

**OFFICE OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
YAVAPAI COUNTY, ARIZONA**

Prescott, Arizona**November 5, 1998**

The Board of Supervisors met in special session on November 5, 1998, at the Jerome Grand Hotel, 200 Hill Street, Jerome, Arizona.

Present: Bill Feldmeier, Chairman; Chip Davis, Vice Chairman; Gheral Brownlow, Member.

Absent: Bev Staddon, Clerk, due to medical leave.

Also present: Jim Holst, County Administrator; Brenda Peterson, Administrative Aide.

The following persons were also present at the meeting: Dan Main, Chino Valley Town Council; John Olsen, Prescott resident representing the Groundwater Users Advisory Committee; Kate Nelson, Chino Valley Mayor; Phil Foster, Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR); Jim Holway, ADWR; Greg Wallace, ADWR; Al Bradshaw, Bradshaw Public Relations; Winn Hjalmarson, Camp Verde resident; Brenda Hauser, Camp Verde Council; Dick Ellis, Sedona resident; Harry Easton, Sedona resident; Mike Bluff, Clarkdale Council; Ken Bennett, District 1 Senator-elect; Mark Stevens, Prescott City Manager; Anita MacFarlane, Sedona City Council; Judith Keane, Sedona City Council; Tom O'Halleran, District 3 Supervisor's Assistant; Ken Rittmer, Prescott Valley Town Manager; Jay Fagelman, Prescott Valley Vice-Mayor; Marybeth Carlile, Big Park area resident; Tony Gioia, Camp Verde Council; Joan McClelland, Big Park area resident; Joanne Johnson, Big Park area resident; Tom Reilly, Prescott City Council; Doree Christensen, Jerome Vice Mayor; Rennie Radoccia, Clarkdale Mayor; Jay Kinsella, Jerome Mayor; Roberto Rabago, Jerome Town Council; Brad Huza, City of Prescott Environmental Services Director; Mike Baker, Cottonwood City Council; Ruben Jauregui, Cottonwood Mayor; Lucy Mason, Prescott City Council; and Joanna Dodder, the Daily Courier.

ITEM NO. 1. **Study session for discussion only regarding water issues, including discussion regarding the headwaters of the Verde River and the possible declaration of water mining in the Prescott Active Management area.** Chairman Feldmeier told those present that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss "where do we go from here" with regard to the water issue. There was general discussion regarding the impending decision on whether the Prescott AMA is mining groundwater, and on the need for all jurisdictions in the County to work together. Mr. Olsen said he had been dealing with water issues for many years and that it was his belief that this matter needed to be resolved outside of the courts. He said he had sent a letter to ADWR Director Rita Pearson outlining objections for further study of the water issue, that he believed there was adequate water for everyone currently and in the future, but that the groundwork needs to be laid for managing water resources. He said he believed Yavapai County could provide the leadership role in this regard. There was brief discussion regarding what additional studies might cost and how they might be funded. There was also discussion regarding the peer review of ADWR's model and of the Shamrock study, along with questions about the existence of alternate water supplies and what would be involved in utilizing them from both a legal and financial standpoint. Mr. Bennett said the water issue was one that could bring the entire region together, but that it also has the potential to pull everyone apart if steps are not taken to ensure that the jurisdictions continue working together. He said that whatever might be needed at the state legislature, whether it was additional for peer reviews or legislative changes, it would be much easier to accomplish if the entire community that is affected is working together instead of half of them sending letters and faxes saying one thing and the other half sending letters and faxes saying something else. Ms. Nelson spoke about lot splits and the fact that there are no controls over individual wells. Mr. Olsen said a central authority was needed to deal with these issues. He spoke briefly about the Verde Valley Watershed Association, saying it had been working together for a long time but was an ad hoc committee. He said the

Groundwater Users Association in the Prescott Active Management area realizes that the water issues go far beyond the boundaries of the AMA, and that it was necessary to look out for everyone's interests and that representation in resolving these issues would be needed from every jurisdiction in the County. There was discussion regarding which entity should be the lead entity in dealing with water issues. Ms. MacFarlane questioned whether the County was the right entity, saying she believed the Verde Valley Watershed Association would be seen as neutral and could be the lead entity. Supervisor Davis said he saw a need for two groups, one of elected officials and one of technical experts. He suggested an appointment of someone from each entity and said he believed there was help available from other agencies, such as the Bureau of Reclamation. He said the Verde Valley's interest was to protect the Verde River and that the PAMA's goal was to sustain safe yield and identify other sources of water. He said it would be necessary to identify how to obtain representation from every interested party and how to work together with technical resources. There was brief discussion about what help might be available from the Governor's office, during which several people said that concurrence by the Governor's office with local efforts would be critical to obtaining funding for additional studies. Mr. Rittmer said representatives of Prescott Valley had met with Governor Hull two weeks ago and that she was concerned that there is no confidence in whatever decision will be made by ADWR. Mr. Reilly said it was very important for everyone to look at the future. He said everyone knows they want to protect water resources and that they want local control, but that it is important to know what everyone wants the water for. He asked if Clarkdale wanted to have a population of 250,000 people. He asked if that was what Prescott wanted, saying he did not think it was. He said that these are issues which need to be addressed as a region and that there was an opportunity here to come together and address the issues that are important to everyone. Mr. Reilly said he was not promoting a no growth idea, but instead a planned growth idea and that the alternative was lot splits. He spoke of the parallels of the Growing Smarter Act and the water issue, saying it was an opportunity to deal with both at the same time. He said it would require a tremendous amount of work, but that it could be done. Chairman Feldmeier said there was an immediate concern about the impending declaration of water mining, and that the County has the least to gain and the most to lose because of the potential of parcel splitting. He noted that the County does not supply water to anyone, but said that parcel splitting will ruin the unincorporated areas and will have a negative impact on cities and towns. He said what he was hearing from local governments was that a delay in the declaration was needed. Chairman Feldmeier said there was nothing to lose by delaying the declaration because the rules were in place now. He said no one was asking for the ability to allow more development now, but that local governments were not convinced that water mining is taking place. Mr. Reilly said a reason for delaying the declaration would be to allow time to develop growth planning for the entire region. Supervisor Davis said he thought the declaration should be allowed to occur, and that this would provide the entities with an opportunity to resolve problems. Chairman Feldmeier said the problem was the permanency of a declaration. He said he was not willing to ask for a delay in the declaration without agreeing that the rules currently in place remain in place. He said he also wanted to feel comfortable that if a declaration occurred, it was done for the right reasons. Supervisor Brownlow said he also was in favor of delaying the declaration and keeping the current rules in place. He said he would guess that about 30% of all private land in Yavapai County is outside of the AMA, and that with a declaration of water mining, the growth will just move outside of the AMA. He said that no one could stop development, and that there were several large ranches outside of the AMA that would likely be sold off and developed. Mr. Main said that the ranches north of Chino Valley would develop and legally take all the water the Verde Valley is concerned about. Ms. Keane asked what harm would be done to the Verde Valley if a declaration was delayed for two years. She asked if anyone thought the water would run out in two years. Some others present said they saw no problem with delaying the declaration. Supervisor

Davis said it appeared that whether or not the declaration should be delayed was something that everyone could not agree on, and asked where to go from here. Chairman Feldmeier asked how the Verde Valley would feel about the jurisdictions in the AMA asking for a delay. He asked if Verde Valley jurisdictions were going to oppose it. Mr. Olsen said he believed that what needed to happen was a coming together that would be beneficial for everyone, and that he thought the issue at the moment was whether the County would take the lead role so that everyone can move on to other issues. Chairman Feldmeier said the County had made a commitment to bring this day's meeting together and would do so again. There was general agreement that another meeting should be held in two or three weeks. Mr. Foster suggested waiting for the next meeting until after the peer review is completed.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Clerk _____ Chairman