



Minutes
Strategic Planning Committee
Aug. 15, 2023

Committee members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online: Committee Chair Brian Risley, Mike O'Malley, Michelle Talarico and David Leinweber

Utilities Board members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online: Lynette Crow-Iverson and Nancy Henjum

Staff members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online: Alex Baird, Marcela Espinoza, Natalie Watts, Lisa Barbato, Mike Francolino, Abby Ortega, Justin Fecteau, Renee Adams, Tristan Gearhart, Joseph Rasmussen, and Dave Padgett

City of Colorado Springs staff members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online: Renee Congdon

Call to Order

Committee Chair Risley called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

Review Minutes

The minutes from the July 18, 2023 Strategic Planning Committee meeting were reviewed and accepted for posting.

Compliance Reports

- I-14 Enterprise Innovation (annual)

Ms. Abby Ortega, General Manager-Resource Infrastructure Planning, reviewed the (I-14). She shared details from the report and shared updates on projects the organization has been working on during the reporting period to foster an environment that promotes innovation.

Purpose of Strategic Planning Committee

Committee members discussed the purpose of the Strategic Planning Committee. Committee Chair Brian Risley read off a statement by Committee Member Mike O'Malley:

"The framework of the Integrated Resource Plans is sound. Any factor that changes the calculus for our strategic plans should trigger a reevaluation (i.e., price of natural gas, supply chain, bond rates).

The strategic planning committee should have a calendar laid out two years in advance with reoccurring events. The strategic planning calendar needs to reflect the legislative calendar and drive the financial planning calendars.

Unfunded legislative mandates will impact our strategic plan and the ratepayers need to know exactly who (by name and Congressional District) is responsible and the specific costs that will be incurred as a result.

There is a need for an Integrated Resource Plan for our fiber optic. The system needs to be treated like our fifth utility.

Aligning cost recovery across all four services is a deception leading to loss of trust. Each system needs to be fiscally independent. Wastewater has now become the limiting factor of our utility and alternative courses of action need to be planned to provide expansion to the east of our current infrastructure.”

Chair Risley expressed that we need to be focused policy and the future.

The Committee Members discussed the direction of the committee and agreed that they would like the committee to be a blend of long-range planning and report outs from staff. Additionally, they would like the Strategic Planning Committee to talk about what is coming and not focus as much on current policy review. Committee Chair Risley asked for staff to provide a matrix of top concerns for each of the four services and support services. Staff said they would have a draft matrix prepared by the September Strategic Planning Committee meeting.

Water Ordinance Discussion

Chair Risley proposed changes to modify and streamline the Water Ordinance process. Ms. Renee Congdon, Utilities Chief of the City Attorney’s Office, advised changes made to Chapter 12 will also need to cascade to Chapter 7 and other chapters as well. Ms. Ortega said that Springs Utilities will work with the City to make necessary changes.

Proposed Changes to City Code section 7.5.701 (Annexation of Land)

Ms. Congdon advised changes made to Chapter 7 will cascade to different chapters. She recommended that when making changes we are looking at it from a utilities perspective, making the codes consistent with practice.

Indirect Potable Reuse Plan

Ms. Kim Gortz, Water Resources Manager, provided an update on increasing indirect potable reuse through the Water Integrated Resource Plan. Ms. Gortz reviewed the Utilities Regional Water strategies through infrastructure, reuse, and new water supplies. She explained that some of the benefits for Spring Utilities include: leveraging existing infrastructure, being a leader in identifying regional solutions, and providing additional tools to deliver reusable water supplies.

Ms. Gortz stated the next steps are to continue discussions with regional entities and identify grants to help fund the projects.

Board Member Nancy Henjum expressed her gratitude for the Water Resources team.

Plan for future meeting: Thursday, Sep. 21, 2023

Committee Member Risley proposed discussing mitigation of natural gas prices and exposure/attainability at the next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.