

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

**September 8, 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 Vice Chair Carl Dickens at approximately 5:10 p.m. on the above-cited date. This meeting was conducted via Webex.

**B.** The following members present:

**Members Present:**

Carl Dickens  
J.J. Gonzales  
Lloyd Gronning  
Ken Kirk  
Steve Rudnick  
Emily Wolf

**Member(s) Excused:**

Shann Stringer, Chair

**Others Present:**

John Dupuis, County Utilities Director [briefly participated by phone]  
Deborah Leyba, County Utilities Division Staff  
Michelle Hunter, County Water Resource Manager

**C. Review of Agenda**

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

**D. Approval of Minutes**

**August 11, 2022:** Mr. Kirk moved to approve and Mr. Gonzales seconded. The motion passed without opposition.

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

This item was deemed unnecessary.

**2. Matters from the Public**

**A. Christine Chavez, Update**

Ms. Hunter advised the committee she has not heard from Ms. Chavez. The City's Water Conservation Committee (WCC) will be meeting later this month and Ms. Hunter will be attending. WCC has been meeting in person.

**3. Action Items**

None were presented.

**4. Matters from the Committee**

**A. Update – Joint City County Meetings**

Ms. Hunter said there are joint staff meetings that occur on a weekly basis as well as monthly Buckman Direct Diversion meetings.

Ms. Hunter reported that a joint meeting occurred today regarding the San Juan-Chama river water pipeline. The City provided comments and significant edits on the RFP document that the Pipeline Coalition developed. Once she and Mr. Dupuis confer on the requested changes, the RFP will be issued and provided to the WPAC members. Mr. Dupuis has expressed an interest in having a representative from WPAC on the selection committee. Ms. Hunter said the City is anxious to get the RFP out and that process underway.

**5. Matters from the Committee**

**A. Any Matters from the Committee**

None were offered.

**B. Cañada de los Alamos Review**

Ms. Hunter said she spoke with Chita Gillis at Cañada de los Alamos Mutual Domestic Water Consumers and Mutual Sewage Works this week. Santa Fe County still has a couple of action items to accomplish in order to move the project forward. The community has the required funding – \$1.2 million – for the design work which was awarded to Molzen Corbin. A JPA will be necessary, along with a thorough review of the ordinance requirements and an inspection of the system.

Mr. Gronning referenced his 5/19/22 email to Mr. Dupuis advising that the ordinance required a site inspection, County review, and written report. The report is then submitted to the County Manager who determines whether the application is complete, and the final step appears to be

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WPAC's approval. Ms. Hunter said the site inspection informs the report and she was confident that it would occur.

It was noted that former County Attorney Greg Shaffer is now the County Manager.

**C. Aztec Springs**

Participating by phone, Mr. Dupuis said Aztec Springs is a small subdivision adjacent to Hyde Park Estate. The subdivision will be working with an attorney to become a mutual domestic to then apply for and hopefully receive NMED grant funding.

**D. Cañoncito Pipeline**

Ms. Hunter said the project is moving along and new customers outside of Cañoncito along Old Las Vegas Highway are being connected.

Mr. Gonzales asked how many customers would be connected to the pipeline and Ms. Hunter said all 130 Cañoncito users are on the new system. Cañoncito brought some water rights to the table. Mr. Gonzales noted that the Cañoncito's wells are contaminated and he questioned whether those water rights are transferrable. Ms. Hunter said those rights will be transferred to the County and the water for Cañoncito is coming through the County's water rights via the Buckman system.

Although the BDD was down for a couple of weeks, Ms. Hunter noted that it was back up last week. She understood the County could use its water rights, even groundwater, by diverting at BDD. Cañoncito's water rights will be assimilated into the County's pool.

Mr. Gonzales said he fully supported the County providing water to Cañoncito and communities that need water, but he could not support the County creating a water deficit by approving water for subdivisions that have not been built. He added that BDD has problems with its pumps and the drought.

**E. Eldorado**

Ms. Hunter reported that the County was working through the permit application with the OSE. She noted that the County can use its water rights anywhere within the County service area.

**6. Matters from County Staff**

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

Covered under 4.A.

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

Ms. Hunter said the project is under construction and permits are being sought for ROWs on the County roads where the trunk lines are being located. She said she would tour the area soon.

BOR is moving quickly to avoid the skyrocketing costs of materials. Additional funding for the project is expected in the next legislative session.

**C. County Staff Update** - Nothing further was provided.

**7. Other Business**

Mr. Rudnick asked whether anyone had seen the overly optimistic article in the *New Mexico Magazine* by Jesse Roach about water. Mr. Dickens noted that he did not share that optimism.

**4. D. Update on the Water Resource Plan**

Mr. Gronning said after a year on the committee he was not assured there was enough water to serve the population that is currently being served. The plan that the two entities are working on will be a terrific planning document. He requested a written presentation from staff on the water resource plan and on the materials that have been done to date so that WPAC has a better understanding of the water supply, how it could vary, who is served, etc. Mr. Gronning mentioned the Santa Fe Water Plan 2100 appears to be behind schedule based on the plan schedule posted on the County's website.

Ms. Hunter agreed the 2100 plan is behind schedule and there was a staff meeting last week directing additional staff time to the project. Department staffing is improving with a new deputy director and a hydrogeologist starting next week.

Mr. Gronning said he expected an actual water resource report and requested that staff present it in components to WPAC.

**7. Other Business (cont.)**

Mr. Dickens said he would like to see the expertise on this committee better utilized: a good process will produce a good product. How can the committee's work be presented to the BCC and lead to action?

According to the charter of the WPAC, its work is presented to the BCC via the County staff, noted Mr. Rudnick. WPAC does not go directly to the BCC.

Having served as a utilities director in the past, Mr. Gronning said WPAC is clearly an advisory board and rather than write reports which would not be a good use of the committee's time, he recommended providing the County with policy advice.

Mr. Dickens advocated including a County Commissioner at each of these meetings in an effort to share the wealth of water-related knowledge this committee has. Mr. Rudnick pointed out that the County will soon have three Commissioners with a water background who could contribute to WPAC's discussions. It was noted that Commissioner Hamilton was included on all of WPAC's email communications.

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**Interstate Stream Commission:** Mr. Dickens said the ISC's 50-year plan is reportedly stalled in the Governor's Office. He recommended that every community in the county have its own water plan that includes a wastewater reuse program. La Cienega has funding for water master planning and could serve as a model for other communities. It is important to change the mindset of how water is used.

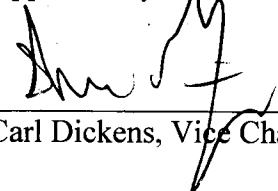
A discussion regarding wet water rights versus paper water rights is warranted. Mr. Dickens noted that La Cienega has lost 60 percent of its water resources in the past 40 years. Metering wells was established as a requirement on all new development and has not been enforced, stated Mr. Dickens. There is a perception that there are unlimited water resources. La Cienega is holding a meeting next week with the County Sustainability Division, and the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Resource and other, he offered to send an email regarding the meeting. He mentioned that the La Cienega Aquifer has been monitored for over 10 years.

A discussion about the Quill Wastewater plant occurred. The County plans to provide non-potable self-service bulk water from the facility.

## 7. Adjournment

Mr. Dickens declared the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Approved by:

  
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Carl Dickens, Vice 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 10TH Day Of January, 2023 at 05:16:06 PM  
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # **2004629**  
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

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

