



## APPROVED MINUTES

### Fiscal Leadership on Water (FLOW) Committee

Thursday, January 8, 2026, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Broomfield Municipal Shops

3951 W 144th Ave. - Flume Conference Room

#### 1. Introductions and Roll Call:

Members Present: Jeff Fredericks, Gary Klaphake, Steve Pierotti, Sam Taylor, Kevin Wegener, Art Umble, and Chris Kyea were virtually present.

Absent: 0

Facilitator: Jane Clary - present

Staff Liaison: Ken Rutt, Director of Water Utilities Department

Staff in Attendance: Ken Rutt, Director of Water Utilities, Jeff Ruger, Deputy Director of Water Utilities, Mark Lorie, Deputy Director of Water Utilities, Branden Roe, Planning Manager, Shawn DeSotel, Distribution & Collections Superintendent, Nancy Andzulis, Senior Operations Manager, Monica Losey, Administrative Support IV

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Steve Pierotti, at 6:00 p.m.

#### 2. Public Comment: None, but there were Committee Member Comments:

- **Water Rate Discussion:** A request was made for a future meeting to dedicate time for a board discussion on observations and lessons learned from the past year, particularly concerning the impact of drought restrictions and wet summers on water consumption and revenue. The goal is to reflect on the balance needed to maintain sufficient revenues (e.g., through Tier 3 rate increases or reserve funds) during periods of use reduction.
- **Outreach:** A committee member mentioned receiving an article titled "Understanding Changes to Broomfield's Water and Sewer Rates for 2026," suggesting that such guide-with-bullet-points information would be useful for committee discussions and public outreach.

#### 3. Bylaws and Procedures Review

The committee reviewed proposed revisions to the bylaws and procedures.

Key Discussion Points and Decisions:

- **Purpose and Goals (Section 1):**
  - Staff clarified that the committee's purpose is: The goal and objective of the first 6 months was to provide the committee with in-depth training regarding enterprise funds, projects, planning related to each of the enterprise functions and operations, have established bylaws, and be provided detailed information regarding the five year capital infrastructure plan by the end of 2025. This background will assist in the committee's responsibility of reviewing financial information and proposed rates for the water, sewer, stormwater and reuse enterprise funds. This will ultimately lead to

the committee confirming or non-agreement with staff recommendation related to rate recommendation to Council for the 2027 budget.

- The committee agreed that the purpose should be made more generic and focused on the ongoing process of understanding and making recommendations on the city budget and financial aspects of the water/sewer enterprise funds.
- Recommendation vs. Review: The committee debated the word "recommendation." It was generally agreed that the committee's role is to review staff-formulated recommendations and provide feedback, suggestions, or a statement of support/non-support (a confirmation) to the City Council. The resolution establishing the committee, however, uses the terms "suggestions and recommendations."
- Adoption of Procedure Amendments, The committee voted to accept:
  - Section C1 - Majority amended from 3 to 4 members
  - Section D3: Attendance - Attendance and Removal: Each appointed member is expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings. Members who have missed an excessive number of regularly scheduled meetings or who have three or more consecutive unexcused absences may be removed from their appointment by act of the City Council. Unexcused absences are those absences that were not communicated to the board chair or to staff assigned to FLOW prior to a regularly scheduled meeting. Members may also be removed from office by the City Council under the provisions of section 11.2 of the Charter.
  - Remote Participation (E2): modified the number of remote meetings for Committee Members may participate remotely in no more than four meetings per year. This is an increase from 2 meetings.
- The committee tabled further wording revisions for Section M (which contained additional goal/work detail).

#### 4. [Water Supply Study Session Presentation](#) (Mark)

Mark presented a comprehensive overview of Broomfield's water supply, reliability, and planning efforts, scheduled to be presented to City Council on 1/20/26.

##### A. Water Supply Headlines

- Supply Sufficiency: Water rights and resources are sufficient to meet expected growth through 2050 under average conditions and droughts comparable to the 2002 event.
- Key Risks: Climate change and Colorado River Compact decisions are major uncertainties that could constrain resources.
- Future Requirements: Reliable future supply *assumes* two major developments:
  - Resolution of naturally occurring mineralized uranium issues at Chimney Hollow Reservoir within 5-8 years.
  - Development of Broomfield Reservoir to meet peak summer demands by approximately 2037.
- Severe Droughts: Droughts more severe than 2002 would almost certainly require a drought declaration and mandatory water use restrictions (Potentially up to Drought Stage III).

##### B. Potable Water System (Supply & Reliability)

- Sources: Primarily relies on Colorado-Big Thompson (CBT) water, Denver Water purchases, and Windy Gap Project water. Approximately 75% of Broomfield's water supply is from the Colorado River.

- Growth Projections: Projected water use for 118,000 people by 2050 is 17,263 acre-feet per year. Non-drought supply is projected to remain well above this demand (including a 10% buffer).
- Chimney Hollow Reservoir (Windy Gap Storage):
  - The dam construction is substantially complete.
  - Uranium was found in the rocks used to build the dam, which will dissolve into the water upon filling.
  - Staff is working with partners on mitigation options to keep the treated water uranium levels as close to zero (non-detectable) as possible.
- Drought Procedures:
  - The process is dependent on snowpack and the Northern Water CBT quota (issued in April).
  - Current Outlook (Early 2026): Snowpack is 40% below normal. If conditions persist, staff will recommend a Drought Watch (voluntary restrictions) to start in February.
  - If the CBT quota is less than 70% in April, staff will recommend a Drought Stage I, II or III declaration to City Council; this would involve mandatory water use restrictions.
- Climate Change and Colorado River Compact:
  - Historical supply patterns are unlikely to hold due to non-stationary climate patterns. The future is uncertain but most evidence points to longer, more frequent, and more severe droughts.
  - The 1922 Colorado River Compact divided the river basin into the Upper Basin (Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Wyoming) and the Lower Basin (Nevada, Arizona, California), allocating 7.5 million acre-feet annually to the Upper Basin and 8.5 million acre-feet to the Lower Basin.
  - The Colorado River is suffering from a prolonged drought and historic low levels in Lake Powell and Lake Mead (now ~30% capacity).
  - New operational rules are being negotiated between Upper and Lower Basin states. If negotiations fail, a "compact call" by the Lower Basin is likely. A compact would trigger complex litigation due to differing interpretations of the 1922 Compact. Outcomes of litigation could result in curtailment of Upper Basin use which would severely restrict Broomfield's water supply.

### C. Reuse Water System

- Source and Demand: The reuse system is separate and uses treated effluent, primarily from Windy Gap water, which is legally reusable. Current use is ~2,500 acre-feet/year, projected to reach ~3,311 acre-feet/year at near build-out.
- Great Western Reservoir (GWR):
  - The dam, built in 1904, is rated as "conditionally satisfactory" by the State Engineer's Office (SEO) due to issues with the 60-year-old toe drain and outlet pipe.
  - SEO requires that Broomfield address issues with the toe drain and outlet pipe in order to continue using the reservoir.
  - Alternatives (Conceptual Cost Estimates):
    - Repair (Partial Excavation): \$35.9 million
    - Rebuild (Complete Excavation): \$48 million
    - Breach/Decommission: \$14 million (plus cost to replace storage capacity).
  - Decisions will be supported by a new water resources system model and financial considerations. Recommendations are expected by the end of 2026.
- Heit Pit: A local gravel pit that could add about 1,000 acre-feet of capacity to the reuse system, offering a potential alternative to GWR.

- Becky Property: A 136-acre property in Weld County purchased in 2000 for its water rights (254 CBT units, currently valued at \$15 million). The property itself is no longer part of the long-term water supply plan and may be sold to Erie to secure funding for reuse system projects.

#### D. Planning Initiatives

- One Water Initiative: A process to better integrate and manage water supply, stormwater, wastewater, and reuse water.
- Water Efficiency Plan Update: Required by state law, the plan must be updated by April 2027 and will proceed with consultant help, potentially funded by a Colorado Water Plan Grant.
- Water Resources Master Plan: Building on the above, a comprehensive master plan is expected to be finished by the end of 2027 to guide long-term investment and construction decisions.

#### 5. Updating Water Use and Drought Restrictions Code

Staff is proposing changes to [code](#) regarding water use and drought restrictions (enforced starting this past summer) based on feedback and enforcement experience:

- New Turf Exception: Proposing to add an exception to allow new turf (sod) to be watered daily for 21 days during normal (non-drought) times, consistent with a current exception under Drought Condition I.
- Winter Irrigation: Adding an exception from December 1st to March 15th that removes day and time restrictions for turf irrigation, encouraging water use during the winter months when sewer charges are calculated.
- Large parcels: Adding an exception for large parcels to vary from the day and time restrictions if they provide documentation to the Water Utilities Department.

#### 6. Committee Feedback on Presentation

- Economics (Art): The presentation lacks an evaluation of the economic impact of mandatory restrictions (e.g., impact on local businesses, city revenue loss). Staff was advised to be prepared to address how the new rate structure mitigates revenue loss during a drought.
- Visuals (Art, Sam): The slides are too text-heavy. Verbal presentation is excellent, but staff should reduce on-screen content and potentially re-integrate the water system map earlier in the presentation as a visual aid and reminder.
- Selling the System (Kevin): Staff should more actively "sell" the positive aspects of Broomfield's system, such as the integrated One Water approach and the city's high percentage of water recovery and reuse compared to other Colorado cities.
- Financial Concerns (Sam): Concerns were raised about the scale of the financial impact of Chimney Hollow mitigation (projected total cost for 5 years is \$18 million) and Great Western Reservoir repair/replacement on the system's finances.
- Recreation: It was noted that any recreation plans for Broomfield Reservoir have been dropped, and the size reduced from 5,000 to 3,000 acre-feet, due to cost and need.
- Outdoor Use: The committee emphasized the significance of 48-52% of annual water use being outdoors as a key factor in drought discussions.

7. Outlook Lift Station: This item was on the agenda for design peak approval but was considered minor enough to defer a detailed discussion in favor of more valuable questions for staff.

8. Emergency Response Planning: The staff is evaluating short-term infrastructure failure scenarios

as part of their planning.

The meeting was adjourned by Chair, Steve Pierotti, at 8:01 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting: February 5, 2026

All upcoming Council items can be found [here](#).  
Click [here](#) for the FLOW Committee Web Page.