

## **Sustainable Gallup Board Meeting Agenda Monday, July 11, 2022, 3:30-5 PM**

**NOTE: We are being hosted on Gallup Solar's Conference Call**

**Dial-in number (US): (551) 241-6424**

**Online meeting ID: gallupsolar**

**Or click to join the online meeting: <https://join.freeconferencecall.com/gallupsolar>**

*"The role of the SGB shall be that of advising the city council on policy matters relative to energy, water and recycling issues..."*

### **Agenda:**

- 1) Reading of SGB role & board member quorum confirmation (Tracy)
- 2) Moment of silence & introduction of city staff, & guests (Bill)
- 3) Agenda approval (Bill) (ACTION ITEM) Roll call
- 4) Previous Minutes approval (Tracy, Eliz) (ACTION ITEM) Roll call
- 5) Brief history of SGB with city councilor, staff or added citizens (if present) (Bill)
- 6) Consultation with new Water & Sanitation director (Tim Bodell)
- 7) Recommendation the city official: progressive water Rates (Bill) (See attached draft)

See low-income credit model: [https://www.santafenm.gov/low\\_income\\_credit](https://www.santafenm.gov/low_income_credit)

See NM Goals: <https://ladailypost.com/gov-michelle-lujan-grisham-announces-release-of-annual-climate-strategy-report-for-state-of-new-mexico/>

See Gallup existing rates: <https://www.gallupnm.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4506/Utility-Rate-Schedule-FY-22>

See Flagstaff example: <https://www.flagstaff.az.gov/3596/Water-Stormwater-Wastewater-Rates>

See current water saver policies: <https://www.gallupnm.gov/325/Rebate-Forms>

8) Community Pantry social programs (Rachel Kuiper)

9) Recycling update (Gerald)

Announcements, future meetings, planning & adjournment.

## Sustainable Gallup Board – Report to City Council DRAFT

Subject: Water rates

The Sustainable Gallup Board supports raising the city's water rates.

Water use in the City of Gallup is regulated through its City Code and is guided by a planning document, ***Assuring Gallup's Water Future***, (Gallup Water Board, 2012) which outlines recommendations to protect/repair/upgrade/replace infrastructure, water source protection, watershed restoration, storm and gray water harvesting, and reuse.

With today's severe drought conditions, it is more imperative than ever that decisions managing water supplies and infrastructure be based on the planning document, ***Assuring Gallup's Water Future***, and take into consideration factual realities the state is facing from diminishing water resources, intensifying drought, and heightened need for conservation efforts, even after the Navajo-Gallup pipeline is completed. This is a sustainability issue for our city.

New Mexico is currently producing a 50-Year Water Plan for the state, based on stewardship, equity and sustainability. It is critical that the state starts charting a course that will allow for more flexibility in managing water supplies and infrastructure in the face of extremes expected from the climate crisis. New Mexico has 16 water planning regions, each with its own water plan. Gallup, in McKinley County is part of Region 6, Northwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan.

Increasing the water rates to support infrastructure repair and upgrade makes sense at this time because leakage is causing the loss of an unquantified amount of water. Postponing these expenditures will greatly increase the cost later.

The Sustainable Gallup Board strongly recommends that a rate increase be tied to a conservation program with public education on water saving steps such as low flush toilets and shower heads, programs that are available to assist with the costs of these actions, and how to access these programs.

Further the Board believes that higher users should pay more and that rates should be progressive with the cost increasing as a home or business uses more water.

The Board is very concerned about the large amount of water that two Glove Factories will use at a time when the area is in a long-term drought. The added water share to Gallup from San Juan pipeline is not certain and the new wells may not keep up with increasing demand. At the least, these factories and any others, should pay the main share of the needed infrastructure costs that will be incurred and be required, in writing, to include all the latest water reuse and conservation mechanisms.

The plan should include assistance for those users on limited incomes. Lower rates and home assessment to determine if/where leakage or excess use is occurring are examples of opportunities for assistance. For proof of need for lower rates, low-income families could simply require the filing of proof of their enrollment in the NM LIHEAP, for example.

We have included a copy of *Assuring Gallup's Water Future*. Since this document is 10 years old and conditions have changed, we recommend that the city undertake updating this plan. Doing so would fit in with the state's efforts to address the critical problems of diminishing water resources and an intensifying drought and show that the city of Gallup is on board.

The Sustainable Gallup Board appreciates the city council's work and deliberation on this issue. We ask that you take these comments and suggestions into account.