

SONOITA CREEK FLOOD and FLOW STUDY COMMITTEE

MISSION: The watershed is a vital component of this community's well-being. The Sonoita Creek Flood and Flow Study Committee will (i) make recommendations to the Patagonia Town Council with respect to best practices within its jurisdiction to manage erosion, to enhance water flow, to create optimal flood mitigation and to promote the long-term health of the riparian corridor, (ii) look at the entire watershed area to influence upstream conditions and to optimize downstream consequences, and (iii) educate the public.

MINUTES for August 10, 2017 Meeting

(NOTE: this meeting's recording is available at Town administrative office)

ATTENDEES: Carolyn Shafer, Anne Townsend, and Dave Ellis. Guests: Bill O'Brien (NextGen Engineering), Georgette Larrouy, Barbara Ellis, Tomas Jonsson, Brad Sander, Susan Belt

1. Dave Ellis moves and Anne Townsend seconds approval of minutes of July 13 regular meeting and July 31 special meeting; adopted unanimously.
2. Dave Ellis reported on various potential sources of funding for the next phase of the water retention basin project. Dave reported a productive initial conversation with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) re Next Gen's option (in Phase One of Water Management Plan). TNC is interested in discussion about this option but that before a decision can be made by TNC on where the option is viable from TNC's standpoint, there needs to be a great deal of additional information. Dave said the next steps are: 1) collect more expertly collected information for TNC; 2) then TNC can decide whether to allow this option to go forward.

Darrick from NextGen presented funding suggestions for pursuing the options of our WMP: AZ Water Protection Fund; Water Quality Improvement grants; National Grant (??) and Natural Resources and Conservation District. Ranchers supported other similar projects such as for the San Pedro and at Horseshoe Basin in Cochise County. Palominos High School has a retention basin. Darrick emphasized that such a basin could improve water quality due to catching some of the sediments. January is the start of FEMA FMA and PDM grants; this is also Arizona's time frame for its grants. Dave and NextGen will pursue potential funding. Anne Townsend volunteered to help write up proposals. Darrick pointed out that we should talk to ADOT re bridge-repair funding, including the possibility of building a single-span bridge (which was John Hayes' recommendation). NextGen will work up some numbers for us for its various proposed stages. It was noted that AZ Mining agreed to help fund hydrology studies. Anne will ask FOSC for its list of well-monitoring volunteers and will send it to Dave and NextGen so Dave can email them along with the survey participants to ask if there might be a better time for F&F to meet (so we could get greater participation on the Committee).

3. There followed a discussion of Next Gen's July 31, 2017 recommendations.

4. Carolyn advised the committee on the developing story about arsenic and lead in excessive quantities being discovered on town property near the old smelter location.

5. The next F&F Committee Meeting is scheduled for September 14 at 10 a.m.