

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

**July 14, 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 5:10 p.m. on the above-cited date.

This meeting was conducted via Webex and there were connectivity issues throughout the meeting.

**B.** The following members present:

**Members Present:**

Shann Stringer, Chair  
Carl Dickens  
J.J. Gonzales  
Ken Kirk  
Steve Rudnick  
Emily Wolf

**Member(s) Excused:**

Mary Helen Follingstad  
Lloyd Gronning  
Bryan Romero

**Others Present:**

John Dupuis, County Utilities Director  
Deborah Leyba, County Utilities Division Staff  
Michelle Hunter, County Water Resource Manager  
Camilla Bustamante, District 3 Commissioner-Elect

Mention was made that Bryan Romero had missed the last few meetings and Mr. Dupuis offered that both Mr. Romero and Ms. Follingstad's terms had expired. He offered to look into it.

**C. Review of Agenda**

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

SFC CLERK RECORDED 01/10/2023

#### **D. Approval of Minutes**

**March 10, 2022:** Mr. Gonzales moved to approve and Ms. Wolf seconded. The motion passed without opposition.

#### **E. Introductions of WPAC Members, Staff, and Guests**

Mr. Gonzales introduced Ms. Camilla Bustamante, Commissioner-elect. Ms. Bustamante said she was interested to learn about the committee and grateful to be here. Mr. Dickens said Ms. Bustamante has been involved in the community for years and is passionate about community issues and especially water. Ms. Bustamante said she has been involved in water quality and water regulatory work for about 30 years.

Ms. Wolf said she and Mr. Dickens have been working on the educational component of water conservation. She is talking with Christine Chavez, City Water Conservation Manager, and working to develop ways the County can partner with the City on outreach and education programming and expand that to County schools.

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

- A. Christine Chavez, Update on the Next Generation Water Summit and Community Event** – No update provided

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

#### **4. Matters from the Committee**

- A. Update – Joint City County Meeting** - No meeting occurred.

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

No meeting occurred since WPAC last met.

- C. Update on the Water Resources Plan** - No update was provided.

#### **5. Matters from the Committee**

- A. Meeting Minutes**

Chair Stringer said it would helpful to have the minutes from the previous meeting before he developed an agenda and requested the minutes be produced and sent out earlier.

#### **6. Matters from County Staff**

- A. Update on SJC Return Flow Pipeline and Planning Process**

Mr. Dickens, spokesperson for the Pipeline Coalition, which is a group of 20 organizations, stated the planning process has been an example of how well a community group can work with the City and County in terms of water planning. The Coalition recently completed the RFP for a

facilitator to work on the stakeholders-involved planning process. The idea is to mitigate the effects of the reduction of water in the river. Once the RFP is finalized he will be sharing it with WPAC.

Mr. Dupuis said staff is greatly appreciative of the Coalition for the drafting of the RFP scope. The ones affected by the pipeline are the most able to know where their needs are. He said he was optimistic about the outcome. The draft has been reviewed by Ms. Hunter. Staff will continue its review to ensure that the project can mesh with the CIP project.

Mr. Dickens estimated that the RFP will be available for WPAC's review early August.

**WPAC membership:** Mr. Dickens said he contacted Dan McGregor, the Bernalillo County representative on the Santa Fe Basin Water Planning Committee, who has suggested that WPAC make a formal request for a representative from southern Santa Fe County to participate on WPAC.

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

Mr. Dupuis said there was an operating agreement meeting this week, the first of substance since Covid, and three components were discussed:

- Operations of the system
- Allocation of expenses
- Utilization of water rights

The meeting was well attended with good collaborative discussion. Revisions to the draft operating agreement were implemented and assigned to people to formally make the changes. He was pleased with the progress.

The construction of the intake and the water treatment plant continue. The plant work is basically earthwork and BOR is releasing subsequent construction packages to the design-build contractor to fast track construction of water lines which can run concurrently with plant construction. The fast track is result of the concerns of the BOR and partners regarding inflation that affects spending capability. It is anticipated that the water treatment plant and waterlines to El Rancho area, San Ildefonso and the west side of Pojoaque will be completed within two years.

A request was made to the BOR to have a third-party review regarding how much it costs to run the system and explore operational options. BOR is receptive to paying for the third-party review.

Mr. Gonzales asked about the success of getting people to sign on to the system. Mr. Dupuis said the Court keeps a record of people who elect to connect to the system. The election period has not closed and there is chatter that people elected to connect with the notion the system would never happen. The County sent out approximately 2,000 postcards advising the area residents that the County was reserving up to \$10,000 hookup assistance for anyone who agrees to connect. Approximately 960 responses were received in the affirmative. Once streets have

been identified for laying the pipe, the County will reach out to those residents with a service agreement. The idea is to lay pipe in areas where people want it.

Mr. Gonzales recalled that once property was transferred to a new owner in the service area there was a requirement to hookup to the system. Mr. Dupuis said it was a court requirement to do so.

Mr. Gonzales asked about the OSE requirement of private well metering. Ms. Hunter said she will follow up with the State Engineer regarding metering. Mr. Dupuis said he understood the metering requirement has been extended multiple times; however, it was not being policed. He mentioned that Amy Ewing with Stephens & Assoc. will be developing a pilot project regarding meter reading in the La Cienega/La Cieneguilla area. When appropriate, Mr. Dickens requested that Ms. Ewing provide a presentation to WPAC.

### **C. County Staff Update**

Mr. Dupuis said the County will be making an offer to fill the deputy director position and there is a candidate for the hydrogeologist position.

Chair Stringer raised concerns that the consistent removal of water from the river via the Buckman Diversion will incur glitches. With what is occurring with the Colorado River in mind, he asked, where will the County obtain water in the event there is no river water available? Mr. Dupuis said the state has a proactive approach to ensure a meaningful amount of water is delivered to New Mexico through annual diversions from San Juan watershed to the San Juan-Chama infrastructure project. There is an anticipated reduction. The state is leasing water rights from the Jicarilla Apache Nation and will not use that water but instead credit it as the state's required reduction. While it's not a foregone solution that the state will benefit from the lease, it does demonstrate the state is being proactive. For the County the reduction of SJC water will have a minimal effect.

Mr. Dupuis said a Santa Fe 2100 modeling effort has implemented scenarios that contemplate the issue of less river water. He noted that the County Commission created a strategic goal to develop a backup water supply equal to the previous year's distribution. The County allows the City to use all of its excess native rights which permits the City to divert less. There is approximately 1,000 acre-feet stored in Abiquiu and the City can use the San Juan-Chama water rather than Nichols or McClure. The County has 1,850 acre-feet to provide for the one-year backup which exceeds what is currently delivered. He highlighted that using additional resources, the strategic goal was met.

Regarding mechanical elevation pool levels required for diversion, Mr. Dupuis said basically any flow can be diverted.

Chair Stringer referred to a report out of LANL stating that over the next four years the areas within the southern Rockies will appear more like the Arizona or the Gila mountains. Mr. Dupuis said BOR projections for the San Juan-Chama range are roughly zero to 60 percent reduction over the next 10 years. Allocations have already been reduced over the years.

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**7. Adjournment**

Upon motion by Mr. Gonzales and second by Mr. Dickens, Chair Stringer declared the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Approved by:

  
Shann Stringer, Chair


Respectfully submitted by:

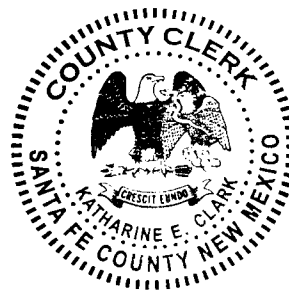
  
Karen Farrell, Wordswork

COUNTY OF SANTA FE           )  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO       ) ss

WATER POLICY ADVISORY  
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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for  
Record On The 10TH Day Of January, 2023 at 05:16:05 PM  
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # **2004628**  
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

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



SEC CLERK RECORDED 01/10/2023