

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE COUNTY
WATER POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 9, 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.

This meeting was conducted via WebEx.

B. The following members present:

Members Present:

Shann Stringer, Chair
Carl Dickens
Mary Helen Follingstad
J.J. Gonzales
Lloyd Gronning
Ken Kirk
Steve Rudnick
Emily Wolf

Member(s) Excused:

Bryan Romero

Others Present:

John Dupuis, County Utilities Director
Deborah Leyba, County Utilities Division Staff
Michelle Hunter, County Water Resource Manager
Anna Hamilton, County Commissioner

C. Review of Agenda

Upon motion by Mr. Rudnick and second by Mr. Kirk, the agenda was unanimously approved as published.

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D. Approval of Minutes

March 10, 2022: Mr. Gronning moved to approve and Ms. Follingstad seconded. The motion passed without opposition.

May 12, 2022: It was noted that the date of the meeting minutes was listed as May 11th on the agenda as well as being wrong on the first page of the minutes. With that correction and upon motion by Mr. Gronning and second by Ms. Follingstad, the minutes were approved as corrected. [The minutes were resubmitted with the correct date.]

E. Introductions of WPAC Members, Staff, and Guests

Michelle Hunter introduced herself as the new County Water Resource Manager.

2. Matters from the Public

A. Christine Chavez, Update on the Next Generation Water Summit and Community Event

Ms. Chavez was not present and Mr. Gronning offered that he attended some of the summit and thought it was outstanding, put together well with a great slate of speakers. Mr. Kirk agreed.

Mr. Dupuis said the event was well organized and easy to navigate. The entire event was recorded and can be viewed.

3. Action Items – None were presented

4. Matters from the Committee

A. Update – Joint City County Meeting

No meeting occurred. Ms. Hunter offered to contact Ms. Chavez and discuss future meetings.

B. Update of the City of Santa Fe Water Conservation Committee Meeting

Mr. Kirk said there was a meeting in May and he understood another was scheduled in June.

C. Update on the Water Resources Plan

Mr. Dupuis reported on the Santa Fe 2100 (aka Water Resource Plan) noting that there was a recent presentation to the Lower Santa Fe River Coalition from Bill Schneider. A process is being developed for an MOA with the City in which the County would piggyback the contract and fund groundwater related work outside of the City. The County is interested in Eldorado through to La Cienega/La Cieneguilla areas.

Ms. Follingstad asked whether expanding the focus to include the north side of the City could be considered. Mr. Dupuis commented that the northwest well is a critical component of the City's water supply and an integral component of the 2100 work. Ms. Follingstad appreciated the focus

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on the south side and recommended taking note of areas north of 599 between the city boundary and the NPT boundaries.

Mr. Gronning reminded staff that he requested documents/reports regarding supply and demand scenarios. He suggested WPAC an agenda item to discuss City-County Water Authority.

Mr. Dupuis said the modeling being done for 2100 takes into account every worst case scenario possible. He mentioned a June 23rd staff meeting with Stephens & Associates to discuss the County's well metering and monitoring program. At this point there is a lack of good data; however, good assumptions are being made. Chair Stringer recommended that Jacqueline Bean provide an update on the project. The scope of work link was provided in the chat. The Chair thought it was a good idea to have WPAC's input early on the project on.

A discussion regarding adding the City-County Water Authority to the agenda ensued. Ms. Follingstad mentioned the 2014 whitepaper that WPAC released on the topic and offered to email it to the members. Mr. Rudnick, who was also on WPAC with Ms. Follingstad when the whitepaper was developed, said the political implications have not changed since then. Past minutes as well as the whitepaper would be instrumental in this matter.

Commissioner Hamilton agreed that the political road blocks still exist regarding a regional authority. Mr. Rudnick noted that the City's resolution in opposition to a regional authority has not been rescinded after many requests. Ms. Follingstad said that according to Councilor Romero-Wirth the resolution was short-sighted.

Mr. Gronning said he has had discussions with Commissioner Hughes who is appreciative of WPAC's efforts and if WPAC wants to work on the topic they should ask the Commissioners to place it on WPAC's work plan. Governance and engineering aspects need to be considered as well as the water resource component. It was noted that WPAC is authorized to work on the 2100 plan and a regional authority could fall that scope.

There was committee consensus to work with the City's Water Conservation Committee and discuss water resource planning efforts as a first step.

Mr. Dickens mentioned Galisteo resident Roger Taylor who, 15 years ago, was very involved in water issues was instrumental in getting WPAC developed to investigate the idea of a regional water authority.

As public documents, Mr. Gronning requested that staff upload the WPAC minutes, whitepaper and other reports on the County website under the WPAC page. There was committee consensus that the documents should be available on the County's website and staff should post them. It was noted that the County Manager's office controls the website. Ms. Hunter said she would investigate the issue and report back next meeting. Ms. Leyba added that she records the minutes at the Clerk's office and may be able to assist.

Commissioner Hamilton recommended that WPAC provide quarterly reports to the BCC. She also suggested that a monthly WPAC newsletter could be issued through the County's mailing list.

Mr. Dickens lamented WPAC's lack of administrative support. There was consensus that WPAC needs a Christine Chavez.

Regarding the drought management plan, it was not adopted by the BCC because County staff was to review and report back on it – that did not happen. Chair Stringer noted that with the pandemic and loss of County staff, the report did not move. It was mentioned that the plan appeared to be shelved because the City was working on a plan. The City's feedback on the drought plan was important and has not yet occurred and there have not been any joint City-County meetings since before Covid.

Mr. Dupuis spoke optimistically about working with the City in regards to water issues. With the City and County on the "same page" the public will be receptive to the unique concerns of the rural County compared to the dense City community.

Eldorado is interested in participating in conservation measures with the County utility thus creating greater regional benefits. Mr. Dupuis pointed out these partnerships take time to develop. He was pleased to have Ms. Hunter join staff and felt positive about the effort.

Mr. Kirk mentioned Kim Shanahan's recent article in the *New Mexican*. He noted that he provided Ms. Chavez a copy of WPAC's whitepaper. He felt that WCC would be interested in discussing the whitepaper and understood WCC would meet in person once an appropriate venue was located.

Mr. Kirk mentioned that Mark Sanchez, Executive Director of the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority, was a friend of his and would make himself available to speak at a WPAC or a joint meeting with the WCC.

Chair Stringer requested that Commissioner Hamilton approach Councilor Romero-Wirth to coordinate a joint meeting and perhaps broach the topic of rescinding the City's resolution. Spatial Cooperation or Regional Authority could be on the next agenda unless the City is not willing to rescind their resolution.

Staff was asked to investigate whether WPAC could meet in person and it was also mentioned that a joint Zoom meeting with WCC would be cumbersome.

Regarding regionalization, the City was concerned that the County was taking advantage of the City's infrastructure and investment. It was noted that the County is a 50 percent owner of the Buckman Direct Diversion and the whitepaper could be updated to show growth in the County's utility customers, i.e., Eldorado, Cañoncito, NPT to demonstrate a balanced partnership.

Mr. Rudnick lauded Mr. Dupuis and Steve King of Eldorado for their accomplishments.

The concept of a City-County water authority is staying on the agenda.

Cañada de los Alamos

Mr. Dupuis said everyone has been responsive but additional information is needed to begin the process. He said it was important the process is thorough and with Ms. Hunter on board he was confident things will move forward.

5. Matters from the Committee

A. Carl Dickens update on Pipeline

Mr. Dickens, spokesperson for the Pipeline Coalition, said there is a core group of people meeting monthly to work on the return-flow pipeline. A subcommittee of the Coalition is working on an RFP for a facilitator to oversee the planning process. He cited this project as a good example of a City-County effort as well as a community-based team working on water issues. The single intent is to provide a consistent clean flow of water in the Santa Fe River. The Coalition is interested in reporting to the BCC and offered to forward the Coalition's reports.

B. Carl Dickens update on video project and river story

Mr. Dickens said Duncan Sills is developing stories of people along the Santa Fe River that will be in a video format.

6. Matters from County Staff

A. Update on SJC Return Flow Pipeline and Planning Process

Mr. Dickens said the City has formalized its application for return flow credit with the OSE. The Wildearth Guardians are putting together a workshop for those interested in protesting the transfer of water rights.

Chair Stringer said it was unfortunate that there has not been a protest to the OSE's call that there is no return flow by leaving the water in the river. In fact, Mr. Dickens said it may not be a formal decision of the OSE.

Mr. Dickens noted that Stacy Timmons provided a presentation regarding the Santa Fe River water that reaches the Rio Grande and the challenges in measuring that water.

B. Update on Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System

Ms. Hunter said there was a meeting with the BOR today and construction is moving along.

C. County Staff Update

Ms. Hunter said the County is in the process of hiring a deputy utility director and interviews for a hydrogeologist will begin this week.

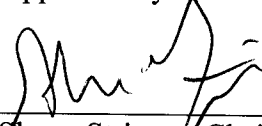
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Chair Stringer recommended the division consider hiring someone analogous to Christine Chavez and her position that encompasses conservation and education outreach. Mr. Rudnick said an education/communicator is desperately needed.

7. Adjournment


Chair Stringer declared the meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Approved by:



Shann Stringer, Chair

Respectfully submitted by:


Karen Farrell, Wordswork

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

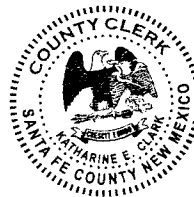
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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 21ST Day Of July, 2022 at 10:46:19 AM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1993432
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office

Katharine E. Clark

Deputy  County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM



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