Minutes from the April 9, 2025, Meeting

Upon a motion made by Troy Hayes, and a second made by Jessica Marlow, the AMWUA Management Board unanimously approved the May 14, 2025 meeting minutes.

2. Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, August 13th, at 10:00 a.m.

3. Ag-to-Urban Concept

Warren Tenney, Executive Director of AMWUA, provided a verbal update on the ongoing “Ag to Urban” discussions. The Governor’s Office proposal included a 1.5 acre-feet per acre conversion rate. AMWUA has stated it cannot accept anything above that

**Arizona Municipal Water Users Association**

rate. Other parts of the proposal, such as well modeling requirements, limited portability, and land eligibility based on irrigation history, appear to have support. Concerns remain over the potential impact on the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRD), with CAWCD refining its requests to protect CAGRD's water portfolio. AMWUA has also raised concerns about how CAGRD could be impacted by Ag-to-Urban but want to be sure that any solution for CAGRD is well thought through and does not unintentionally negatively impact CAGRD's responsibilities to its M&I customers. Along with concerns about CAGRD, AMWUA also continues to push for a guardrail or incentive to ensure a water provider does obtain a designation. We put forward an idea of a guardrail, but it was not included. ADWR Director sent an email voicing his support for the Ag-to-Urban proposal.

Jeremy Abbot asked when the final legislative language might be available, given the session could end by next week. Mr. Tenney responded that he did not know. The proposed session deadline is largely self-imposed due to upcoming legislators' absences. He assured that he would forward legislative language that he receives.

#### 4. [2025 Legislative Session](#)

Paul Bergelin, AMWUA's Water Policy Advisor, provided a comprehensive legislative update, noting the session has extended to 150 days. While there is alignment between the Senate and Governor's office for a budget, the House has introduced its own protest budget. Mr. Bergelin emphasized that although AMWUA faced challenges pushing forward supportive legislation, a number of harmful water bills were stopped. This session saw a record 130 water-related bills, many attempting to override the Phoenix AMA groundwater model and undermine assured water supply rules. AMWUA opposed several problematic bills related to commingling, stormwater recharge, recovery, and arrangements with irrigation districts.

A few bills would have impacted municipal providers' rates and operations, but they did not pass out of the Legislature. Lawmakers considered a couple of bills that established additional conservation measures with one that was amended with AMWUA's support. Mr. Bergelin stressed concerns over continued fund sweeps from the Long-Term Water Augmentation Fund for the budget, which originally held \$1 billion but could drop below \$400 million. He concluded that while this session saw success in defense, future progress will require better cooperation between lawmakers and the water community, particularly to ensure aquifer sustainability and to secure new supplies post-2026.

Barry Aarons noted that while long-term water funding, such as preserving the WIFA fund, is important, legislators' focus remains on passing the current budget. The WIFA fund, initially established with \$1 billion for specific projects, has gradually been depleted and is now treated as a rainy-day fund.

Mr. Aarons noted increased legislative interest in long-term water issues. He also mentioned there will be growing discussions around the Colorado River. Regarding the state budget, Mr. Aarons anticipated negotiations would extend to the June 30 deadline.

Mr. Aarons noted successful engagement with legislators during the session, citing a notable negotiation to exclude Maricopa County from a bill intended for Pinal County, reflecting effective advocacy efforts. He praised legislators such as Representative Tim Dunn for their openness and collaborative approach to water issues and encouraged continued focus on building consensus to address challenges constructively.

5. Agreement with the University of Arizona for the Smartscape Program

Mr. Tenney explained the annual funding agreement for the Smartscape program, a training initiative for landscape and irrigation professionals focused on sustainable, desert-adapted landscaping and irrigation practices. AMWUA has longstanding support for the program, highlighting its role in helping members improve water use efficiency through their conservation efforts. Tenney requested continued support for the agreement for another year, noting that the program is partially funded through Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) funding sources.

Upon a motion made by Nicole Petker and a second by Gretchen Baumgardner, the AMWUA Management Board unanimously recommended that the AMWUA Board approve the agreement.

6. Fiscal Year 2026 AMWUA Budget

Mr. Tenney noted there had been no suggested changes for the Fiscal Year 2026 AMWUA budget from the Management Board or Board of Directors. The proposed budget totals \$1,869,430, reflecting a 9.9% increase from the current budget. To partially offset this increase to member assessments, the budget includes a projected \$100,000 carryover from the current year. The primary driver of the increase is the addition of a Government Relations Manager position, aimed at strengthening AMWUA's advocacy on water issues amid ongoing legislative concerns such as the ag-to-urban discussions. Other increases reflect normal operational cost rises, including lease and office expenses. Tenney emphasized AMWUA's commitment to fiscal responsibility given that the budget is funded by its members and welcomed any questions before seeking the board's recommendation in favor of the budget.

Upon a motion made by Barbara Chappell and a second by Ron Serio, the AMWUA Management Board unanimously recommended that the AMWUA Board of Directors approve the budget, as presented.

## 7. Media Partnership Opportunity

Sheri Trapp, AMWUA's Communications Director, presented a media partnership opportunity with KTAR for their upcoming Water Watch series, a year-long program focused on educating the community about water issues. This exclusive sponsorship would provide AMWUA with exposure through weekly segments, dedicated web content, and ongoing promotion both on-air and online. This is an opportunity to expand AMWUA's outreach to better convey the municipal water perspective, especially as water issues gain more prominence. The partnership, offered at \$85,000, is seen as a cost-effective way to enhance AMWUA's communication efforts. Ms. Trapp highlighted the opportunity to position AMWUA as water experts, advocate for policy, and educate the public on complex water management topics.

Mr. Tenney added that the \$85,000 cost for the media partnership was reasonable compared to other media costs. Rather than altering the current budget, he recommended funding the partnership through the reserve fund, which has sufficient balance to cover this one-time expense. He proposed using up to \$85,000 from the reserve fund to finance the initiative and emphasized that the effectiveness of the partnership could be evaluated over the coming months to determine if future budget inclusion or similar opportunities are warranted.

Ms. Petker asked if there were any preliminary audience exposure numbers or analytics provided for the media partnership. Ms. Trapp responded that they had received audience analytics, showing a diverse and substantial audience both on-air and online.

Ms. Baumgardner expressed her support for the initiative and agreed that using the reserve fund made sense. She inquired about plans to replenish the reserve fund. Mr. Tenney explained that Board policy requires replenishment of the reserve fund when it drops to \$50,000, which is the reserve fund is far from. Interest earned on accounts and any budget carryover surplus are typically added to the reserve fund, ensuring a natural increase over time.

Mr. Serio and Mr. Beaty raised several questions, including about how potential issues with AMWUA's nonprofit status in relation to sponsoring KTAR's Water Watch. These concerns were acknowledged but not seen as problematic.

Ms. Trapp emphasized that AMWUA typically collaborates closely with member cities to ensure consistent and accurate messaging, citing successful past campaigns. While it's not possible to get weekly input from all 10 cities, their proven communication process remains effective.

Mr. Tenney explained that for the 52-week media partnership with KTAR, AMWUA will be sponsor, but KTAR retains editorial control. However, AMWUA will be able to contribute ideas, write supportive blog posts, and produce eight original articles independently.

Upon a motion made by Jeremy Abbott and a second by Ms. Petker, the AMWUA Management Board unanimously approved recommending to the AMWUA Board of Directors the use of up to \$85,000 from the reserve fund for AMWUA to sponsor KTAR's Water Watch series.

### **C. Member Reports**

Ms. Chappell announced that Goodyear successfully finalized and adopted a new water allocation policy, establishing a water budget for all undeveloped parcels. This means any new development proposal must fit within the assigned water budget, helping staff evaluate project feasibility early in the process and avoid delays later. Troy Hayes inquired about transferring water budgets, to which Ms. Chappell clarified that budgets cannot be moved between parcels, and rezoning land does not increase its water allocation. Jessica Marlow asked if developers could bring in their own water. Ms. Chappell confirmed there is a mechanism for that and noted that in some cases, if a project has strong merit and the city has extra water available, the budget may be increased through Council action—though that may reduce available water elsewhere. She also suggested developers might consider other parcels with larger budgets if their initial site is not suitable. Additionally, Ms. Chappell shared that a new GIS tool has been developed and is currently in testing. This tool allows staff to select a parcel during pre-application and immediately view its water budget, providing guidance and enabling side-by-side comparisons for multiple properties.

Mr. Beaty shared that Avondale's water resource ordinance is scheduled to go before its Council on July 7. He also highlighted that Avondale's water rate will increase by 6.7% next year. In addition, the city implemented two new specialty fees: a treatment fee to help address significant PFAS treatment costs, and a water resource fee to support the development of new water resources, such as the Bartlett Dam project. He noted these fees are specifically targeted and not just general operational increases.

Jessica Marlow shared that Gilbert is exploring a concept to help support septic-to-sewer conversions. Initially, the idea was explored as an outside-the-town-boundary fee, but they realized there are also a few in-town residents still on septic systems. The goal is to find a fair way to capture and support those conversions. While it's uncertain whether the proposal will move forward, it reflects their broader consideration of non-operational funding mechanisms, and the increasing value placed on reclaimed water.

### **D. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Tenney reported a below-average winter for the Salt and Verde watersheds, with SRP reservoirs at 65% capacity. For the Colorado River, Lake Mead and Lake Powell are at 31% and 33%, respectively. Overall system storage has dropped by over one million acre-feet compared to the previous year. There is no progress with Basin States negotiations, but the Administration appears to be more engaged.

Mr. Tenney introduced Caitlyn Hall as AMWUA's new Water Conservation and Demand Management Coordinator. Dr. Hall introduced herself and expressed enthusiasm for joining AMWUA. She is eager to learn more about the specific challenges and priorities in central Arizona.

**F. Adjournment**

Mr. Beaty adjourned the meeting at 11:27 am.

## **AMWUA MANAGEMENT BOARD**

### **INFORMATION SUMMARY**

**August 13, 2025**

## **Post-2026 Colorado River Operations**

### **ANNUAL PLAN REFERENCE**

#### **Colorado River Transition**

Assist, monitor, and coordinate the impacts of reduced Colorado River water to ensure our members' interests are forefront.

*Strategic Plan: Facilitate our Strength in Numbers, Collaborate and Advocate for Solutions, Safeguard Water Supplies, Prepare for Impacts of Drought & Shortage, Minimize Financial Impact*

### **SUMMARY**

The Colorado River is under increasing attention as the current 2007 interim guidelines for the Colorado River are set to expire at the end of next year and there remains no certainty how the river will be managed beginning in 2027. The seven Basin States continue to meet but there is no indication of consensus between the Upper and Lower Basins. Reclamation is evaluating a new concept for managing the river based on the natural flow that is produced. Plus, this year's projected unregulated runoff inflow into Lake Powell is 52% despite the snowpack in the upper Colorado River Basin being only slightly below average this winter. This makes for one of the five driest years in the last 50 to 60 years.

AMWUA staff will provide an update about the Colorado River negotiations and hydrology along with the potential implications for Arizona.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The AMWUA Management Board is requested to ask questions and discuss the Colorado River situation.