

**MINUTES OF THE**  
**SANTA FE COUNTY**  
**WATER POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**January 13, 2022**

**Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**I. A.** This regular meeting of the Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) was called to order by Chair Shann Stringer at approximately 5:00 p.m. on the above-cited date.

In accordance with the Public Health Emergency Order issued by the State of New Mexico, this meeting was conducted via WebEx.

**B.** A quorum was achieved with the following members present:

**Members Present:**

Shann Stringer  
Bryan Romero  
Mary Helen Follingstad  
J.J. Gonzales  
Lloyd Gronning  
Ken Kirk

**Member(s) Excused:**

Emily Wolf  
Carl Dickens  
Steve Rudnick

**Others Present:**

Anjali Bean, County Water Resources Manager  
Anna Hamilton, County Commissioner  
John Dupuis, County Utilities Director  
Tina Salazar, County Constitute Liaison  
Jesse Roach, City Water Division Director  
Christine Chavez, City Conservation Manager

**C. Approval of Agenda**

Ms. Follingstad moved to approve the agenda as published and Mr. Romero seconded. The motion passed without opposition.

**D. Approval of Minutes: December 9, 2021 WPAC Meeting**

Mr. Gonzales noted that the on page 3 regarding the flood plain it should read “depleted” not

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“depleted.”

Ms. Follingstad moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Gronning seconded and the motion passed without opposition.

## **E. Introductions**

Those present introduced themselves.

## **2. Matters from the Public**

Sharing his screen, Mr. Roach displayed a City/County draft project document entitled “Santa Fe Water Resources Indicator.” The purpose of the tool is to inform seasonal conservation policy. He noted the following:

- The Santa Fe Water Resources Indicator is a quantitative tool used to summarize water availability to the City and County water utility systems in order to inform seasonal conservation policy
- It can be used in the spring of each year to help define what water use restrictions City and County water utility customers can expect during the remainder of the year
- It is a transparent quantitative definition of seasonal water resources availability
- The tool is not for short term planning, i.e. catastrophic supply disruption scenarios
- The tool is not for long range water resources planning
- The tool is very specific to seasonal conservation policy
- It combines three different metrics – a groundwater indicator, a surface water indicator and a regional drought indication – into a single index

If it was discovered that the sustainable yield/natural inflow into the groundwater basin changed, it was asked whether the tool could be adjusted. Mr. Roach confirmed it could adding that the tool has flexibility. The Buckman Wellfield in its current configuration is considered to be 2,500 acre-feet per year and is permitted to 10,000 acre-feet.

Regarding the drought monitor for the County as a whole, six different codes are used from no drought to exceptional drought

Reviewing data from 2000 forward, from the perspective of sustainability, water resources were in really bad shape from 2000 to 2007. Then conservation measures clicked in, reliance on wells was reduced, and in 2011 BDD came on line and the groundwater resource began to recover.

The concept is that annually in April the model would run in a predictive mode. The index could be updated monthly with actual storage numbers.

Ms. Chavez noted that the tool has been reviewed internally by City and County staff. The next step is for the joint City-County committee to further the review.

Mr. Dupuis said if the County had a groundwater source it could be incorporated into the tool.

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Regarding conservation methods, Mr. Roach said the City and County utilities have worked together on this and when the City calls a drought, the County will impose the same conservation methods as the City. The shared pool agreement has been very useful. The flow at Otowi was not included in the tool.

Different policies will be developed for the five different drought levels. Despite the fact that last year marked the most severe regional drought, no behavioral changes were required because of the last 20 years of building water sources.

According to City policy, each April the Water Division informs the City Manager whether any level of drought needs to be implemented. This year the indicator will be introduced as a new tool and according to the tool policy responses are being updated.

Mr. Romero appreciated the effort in developing the tool. He suggested reviewing the capital investment that was required to obtain additional water resources and including that information.

Mr. Gronning said the public needs to be informed/educated on how it is that Santa Fe is a better water resource than many of the communities in the southwest. He recommended forwarding the tool to a communications/PR group to develop a one-page description for a general public press release. Mr. Roach agreed with the press release and said the indicator values will be posted on the website.

It was noted that the "worrying Tina" concept should be reviewed as it could be construed as sexist.

Along with the capital investment, the long history of water planning, i.e., Metropolitan Water Board, should be incorporated.

The tool will be vetted by the WPAC and WCC with adequate time to fine tune it.

Commissioner Hamilton said she was really impressed with the tool and particularly pleased to learn of the vetting process which includes public input. She suggested overlaying information since Buckman has been on line as well as the increase of aridity. Mr. Roach said the model includes different climate change scenarios. Conservation can be viewed as an adaptation policy. A policy response may be the level of conservation required to reach the reduction result.

Mr. Dupuis mentioned that more native water is being used at the start of the season followed by more SJC water later when there may be restrictions on native diversions.

Chair Stringer remarked that policy wise it would be a good idea to promote reduction of water use in the 4-6 range.

With 43 percent of the County on groundwater, a groundwater index would be useful. The Peggy Johnson study may be an appropriate resource. It would be difficult because of the different rates of recharge. Mr. Dupuis said that could be used to highlight the work under Santa Fe 2100 joint efforts. The County is working with Eldorado data to demonstrate the groundwater-

affected parameters and the overall effect of pumping groundwater. It could serve as a simpler tool to better understand the impact of major groundwater users.

Regarding domestic wells, Mr. Romero recommended GIS mapping overlays to define water-type districts. Mr. Dupuis said including a graph showing the scope limits of the utilities' boundaries would also be helpful.

Mr. Roach was thanked for his presentation.

3. **Action Items** – None were presented.

4. **Discussion Items**

A. **2022 WPAC Work Plan Priorities**

Mr. Gronning said he has recommended adding water resources planning. WPAC would receive progress updates and provide advice on water resources planning and policy matters. Chair Stringer agreed it was a reasonable addition.

Ms. Bean noted that changing the work plan would postpone its presentation to the BCC which was scheduled for January 25<sup>th</sup> although the BCC could entertain an addition or move the work plan to the next BCC agenda. Ms. Bean pointed out that the work plan includes “continue work on drought management and water resources planning” for the County. The committee would receive updates on planning and policy matters from staff.

Ms. Bean said the work plan is ambitious with multiple tasks and she recommended identifying priorities to direct the next few meetings.

Chair Stringer opined that the priorities would be, 1) the County-City partnership with the City reopening its Chapter 25 for updating, 2) floodplain management could be handled as a subcommittee task and, 3) a summary of current knowledge/data regarding domestic wells could be incorporated into the educational outreach component.

It was suggested that the County-City partnership include the “planning” component.

Mr. Kirk moved to support the work plan as presented. Mr. Gronning seconded and the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

B. **Discussion of Education and Outreach to Domestic Well Users**

Ms. Bean said Mr. Dickens contacted her and was unable to attend tonight.

5. **Matters from the Committee**

A. **Update from County Soil and Water Conservation Districts**

Chair Stringer advised the committee that at this point he had no updates. Currently, he is not a board member and did not attend the last meeting.

6. **Matters from County Staff**  
C. **County Staff Update**

Ms. Bean shared with the committee that she has accepted a position with a non-profit, Western Resource Advocates, and that this is her last WPAC meeting as well as her last week at the County. She was congratulated, and was encouraged to seek a position on this committee.

Mr. Dupuis said he will assume staffing responsibilities for WPAC.

A. **Update on SJCP Return Flow Pipeline and Planning Process**

Ms. Bean reminded the committee that staff update topics are being rotated on the agenda. She is currently developing a draft scope of work for consulting services for the lower Santa Fe planning process. Once prepared and the RFP issued, it can be shared with the committee.

B. **Update on Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System**

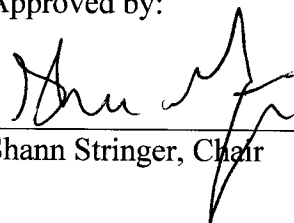
Ms. Bean reported that according to the BOR, construction on the water treatment plant is anticipated to start early this spring. This will be a big milestone for the project. The plant is located on San Ildefonso property in El Rancho off CR 502.

The status of the 40-80-year water planning is slightly behind which is attributed to Covid and staffing challenges. Mr. Dupuis added that he is involved in finalizing the scope for the consultant and providing a cost for the County's contribution incorporated into the work plan.

7. **Adjournment**

Mr. Gonzales moved to adjourn and Mr. Kirk seconded. Chair Stringer declared the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Approved by:

  
Shann Stringer, Chair

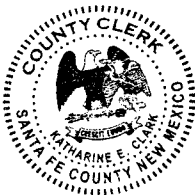
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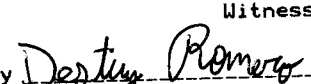
  
Karen Farrell, Wordswork

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COUNTY OF SANTA FE )  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ss

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for  
Record On The 21ST Day Of July, 2022 at 10:46:14 AM  
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1993427  
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County



Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office  
Katharine E. Clark  
Deputy  County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

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