

DRAFT* MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AND
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Utilities Field Operations Training Center
35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa, CA
April 8, 2024

Attendees: Mike Healy, City of Petaluma
Oriana Hart, City of Petaluma
Matt Fullner, Valley of The Moon Water District
Jon Foreman, Valley of the Moon Water District
Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa
Natalie Rogers, City of Santa Rosa
Eric Miller, North Marin Water District
Jack Baker, North Marin Water District
Brad Sherwood, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA or Sonoma Water)
Laura Sparks, City of Cotati
Craig Scott, City of Cotati
Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma
Mike Berger, City of Sonoma
Cristina Goulart, Town of Windsor
Emily Sanborn, City of Rohnert Park
Vanessa Garrett, City of Rohnert Park
Jed Smith, Marin Municipal Water District
Lucy Croy, Marin Municipal Water District
Michelle Montoya, City of Santa Rosa

Staff/Alternates: Lynne Rosselli, SCWA
Paul Piazza, SCWA
Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA
Kent Gylfe, SCWA
Jake Spaulding, SCWA
Chris Delaney, SCWA
David Manning, SCWA
Larry Russell, Marin Municipal Water District
Shannon Cotulla, Town of Windsor
Peter Martin, City of Santa Rosa
Claire Nordlie, City of Santa Rosa
Stacie Hatfield, City of Santa Rosa

Public: Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection
Dick Dowd, Sonoma County Alliance

1. Check In
Chair Healy called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.
2. Public Comment
Jed Smith, Marin Municipal Water District, shared that Marin Municipal Water District has recently finished their five-year strategic plan. The objectives included fiscal responsibility, watershed stewardship including working on their first recreation plan since 2004, core operations, water supply storage and conveyance feasibility studies, and organizational structure.
3. Recap from the February 5, 2024 WAC/TAC Meeting and Approval of Minutes

Moved by Jack Baker, North Marin Water District, seconded by Laura Sparks, City of Cotati. Unanimously approved.

No public comment.

4. Recap from the March 4, 2024 TAC Meeting and Approval of Minutes (TAC)
Moved by Matt Fullner, Valley of the Moon Water District, seconded by Vanessa Garrett, City of Rohnert Park. Unanimously approved, with City of Cotati abstaining.
No public comment.

5. Water Supply Coordination Council – March 18, 2024
The Water Supply Coordination Council met on March 18 and finalized today's agenda.
No public comment.

6. Presentation of Draft FY2024-25 SCWA Water Transmission System Budget and Rates
Jake Spaulding, SCWA, presented.
The water transmission system has three main aqueducts. Each contractor receives water from one of the aqueducts and pays the rate that is associated with that aqueduct. The water transmission system budget is made up of operations and maintenance, four subfunds, five capital funds, and debt service funds. Some of the challenges being faced include that the rate must be a fully volumetric rate, low water deliveries, aging infrastructure, maintenance needs, increased repairs, and natural hazard vulnerabilities. The proposed Capital budget for FY 24-25 includes \$8.46 million for hazard mitigation projects to reduce risk, \$7.20 million for other capital projects to increase resiliency; for operations and maintenance the proposed FY 24-25 budget is \$45.41 million to protect, improve, and maintain system reliability; and \$7.53 million for Biological Opinion, water supply planning, and water conservation. The total budget amount for 2024-25 is \$74.43 million, and is offset with \$18.13 million from grants, use of fund balance, and bond proceeds. In comparison to fiscal 2023-24, the 2024-25 budget is \$6.14 million more due to the operations and maintenance and capital needs. Rates are calculated by taking the proposed budget and dividing it by the estimated amount of water sold, which is determined by the Restructured Agreement to be either the lesser of the last three year's annual average water deliveries or the last twelve months of actual deliveries. Three years of historic droughts and state mandated water conservation lead to the lowest water deliveries in 30 years, which put significant pressure on the budget. Efforts made to reduce the budget and rate included deferring non-routine maintenance (\$8.9 million), using the 3-year annual average rather than the 12-month actuals, and increasing the use of grants, bond proceeds, and fund balance (\$18.13 million). This resulted in the projected rate increase dropping from 14.57% to 9.88%, with the total cost per gallon coming to \$0.004. The proposed rate for fiscal year 2024-25 for Santa Rosa will increase by 9.88%, Petaluma will increase by 9.98%, and Sonoma will increase by 8.14%. Sonoma County Water Agency still has the lowest water rates per acre-foot in the Bay Area. Next steps for the budget and rate adoption include the Water Advisory Committee consideration today and the adoption by Sonoma Water's Board of Directors on April 16.
No public comment

7. Recommendation to Sonoma Water Board of Directors - FY2024-25 SCWA Water Transmission System Budget and Rates
Moved by Natalie Rogers, City of Santa Rosa, seconded by Jon Foreman, Valley of the Moon Water District. Unanimously approved, with Town of Windsor absent.
No public comment.

8. Water Supply Conditions and Temporary Urgency Change Order
Chris Delaney, SCWA, presented.
It has been a wet year for water supply, with a number of large storms that have filled the reservoirs. Lake Mendocino is currently at 98,600 acre-ft, putting it at the top of the

Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) pool and at 10,000 acre-ft above the top of the conservation pool. Lake Sonoma is currently at 265,000 acre-ft, which is just above the minor deviation pool, and is 20,000 acre-ft above the top of the conservation pool. Regarding the Potter Valley Project, PG&E has filed a variance with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to modify this summer's operations. This variance will reduce transfers from the Eel River into the Russian River by between 65 – 85 cubic feet per second (csf) compared to the typical summertime transfers. There will be significant reduction of water into Lake Mendocino as a result of this variance. Sonoma Water is currently operating under a Temporary Urgency Change Order from the State Board, which defines the storage threshold in Lake Mendocino for setting our hydrologic conditions. Normally Sonoma Water operates under decision 1610, which determines the water supply condition primarily based on inflows into Lake Pillsbury. With this Order, Sonoma Water is transferring that determination to be based on storage in Lake Mendocino. As of April 1, based on those storage thresholds, currently in a normal supply condition. This means the upper Russian River has a minimum flow requirement of 185 csf and 125 csf in the lower Russian River. Water conditions will next be assessed on April 16th and will likely stay in normal supply conditions.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked about the status of the next temporary urgency change petition, when is it scheduled to be filed, and will it be strictly Biological Opinion compliance.

Chris Delaney, SCWA, answered they will be filing very shortly. Since storage levels are high at both reservoirs, the plan is to file based on the Biological Opinion requirements.

No public comment.

9. Eel Russian Project Authority and Potter Valley Project Update

David Manning, SCWA, presented.

The Potter Valley project is comprised of Scott Dam, Lake Pillsbury, Cape Horn Dam, and Van Arsdale reservoir. There are several alternatives being considered to continue the diversion of water from the Eel River to the Russian River, including Ranney collector system, upstream diversion canal, fish passage improvements at Cape Horn Dam, control section and pump station (Alternative E-2), and roughened channel with gravity supply (Alternative E-3). The alternatives evaluation process included 10 meetings held from July 2023 to March 2024 that included biologists, engineers, and water managers from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Trout, Round Valley Indian Tribes, Mendocino Inland Water and Power Commission, Sonoma Water, McMillen Inc., and Stillwater Sciences. There were 38 evaluation criteria which included Biological Feasibility for Upstream Passage, Biological Feasibility for Downstream Passage, Resiliency and Reliability, Constructability, and Cost. The scoring results were summarized, and the pump station had the advantage for fish passage, sedimentation, construction costs, and constructability and implementation. The roughened channel had the advantage for the operations and maintenance costs. The pump station and roughened channel were equal in the non-differentiating factors which included geomorphic stability for water supply, low and high flow diversion, and challenges integrating with PG&E dam removal alternatives. Overall, the recommended project is Alternative E-2 – Pump Station as it has a lower risk for water supply, has superior fish passage, lower design and construction risk, better upstream and downstream passage, and has a better ability to design around potential reliability issues. Next steps include finalizing the Diversion Facility Assessment Report under the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) grant, taking the preferred diversion facility alternative to a 60% design with a \$2 million grant from U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, grant agreement is anticipated by May 2024, with an RFP for consultant services in Summer 2024. The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will continue to meet to inform on design and operations.

Larry Russell, Director of Marin Municipal Water District, asked about mercury and if the pump station will have an Archimedes screw.

David Manning, SCWA, answered that the Archimedes screw will be removed, and with the removal of the dam, the methyl mercury will not be a concern. As for elemental mercury, it is found in all sediment within the region.

10. Items for Next Agenda (next combined WAC/TAC meeting is May 6, 2024)

None.

No public comment.

11. Check Out

Chair Healy adjourned the meeting at 9:53 a.m.