

FINAL MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AND
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Utilities Field Operations Training Center
35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa, CA
November 4, 2024

Attendees: Dan Herrera, City of Petaluma
Mike Healy, 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
Tony Williams, North Marin Water District
Jack Baker, North Marin Water District
Grant Davis, 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 (arrived at 9:12 am)
Cristina Goulart, Town of Windsor
Sam Salmon, Town of Windsor
Emily Sanborn, City of Rohnert Park
Vanessa Garrett, City of Rohnert Park
Jed Smith, Marin Municipal Water District
Paul Sellier, Marin Municipal Water District
Michelle Montoya, City of Santa Rosa

Staff/Alternates: Paul Piazza, SCWA
Lynne Rosselli, SCWA
Kent Gylfe, SCWA
Lynne Rosselli, SCWA
Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA
Brad Sherwood, SCWA
Carlos Diaz, SCWA
Ryan Pedrotti, SCWA
David Manning, SCWA
Emma Walton, SCWA
David Royall, SCWA
Oriana Hart, City of Petaluma
Larry Russell, Marin Municipal Water District
Cortney Bowser, City of Rohnert Park
Peter Martin, City of Santa Rosa

Public: Brenda Adelman, Russian River Watershed Protection
Duane DeWitt
Pam Jeane
Mike Martini
Peter Kiel

1. Check In
Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.
2. Public Comment

Duane DeWitt spoke on Roseland Creek and gave an invitation to come out and see how the first rain has affected the creek, shared that more needs to be done for the care of riparian corridors, and shared about the option to save water with waterless urinals.

3. WAC Proclamation – Pam Jeane and Michael Healy

Chair Rogers read aloud the proclamation for Michael Healy and Pam Jeane.

Pam Jeane shared her appreciation.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, shared about her time working with Pam Jeane and shared her appreciation.

Grant Davis, SCWA, expressed his gratitude for Pam Jeane.

No public comment.

4. Recap from the August 5, 2024 WAC/TAC Meeting and Approval of Minutes

Moved by Jon Foreman, Valley of the Moon Water District, seconded by Emily Sanborn, City of Rohnert Park. Unanimously approved.

No public comment.

5. Recap from the October 7, 2024 TAC Meeting and Approval of Minutes (TAC)

Moved by Craig Scott, City of Cotati, seconded by Tony Williams, North Marin Water District. Unanimously approved with Town of Windsor abstaining.

Duane DeWitt shared his disagreement with the wording regarding land being purchased near Roseland Creek and enhancing the riparian corridor.

6. Water Supply Coordination Council – October 28, 2024

Chair Rogers announced that the Water Supply Coordination Council met on October 28, 2024 and prepared today's agenda.

7. Approve – 2025 WAC/TAC Meeting Schedule

Moved by Mike Healy, City of Petaluma, seconded by Jack Baker, North Marin Water District. Unanimously approved.

No public comment.

8. Proposed Alexander Valley Water District Presentation

Mike Martini, and Peter Kiel, spoke on this topic.

Agricultural water users in Alexander Valley have been working to find ways to secure water supply and improve water resilience. This effort has been led by the Russian River Property Owners Association in consultation with other water users including City of Healdsburg, Cloverdale, Dry Creek and Lytton Rancherías, Sonoma Water, and conservation organizations. The agricultural landowners pursued forming a new California Special Water District. Some of the threats that the Alexander Valley water supply may face include increased durations of droughts with more intense storm and flood events, reductions or total loss of Eel River imports, surface water rights may be curtailed in all but the wettest years, and minimum instream flows to support anadromous fish may have priority over agricultural and commercial use during periods of reduced water supply. The purpose of the proposed California Water District is to improve reliability and availability of the common supply of groundwater and surface water available to lands within the district. This District would have a water sharing program, the new Eel River – Russian River diversion facility, groundwater investigation and management, and a groundwater recharge program. The Water District would not provide retail water, sewer, or other municipal services. The proposed boundary is intended to cover the valley floor along the mainstem of the Russian River within the Alexander Valley. It will include approximately 28,910 acres of parcels within the Cloverdale area and Alexander areas groundwater basin but will not include incorporated cities or public lands, tribal trust land, or the upland area of the Alexander Basin south of Franz Creek. The proposed district will be comprised

of a minimum of five directors elected by landowners and an executive director who would manage a small administrative and technical team. Funding sources for the Water District would come from a nominal special tax or assessment that would be established concurrently with the District formation, specific programs would be funded through fees for service and regulatory fees, and capital investments would be funded through grants, special benefit assessments, and bond measures. The potential benefits for Sonoma Water contractors of the proposed Water District would include efficiently using surface water and groundwater in Alexander Valley to reduce reliance on Eel River and Lake Mendocino storage, help clarify and administer the Lake Mendocino 10 TAF reservation for Sonoma County, jointly establish and administer a Russian River water sharing program, and provide additional funding for new Eel-Russian facility.

Mike Healy, City of Petaluma, asked about timeline to get it in front of Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) for a decision.

Mike Martini answered that they met with LAFCO on Friday and an ad hoc committee was formed, and a decision was made to move forward on the application process, and by mid to late summer of next year, signatures will be provided to LAFCO for consideration.

Mike Healy, City of Petaluma, suggested the TAC look into this and come up with a recommendation for the WAC.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked if there was a sense of if there is support or if there is interest in the area.

Mike Martini confirmed there is support and that the sponsor of the application is the Russian River property owners.

Brenda Adelman is neutral on this but would ask that when they do their studies, or write their environmental documents, that they consider downstream impacts as well. Shared concern about drought periods and during the summertime and wants to make sure that they are aware of these issues.

Mike Martini responded that one of the challenges was setting the boundary, as they needed to be large enough to be financially stable but small enough to get their foot in the door. Have been approached by those along the lower Russian River and they have shared their desire to participate in this process.

9. FY 2023/24 SCWA Water Transmission System Budget Year-End Review

Lynne Rosselli, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Water deliveries are the bases of water rate, which generates revenue that pays for water operations and maintenance, capital projects, water conservation, debt service, and more. The water rate is fully volumetric, as prescribed by the restricted agreement. The water deliveries were 1.3% under budget for this fiscal year (FY). Best guess for next fiscal year is that they would be in the 42 to 43,000 acre-ft range. Revenues were 15% lower than the adjusted budget and 3.5% lower than the adopted budget. Water sales make up 95% of revenue, and that revenue increased less than 1% over the prior fiscal year. On the expenditures side, 70% of the adjusted budget and 90% of the adopted budget was expended. To help offset those costs, \$2.6 million in grant revenue, \$3.3 million of 2022 bond revenue, and \$5 million in fund balance was used. For the operations fund, 85% of the adjusted budget and 90% of the adopted budget were expended. Looking at capital project expenditures, 56% of the adjusted budget and more than 100% of adopted budget were expended. For subfund expenses, 48% of the adjusted budget and 82% of the adopted budget were expended. As for debt services, it is required to apply a 15% surcharge on top of the debt service amount. This ensures that there is sufficient revenue available to meet the bond covenants. If it is not used, it gets transferred to the capital projects funds. For July, August, and September, 38% of the budgeted water deliveries were made. For quarter one, 9% of the adjusted budget and 16% of adopted budget have been expended. For operations and maintenance, actual encumbrance versus adjusted budget are low. This is because many of the operations and maintenance projects have contracts, and the large purchases are often made in quarter four. On the capital projects side, \$25.69 of the adjusted budget and \$1.08 of the adopted budget have been used. For

the subfund expenses, \$14.31 of the adjusted budget and \$1.24 of the adopted budget have been expended. The next steps for the FY 2025-2026 Water Transmission Budget include the draft budget to the TAC Ad Hoc Budget Subcommittee by January 17, 2025, then the draft budget will go to the TAC Ad Hoc on February 3, 2025, the budget will then be presented to City Councils/District Boards during March, a vote by WAC on April 7, 2025, and adoption by Sonoma Water's Board by April 30, 2025.

Craig Scott, City of Cotati, asked if they were anticipating such a big drop in actual expenditures.

Lynne Rosselli, SCWA, answered that this is adjusted for contracts that had not been incurred and shows the \$20 million in contracts that were not awarded.

Jed Smith, Marin Municipal Water District, suggested to look at actual year to date versus budget year to date.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, asked for more detail on the difference between adjusted budget and adopted budget.

Lynne Rosselli, SCWA, answered that the adopted is voted on by WAC and approved by the Board of Supervisors, whereas the adjusted budget represents the adopted budget plus anything that is rolled over.

No public comment.

10. **Sonoma Water Capital Projects Update**

Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma, left at 10:26 a.m.

Kent Gylfe, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Work is continuing on rehabilitating three of their production wells. These wells are not routinely used, expect during times of exceptional need. At the Occidental Rd Well, a new well was installed, which will improve water quality. Design for the topside of the well is still in progress. The Sebastopol Rd Well's design is complete. The underground work should be completed in the upcoming weeks, with well conditioning and cycling happening through Spring 2025. The Kastania Tank recoat project goals included recoating of the interior and exterior of the tank, replacing cathodic protection, seismic analysis and retrofitting, and modifications to tank appurtenances. This was completed and back in service in September 2024. The Cotati #3 recoat and seismic project is slated to begin construction in February 2025. This tank is the largest in the system at 18MG. The Santa Rosa/Cotati aqueduct cathodic protection project is split into two phases. Phase one will include 11 total rectifier/anode well sites and 11 cathodic protection (CP) stations. Phase 2 will have 20 total rectifier/anode well sites and 39 CP stations. The Wilfred Booster electrical upgrade is scheduled for May 2025. The electrical switchgear was prepurchased in June 2024. The Ely Pump Booster station has been under construction contract for more than 2 years. Ground has not been broken as there have been procurement delays on electrical gears. The designs that are in progress currently include the Bennett Valley fault crossing, the treatment modernization upgrades, Wohler Demuth emergency storage facility, and the Kawana – Ralphine – SBS Pipeline phase 1. Washout inspections are taking place, which includes a complete draining and repairs. Nine tanks have been completed, with the Kawana 1 tank in progress, and three others scheduled. On the planning side, a master plan for the water transmission system is being worked on. The master plan will include recommendations that arise from the regional resiliency study. The master plan is on track to complete in FY 26/27. Received findings from a two-day comprehensive sanitary survey inspection. There were no deficiency findings on pumps, system management, and operation, monitoring, and reporting for operator compliance with state requirements. The minor deficiencies that were found included the need to replace chlorine solution rotometer in Collector 6, minor rust and graffiti on five tanks, and increase security on tank sites.

Tony Williams, North Marin Water District, said the communication with North Marin Water District on the Kastania recoating was wonderful.

No public comment.

11. Water Supply Conditions and Temporary Urgency Change Order

Kent Gylfe, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

The reservoirs are doing well with Lake Sonoma at 223,000 acre-ft of storage and Lake Mendocino at 52,000 acre-ft of storage. Received orders from State Board, responding to the change petition. The order was approved, which sets the storage requirements for minimum instream flows based on the storage at Lake Mendocino. Currently, the upper Russian River is at 153 cubic ft per second (cfs) and the lower Russian River is at 125 cfs.

No public comment.

12. Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership (TAC)

a. 2024 Water Production Relative to 2013 Benchmark

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, spoke on this topic.

For the month of September, the partnership saw a 15% reduction compared to 2013. The year-to-date compared to 2013 is showing a 22% reduction.

b. Water Use Efficiency Messaging

Paul Piazza, spoke on this topic.

The Summer outreach campaign was largely focused on social media, including Facebook, Instagram, and Nextdoor, which tends to be the most active. The Sonoma County Fair saw 633 in-person visitor interactions, earned media in the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, and saw over 50 new sign-ups for the Garden Sense program. During the Fall 2024 outreach campaign, Sonoma Water participated in Fiesta de Independencia and the Zero Waste Week's Fix-it-Fair. Social media outreach for Fall will include reminders to reduce irrigation, planting natives, and check for leaks ahead of sewer-averaging months. There is a call for gardens for the Eco-Friendly Gard Tour which will be held in May 2025.

c. 2024 EPA WaterSense Awards

Paul Piazza, spoke on this topic.

The partnership received three awards from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) WaterSense program. The three awards were the Water Sense Partner of the Year, the Sustained Excellence Award, and the 2024 Outstanding Industry Partnership Award. Marin Water also received an award for education and promoting water sense label products.

d. FY 2023/24 Annual Report

Paul Piazza, spoke on this topic.

The 23/24 annual report highlights the efforts of the partnership over the last year. Some of these highlights include the qualified water efficient landscape program, the landscaper training and certification program, as well as highlighting the education programs for K-12, the residential indoor water use programs, and the commercial programs.

No public comment.

13. Biological Opinion Status Update

David Manning, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Project – Miles 4 and 5 have both been constructed.

Phase VI is in the final stages of design and planning, with construction tentatively planned for 2026.

Fish Monitoring and Maintenance – Sonoma Water began operating a camera in the fish ladder at the Mirabel dam. To date, 750 Chinook have been counted.

Russian River Estuary Management Project – The mouth of the Russian River was mechanically breached last month. Due to a swell offshore, it was closed again in November.

New Biological Opinion – This is still forthcoming, and the implementation of projects and monitoring will continue under the 2008 Biological Opinion until the new one is issued.

Brenda Adelman asked it was unusual for the mouth to be closed this time of year and asked what the reason is.

David Manning answered that it is not unusual for it to be closed due to the change in the offshore wind and swell patterns. This tends to happen in both Spring and Fall.

No public comment.

14. Eel Russian Project Authority and Potter Valley Project Update

David Manning, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

PG&E is in the process of developing a draft surrender license application. They are due to release the draft in January, with the final submission happening in June. There have been meetings held with the Eel Russian Project Authority (ERPA), as well as with Sonoma Water, to discuss the new Eel Russian facility integration into both the draft and final surrender and decommissioning applications. There was a kickoff last week for the 60% design for the new facility. This uses \$2 million dollars from the Bureau of Reclamation grant. In the process of meeting with the regulatory agencies that will oversee permitting at various times. Looking to find ways to coordinate their permitting with the permitting PG&E will need.

Brenda Adelman asked about the public meeting for Biological Opinion Status update.

David Manning answered that there will be a meeting of the Public Policy Facilitating Committee after the release of the new Biological Opinion. There will also be an outreach strategy, where a series of meetings will be held with the public to discuss changes that are in the new Biological Opinion.

15. Integrated Regional Water Management Plan(s) Update

Brad Sherwood, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Working on a North Coast Regional Partnership meeting that will focus climate adaptation. The information will be sent out once the exact time and date are set.

No public comment.

16. Community and Employee Engagement Update

Ryan Pedrotti, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Community Engagement Goal: Engage with the community to build understanding, trust, and support for projects and programs. Some of the projects and programs include the Latino Service Providers tour, the YES Regional Parks tour, and the Water Supply Public tour. There were 18 students that toured the Sonoma Valley County Sanitary District treatment plant on October 16th. The visitors center at Lake Sonoma had over 1000 visits in September and in 875 visits in October. Mussel inspections are taking place at both reservoirs and Sonoma Water was awarded a \$400,000 grant from the California Division of Boating and Waterways for canine and visual inspections at Lake Mendocino. New employee tour took place on October 22nd, with another scheduled for November 7th.

No public comment.

17. Communications Update

Andrea Rodriguez, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Grant Davis, SCWA, was part of the latest SoCo Chat Podcast. Washington Creek emergency repairs have been completed. Press Democrat had an article about the Proposition 4 climate bond and the San Francisco Chronicle featured an article about Marin Water tasting great. Wrapping up the history for Sonoma Water's 75 years. Currently featuring history from the 1990's.

No public comment.

18. Government Affairs Update

Brad Sherwood, SCWA, spoke on this topic.

Lobbying team is working hard on Proposition 4. Sonoma Water has moved back to AAA credit rating. Pre-Covid a weekly email was created, "The Week Ahead", and would like to begin sending it back out to the WAC elected official. This will feature what tours are happening, what regulatory agencies they are meeting with, and what projects they are working on. Director David Rabbitt and Brad met with Department of Water Resources (DWR) director. The director said that the North Coast region is the model region for the state when it comes to water efficiency, water planning, and environmental stewardship. At the ACWA fall conference, Janine Jones, the Deputy of Water Secretary for Drought, will be speaking on subseasonal to seasonal forecasting.

No public comment.

19. Items for Next Agenda

The next WAC meeting is scheduled for Feb 3, 2025.

Jennifer Burke, City of Santa Rosa, reminded TAC members to send in any updated TAC and/or WAC member information.

No public comment.

20. Check Out

Chair Rogers adjourned the meeting at 11:12 am.