



**San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
 Citizens' Advisory Committee
 Water Subcommittee**

MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, January 25, 2022
 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SOFTWARE

Meeting URL

<https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/81995231084?pwd=Q0RtQi9DaFYrakpkSmRmNFNPV2RIQT09>

Phone Dial-in

669 219 2599

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Meeting ID / Passcode

819 9523 1084 # / 413850

Mission: The Water Subcommittee reviews water supply system reliability, water conservation, recycling, regional cooperation efforts and other relevant plans and policies. ([Admin Code 5.140-142](#))

This meeting is being held by Teleconference Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 and the Sixteenth Supplement to Mayoral Proclamation Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency Dated February 25,2020

During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) emergency, the San Francisco Public Utilities Citizens Advisory Committee's (SFPUC CAC) regular meeting room, 525 Golden Gate Ave., 3rd Floor Tuolumne Conference Room, is closed. CAC Members and SFPUC staff will convene CAC meetings remotely by teleconference. Members of the public are encouraged to submit their public comment on agenda items in advance of the teleconference meeting by emailing comments to cac@sfwater.org. Comments submitted no later than 12 PM the day of the meeting will be read into the record by SFPUC CAC Staffing Team members during the teleconference meeting and will be treated as a substitute to providing public comment during the meeting. Persons who submit written public comment in advance on an agenda item or items will not be permitted to also provide public comment on the same agenda item(s) during the meeting.

Members:

Jennifer Clary (Chair) (D11)	Suki Kott (D2)	Amy Nagengast (D8)
Nicole Sandkulla (M-Reg'l Water Customers)	Eliahu Perszyk (M-Large Water User)	

D = District Supervisor appointed, M = Mayor Appointed, B = Board President appointed

Staff Liaisons: Mayara Ruski Augusto Sa and Jobanjot Aulakh
 Staff Email for Public Comment: cac@sfwater.org

OUR MISSION: To provide our customers with high-quality, efficient and reliable water, power and sewer services in a manner that values environmental and community interests and sustains the resources entrusted to our care.

London N. Breed
 Mayor

Anson Moran
 President

Newsha Ajami
 Vice President

Sophie Maxwell
 Commissioner

Tim Paulson
 Commissioner

Ed Harrington
 Commissioner

Dennis J. Herrera
 General Manager



ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order and Roll Call at 5:41 pm

Members present at roll call: (3) Clary, Sandkulla, and Perszyk

Members Absent: (2) Kott* and Nagengast**

Staff: Ellen Levin, Betsy Rhodes, and Taylor Nokhoudian

Members of the Public: Dave Warner

Public Comment: None

*Member Kott arrived at 5:43 pm. Quorum maintained.

**Member Nagengast arrived at 5:45 pm and left at 6:59 pm. Quorum maintained.

2. Approval of the [November 23, 2021](#) Minutes

Member Sandkulla suggested adding the word “been” to her question on page 4 of the minutes. The sentence was changed to “She asked AGM Ritchie if that has been reflected on the Capital work”.

Motion was made (Sandkulla) and seconded (Perszyk) to approve the November 23, 2021 Minutes as amended.

AYES: (4) Clary, Perszyk, Sandkulla, and Kott

NOES: (0)

ABSENT: (1) Nagengast

Public Comment: None

3. Report from the Chair

- Chair welcomes committee members, staff, and the public
- Chair will write a letter on the behalf of the subcommittee expressing concerns regarding in-person CAC meetings resuming February 28, 2022

Public Comment: None

4. Public Comment: Members of the public may address the Committee on matters that are within the committee’s jurisdiction and are not on today’s agenda (2 minutes per speaker)

- **Dave Warner** began by stating that he is a Palo Alto resident. The CAC should have received a copy of a letter that various NGOs (Non-governmental Organization) sent to the Commissioners regarding a recently completed long-term vulnerability assessment (LTVA). For context, Tuolumne salmon are close to extinction. In fact, when a trend line is drawn for Tuolumne salmon population beginning from the

1950s, it drops below zero or extinction in 2012. Luckily, though, they are still hanging on. The LTVA is a remarkable in-depth study, but Warner believes it is missing some key data. First, the study uses 227 million gallons per day as its base line water demand. However, actual demand has been 200 million gallons per day or less since 2013, and Commissioner Ajami alludes that it can even go lower despite population increases. Second, it calculates the recurrence frequency of the 1987-1992 and the 1976-1977 droughts, but not for the design drop model. The design drop model is such an exceptionally rare event that even if it was reduced by a year, it would still be rarer than once in 500 years. Third, while the study states that there is no clear change in precipitation in the next 50 years, 4 degrees Celsius warming is likely. Warner believes this could mean that river flows could come in earlier, substantially benefiting the waterway in drought years, but the study has not broken out that situation. Warner believes that if the LTVA were to address these three items, Commissioners would find that the design drop could be reduced by a year and find that living with the Bay Delta Plan is more achievable than the 93 MGE shortfall that has previously been stated. Please consider having the LTVA presented to the CAC by Peter Drekmeier or another member of the Tuolumne River Trust. There is a public presentation on the LTVA this Thursday at noon. The Tuolumne salmon are at stake.

Chair Clary acknowledged that the CAC received the letter.

Public Comment: None

5. **Issue:** [Water Supply Status and Drought Public Outreach](#), Ellen Levin, Assistant Deputy General Manager, Water Enterprise; Betsy L. Rhodes, Senior Communications Manager, Water Enterprise

Action: Understand the current water status and SFPUC's outreach efforts to address drought

Presentation

- Current Reservoir Storage
- Other California Reservoirs
- California Drought Monitor
- Hetch Hetchy Precipitation
- Upcountry Snowpack
- Water Available to the City
- Upcountry 6-station Precipitation Index as of January 23, 2022
- Bay Area 7-station Precipitation Index as of January 23, 2022
- Total Deliveries
- Drought Tracker
- National Precipitation Forecast
- Water Supply Status and Drought Public Outreach
- Water Conservation Public Outreach
- Key Talking Points
- Creating the Campaign
- For Renters
- Free Devices
- Multiple Languages
- Outdoor Focus Regionally
- Paid Media Overview – in Language
- Paid Media – SF and Region

- The Launch
- Drought Surcharge Awareness
- Thank You!

Discussion

- **Chair Clary** commented that the majority of the state is only in "severe drought" and it is good news!

- **Chair Clary** asked if the 15% reduction in San Francisco is something that has been seen since the beginning of Covid or if it is an increase.

Staff Levin responded that it has increased. However, it is difficult to track because adjustments have been happening on a week-to-week basis that are difficult to tie to an exact cause.

- **Member Kott** commented that when looking at the chart for rainfall, Staff Levin stated that the rain they have had so far has brought them up to a median or average year. Member Kott asked if that reflects all the rainfall so far and if we may reach an above average if it continues to rain.

Staff Levin responded affirmatively. The chart that displays precipitation at Hetch Hetchy shows that they shot up in December. If it had continued raining, they would have been well above that median line. It stopped raining in January, which has become a trend lately where there are dry spells, and it warms up. The lack of rainfall in January has brought them to the median line.

- **Chair Clary** asked if the snowpack is included in the precipitation graphics and if the snowpack is at median as well.

Staff Levin responded affirmatively. There were two slides. The first slide was precipitation, which was just rainfall, and the second slide was about the snowpack. The snowpack slide is showing low elevation snow, which is where the snow pillows are. To get a view of the higher elevation snow, snow surveys are necessary, and a team is out this week and the next week doing snow surveys.

Chair Clary commented that this will be updated then.

- **Member Perszyk** commented that he liked the look of the campaign and that the messaging is clean and straight-forward. The Water Subcommittee has discussed how to connect drought messaging with the fact that ground water and recycled water is being blended into the Hetch Hetchy water to explain to customers that it is not just pure Hetch Hetchy water. Member Perszyk asked if there are any plans to develop messaging around that.

Staff Rhodes responded that drought years present a good opportunity to remind people of the diversification of their supply. People are more receptive during a drought. She hopes the Westside Enhanced Water Recycling Project will be coming online later this year, and they will be stressing the diversification of water resources then too. Staff Rhodes acknowledged that it was a good idea to think of other opportunities to weave that messaging in more.

- **Chair Clary** commented that she receives an e-bill and has not received any drought messaging yet. Chair Clary asked if the SFPUC

has any generic messaging or are they focused on the one age bracket and communities who speak different languages.

Staff Rhodes responded that the campaign was designed broadly and there are advertisements on social media and Nextdoor, bill inserts, and cards on the MTA (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency) buses. The campaign is geared toward general folks. When signing onto the SFPUC account, there is a blazing icon highlighting this topic. Staff Rhodes is also open to other ideas regarding advertising as well.

- **Chair Clary** commented that Nextdoor is strange and has weird headlines, but it is great that the SFPUC is using it. She will keep an eye out for the advertisement on her bus. Chair Clary asked why the drought emergency was passed in November when the Governor called for it in July and had asked for voluntary conservation back in Spring and asked for an explanation behind the timing.

Staff Levin responded that the SFPUC asked its customers for a voluntary water reduction in April when they provided their final water supply estimate for the coming year. The SFPUC asked their customers to reduce their outdoor irrigation use. That was sufficient for the water that they had in their reservoirs, as their water supply system was in pretty good shape. What drove the SFPUC to move into a water shortage emergency was curtailments and the fact that the State Water Board had issued curtailments and curtailment orders. The State Water Board had curtailed San Francisco's diversions in August into its reservoirs on the Tuolumne River system. This created a great deal of anxiety for the SFPUC. If they were not going to be able to take water into the Hetchy system, they would be living off the storage, and that prompted the need for declaring a water shortage emergency.

Public Comment: None

6. **Issue:** [Non-potable Water Ordinance Update](#), Taylor Nokhoudian, Water Resources Program Manager, Water Enterprise

Action: Track the impacts of the Non-potable Water Ordinance

Presentation

- Non-potable Water Ordinance Updates
- Diversifying San Francisco's Water Supplies
- Pilot Onsite Water Reuse at SFPUC Headquarters
- Buildings Generate Resources
- Meeting Private Sector Interest in Onsite Reuse
- Developing Program to Allow Onsite Water Systems
- Non-potable Ordinance Requires City Family Coordination
- San Francisco's Evolving Onsite Water Reuse Program
- 2021 Non-potable Ordinance Amendments
- 2021 Non-potable Water Ordinance Amendments
- Additional Non-potable Ordinance Amendments
- San Francisco's 10 Step Permitting Process
- Examples of Mandatory NPO Projects
- Summary of Onsite Water Reuse Projects in SF
- Water Savings From Non-potable Ordinance
- Onsite Water Reuse Grant Program
- Onsite Water Reuse Grant Program Eligibility and Benefits

- Innovations in Breweries
- Additional Examples of Non-Mandatory Grant Projects
- Thank you
- Summary of Required Sources and Non-potable Uses

Discussion

- **Member Nagengast** commented that there are exemptions for affordable housing and homeless supportive housing, which would exclude them from any grant opportunities. Member Nagengast asked why that is.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that it was due to policy direction from the Mayor's Office of Housing. The idea was not having these requirements apply to affordable housing and homeless supportive housing projects due to the capital cost of installing the necessary system raising the price of the project. There are also ongoing operations and maintenance costs, such as the need for a treatment system operator onsite running the systems. On the grant side, affordable housing projects are still eligible to apply for grants. They can install systems on a voluntary basis and apply for a grant. The SFPUC is just making clear that they are not required to have a system according to the ordinance.

- **Member Nagengast** asked for confirmation that being exempt does not mean that they are unable to apply for the various available grants.

Staff Nokhoudian responded affirmatively.

- **Member Nagengast** asked what is there push back when it comes to hospitals and health service institutions.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that the current water quality standards that the Department of Public Health has in place were developed based on risk-based water quality assessment. It is complicated, but when looking at pathogens of concern (viruses, protozoa, and bacteria), there must be a treatment process for capturing waters onsite to treat and reduce those specific pathogen loads specifically for commercial buildings, mixed use buildings, and multi-family buildings. The research to develop the risk-based water quality framework was not developed for health care buildings, hospitals, and PDR (Production Dispatch and Reporting) industrial use facility types. There are many unknowns regarding contaminants, quality, and what is in the water, and that is the reason the SFPUC is not requiring these types of facilities to re-use water onsite.

- **Member Sandkulla** commented that these systems are all designed for a certain kind of use in the building. As Staff Levin mentioned earlier, use is down completely throughout the entire City, presumably in buildings that also have these systems. Member Sandkulla asked what issues people are experiencing in operation, if that is informing changes to the program, and what is the impact of these unexpected circumstances to the program.

Member Nokhoudian responded that the SFPUC's building comes to mind regarding how Covid has affected building onsite re-use systems. It is a commercial building, and there has been either nobody or only minimal staff in the building for the past two years. The wetland treatment system has been put on standby and is not being used. This

option is available to projects that have these systems. They can choose to not use them if they do not have enough flow to generate recycled water onsite. They will still be able to flush their toilets and run their cooling towers, but it will just be with potable water. Also, it is not just commercial buildings that have these onsite systems. There are also projects with residential components that are either completely multi-family residential with some type of mixed commercial use and residential. For those projects, people are in their residences and they are generating flows including gray water flows and wastewater flows. The residential projects are still able to operate their systems because the buildings are still occupied and producing water that is recycled onsite.

- **Member Sandkulla** asked if there are significant restart costs after the systems are turned off, similar to what happens with desalinization projects. Sandkulla further asked if the membranes go foul and must be replaced.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that there are operational challenges. Biological treatment needs constant wastewater flow to the system to keep it active. There will be some start-up costs and operational considerations when those buildings are once again occupied. For simpler systems, such as a rainwater harvesting system that might have a cartridge filter, UV disinfection, and maybe some chlorine residual, they do not anticipate any challenges with restarting those systems.

- **Member Perszyk** commented that he looked at the calculator that Staff Nokhoudian mentioned, and he was wondering about air conditioning condensate. He did not see it as a supply and has been looking at that for one of UCSF's buildings. In San Francisco, it is not hot or humid, so there is not much supply as there is in other parts of the country. It is great to include that with the NPO (Non-potable Water Ordinance), but Member Perszyk was wondering about including that in the calculator.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that she agrees with Perszyk's point that there is not much air conditioning in San Francisco in general because the climate is so mild. It was a request from the Plumber's Union and the Pipe Fitters' Union to require drain track priming as a required end use and condensate as a required sourced water. Staff Nokhoudian believes it is included in the calculator because a consultant was helping them make modifications to the calculator to ensure it reflected the new amendments and requirements.

- **Member Perszyk** asked if there was a way that a user could put in their building load because condensate is tricky to calculate. Perszyk added that it would be helpful if it was made easier for people.
- **Member Kott** asked how much Anchor Brewery's cost considering they received a \$1 million grant.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that the project cost was a little over \$4 million.

- **Member Kott** commented that it was a great savings for the brewery. She is aware that there are some residences in the City that use sump pumps. Member Kott asked if it is possible to identify those people or

put something on the SFPUC newsletter. Kott also asked if it is easy for them to re-capture their water.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that this program targets the larger buildings, such as the larger commercial and multi-family mixed use buildings and not residences that would be pumping foundation drainage. It is easier to capture that when it is built into the building as a new building. It would have to be designed into the project at the start to know that the foundation drainage would be re-used. It could also be a part of a greater renovation, which is what the Moscone Center did. They knew they were going to be pumping foundation drainage to the sewer, so they incorporated piping, plumbing, and treatment systems and made sure the design captured that and brought it back into the building to re-use for toilet flushing.

- **Chair Clary** asked what drain tap priming is.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that in some buildings, there is piping that comes from a sink or fixture. The drain trap helps to prevent sewer off gassing, so it must get flushed out periodically with water. This helps prevent sewer off gassing from fixtures. Drinking quality water is not necessary to clean the drain trap out, so non-potable water can be used to clean out the drain trap. It is essentially the trap connected to fixtures that helps to release sewer off gassing.

Member Perszyk commented that it was also to prevent sewer flies.

- **Chair Clary** asked how rainwater collection is an option that is no longer required and if that eliminates the requirement to capture and treat 95% of rainwater onsite according to the stormwater ordinance.

Staff Nokhoudian responded affirmatively.

- **Chair Clary** asked if Anchor Steam was the only brewery in town and if the SFPUC created a category just for breweries when setting the requirements for who is eligible for grants and if the SFPUC considered other categories for large water users, and if there are other breweries in the City.

Staff Nokhoudian responded that there are a couple breweries and that they could apply for grants as well. The SFPUC would love to get the word out if CAC members know of other breweries.

Public Comment: None

7. Staff Report

- The due date to submit vaccination records is January 31, 2022
- In-person meetings will resume starting February 28, 2022

*CAC Members expressed concern about returning to in-person meetings. Members had questions about vaccination requirements for members of the public and social distancing at 525 Golden Gate Avenue.

Public Comment: None

8. Future Agenda Items and Resolutions

Standing Subjects

- Groundwater
- Water Quality

Specific Subjects

- Impact of Climate Change on Water Supply – *tentatively* March
- Implementation of the Bay Delta Plan Flow Requirement – *tentatively* March
- Emergency Firefighting Water System Update – *tentatively* May
- Natural Resources and Land Management Division Update
- Integrating Tribal Leaders into SFPUC Land Management Decisions
- State Board Water Rights
- Debate about Bay Delta – Member Sandkulla suggested everyone watch the February 5, 2021 Commission workshop about the Voluntary Agreement
- Affordability
- COVID and Long-term Affordability Program
- Hetch Hetchy Water and Power Division Update
- State Policy and Programs on Affordability or Low-Income Rate Assistance (LIRA)
- Bay Delta Plan and voluntary settlement agreement
- Legislative Update
- State of the Regional Water System Report – Bi-annual report
- Drought resilience: 3-year water supply update
- Water Equity and Homelessness
- State of Local Water Report
- Retail Conservation Report
- Harry Tracy Water Treatment Plant tour

Adopted Resolutions for Follow Up

- Resolution in Support of a Resilient Water Supply [adopted August 17, 2021](#)
- Resolution in Support of the Southern Skyline Boulevard Ridge Trail Extension Project [adopted April 20, 2021](#)
- Resolution in Support of Interim Emergency Rate Assistance Program and Revised Community Assistance Program [adopted July 21, 2020](#)
- Resolution in Support of Improved Communications Related to the San Francisco Groundwater Supply Project [adopted August 21, 2018](#)
- Resolution in Supporting Stewardship and Public Access in the Redeveloped Lake Merced West Property [adopted March 15, 2016](#)
- Resolution on Impacts of Drought on System Maintenance and Improvements [adopted January 19, 2016](#)

9. **Announcements/Comments** Please visit www.sfpuc.org/cac for final confirmation of the next scheduled meeting, agenda, and materials.

10. Adjournment

Motion was made (Clary) and seconded (Sandkulla) to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:01 pm.