

March 25, 2014

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## Request for Coverage

### **Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance supports SAWS staff recommendations for Water Supply Impact Fees**

**When: Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 a.m.**

**Where: The SAWS Board Room (2800 U.S. Hwy 281 North)**

At the SAWS Board meeting of March 4th, the SAWS Board was briefed on the *2014 to 2023 Land Use Assumptions Plan*. This plan includes recommendations for impact fees to fund additional water supplies. The SAWS staff recommended a one time impact fee made by new development at the time of connection that would adequately fund the cost of securing new water supplies needed to serve an anticipated 95,817 new households at the rate of \$2,796/new house.

San Antonio has historically charged the maximum calculated impact fee, as allowed under State Law. State law does not allow recovery of the full cost of new development from the impact fees. Even if the rates are set the highest allowed by state law, current residents and ratepayers subsidize the infrastructure required for new development. The SAWS Staff briefing noted that "Ratepayers already pay the majority of overall costs for new water supplies".

Development interests serving on the SAWS Capital Improvements Advisory Committee (who were a majority on the Committee) opposed the staff recommendation, preferring impact fees of \$1,590/new house. They based their recommendation on the assumption that all San Antonians benefit from growth, so all of us should share in the cost.

Accepting the CIAC recommendation will require a 2.57% rate increase for all SAWS ratepayers. Since many of these new developments will likely be on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge, Transition, and Contributing zones, GEAA objects to requiring all citizens of San Antonio to subsidize new development. GEAA strongly supports the SAWS staff recommendations.

The SAWS staff recommends that the SAWS Board accept and recommend for City Council approval the proposed 2014 – 2023 Land Use Assumptions Plan, Water, Water Supply and Wastewater Capital Improvements Plans, and Maximum Water, Water Supply and Wastewater Impact Fees. After the SAWS Board votes on this issue at their April 1st meeting, they will set a date for Public Hearing (April 3rd). A City Council Public Hearing is set for May 8th, with a City Council vote scheduled for May 15th. Stay tuned for times and places of public hearings details are made available to us.

GEAA is urging local members to contact [Mayor Castro](#), [SAWS Board Chairman Berto Guerra](#), and the [SAWS Board representative](#) to let them know that we support the SAWS staff recommendation for Water Supply Impact Fees that equitably put the cost of new water supplies where it belongs - on new development.