



San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Citizens' Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 17, 2023
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
525 Golden Gate Ave., 3rd Floor Tuolumne Conference Room

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY OBSERVE AND PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SOFTWARE**

Meeting URL

<https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/85917690629?pwd=ZzZldGo2UWY3MXRrMVhqdW5zZTJGdz09>

Phone Dial-in

669.219.2599

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Meeting ID/Passcode

859 1769 0629 / 874115

Mission: The purpose of the SFPUC CAC is to provide recommendations to the SFPUC General Manager, the SFPUC Commission, and the Board of Supervisors regarding the agency's long-term strategic, financial, and capital improvement plans ([Admin. Code Article XV, Sections 5.140 - 5.142](#))

Members:

Moisés García, Chair (D9)

Caroline Law (D1)

Suki Kott (D2)

Sally Chen (D3)

Douglas Jacuzzi (D4)

Emily Algire (D5)

Barklee Sanders (D6)

VACANT (D7)

Amy Nagengast (D8)

Steven Lee (D10)

Jennifer Clary (D11)

Maika Pinkston (M-Environmental Org.)

Nicole Sandkulla (M-Regional Water Customers)

Jodi Soboll (M-Engineering/Financial)

Eliahu Perszyk (M-Large Water User)

Andrea Baker (B-Small Business)

Michelle Pierce (B-Environ. Justice)

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

Staff Liaisons: Lexus Moncrease

Staff Email for Public Comment: cac@sfwater.org

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- **Call to order and roll call at 5:31 pm**

Members present at roll call: (9) García, Law, Jacuzzi, Algire, Sanders, Nagengast, Clary, Sandkulla, Perszyk, and Baker

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

Newsha Ajami
President

Sophie Maxwell
Vice President

Tim Paulson
Commissioner

Tony Rivera
Commissioner

Kate Stacy
Commissioner

Dennis J. Herrera
General Manager



Members Absent: (6) Kott, Chen, Lee, Pinkston, Soboll, and Pierce

Staff/Staffs: Ellen Levin

Members of the Public: None

- **Approve [September 19, 2023 Minutes](#)**

Motion was made (Clary) and seconded (Perszyk) to approve the September 19, 2023, Minutes.

Approved without objection.

Public Comment: None

- **Report from the Chair**

- Welcome members, staff, and the public
- Introduce new member Caroline (Spud) Law, District 1
- Ohlone Tribal Land Acknowledgement

Public Comment: None

- **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

Public Comment: None

- **Discussion and Presentation: [Water Supply Conditions Update](#), Ellen Levin, Deputy Manager, SFPUC Water Enterprise**

Presentation

- Current Reservoir Storage- Tuolumne System + Local System
- Other California Reservoirs
- California Drought Monitor
- Hetch Hetchy Precipitation
- Upcountry 6-station Precipitation Index- September 30, 2023
- Bay Area 7-station Precipitation Index- September 30, 2023
- Upcountry Snowpack: WY 2023
- Water Available to the City: WY2023
- Water Available to the City: WY2024
- WY 2023 Tuolumne River: Water Available to the City
- Total Deliveries
- National Precipitation Forecast
- National Temperature Forecast
- October Precipitation Outlook
- October Temperature Outlook
- Oct-Nov-Dec Precipitation Outlook
- Oct-Nov-Dec Temperature Outlook

Discussion

- **Member Clary** asked, regarding water available to the City, whether the City's water take is limited to specific months.

Staff Levin responded that there is not a limitation to specific months, but it's not often that big spikes are seen in those early months because it takes a really wet year for water to become available to the City outside of the snow melt period.

- **Member Nagengast** asked to confirm that April through October is when San Francisco uses the most water because of outdoor use and gardening.

Staff Levin responded and confirmed that outdoor use is the primary reason but also noted that water conservation has increased, and water usage has decreased during these months since 2015. This is good for conservation but impacts revenue.

- **Chair García** asked why April 15th is the date when SFPUC tells BAWSCA what deliveries will be to the wholesale customers.

Member Sandkulla responded that that's generally when SFPUC has a sense of what to expect for the water year and can anticipate whether agencies will have to call for conservation, which takes time to implement.

Staff Levin responded that SFPUC works closely with BAWSCA on this calendar, and generally waits until that last snow survey to make a call because there is occasionally late season snow. There is a lot of communication happening before then as well, and letters sent out in February and March.

- **Member Clary** asked about drawdown at Hetch Hetchy and flood control.

Staff Levin responded that SFPUC does not have any flood control obligations at Hetch Hetchy, though Don Pedro does, and they have a required schedule. Staff Levin added that SFPUC does work with districts to help them achieve their flood control requirements and indicated that there would not be significant draw down.

- **Member Sandkulla** asked whether SFPUC is seeing a trend in the shifting of dry periods.

Staff Levin responded that SFPUC is always looking for trends but it's less about individual months; rather the trend is more dry years.

- **Chair García** asked, in reference to the 1991-2020 historical median, what the previous historical median like, and when a new analysis may be released.

Staff Levin responded that she would have to look it up, but the median was higher. Staff Levin noted that the SFPUC will likely wait a few more years before conducting a new analysis but that these 30-year trends are critical for planning.

- **Member Nagengast** asked whether the goal is to fill reservoirs up to 100%.

Staff Levin responded affirmatively but the goal is 100% at the end of the snow melt period, in July. The local system is drawn down as winter approaches so that SFPUC can capture winter stormwater. She explained that the SFPUC tries to get to the winter guide curve before winter hits (before December 1st), but with the Hetch Hetchy shutdown we might have the local reservoirs ride a little higher than normal.

- **Member Perszyk** asked about when recycled water is supplying GGP, including groundwater, whether that would be shown as part of the local water supply.

Staff Levin responded that she does have other slides that include groundwater as a source. Right now, the majority of water provided by SFPUC comes from Hetch Hetchy but it is blended with water from the Sunol water treatment plant (Calaveras and San Antonio Reservoirs). Local groundwater constitutes less than 1 MGD because we have limited pumping capacity.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked when flows are adjusted, whether SFPUC is taking into consideration the minimum flows for environmental purposes.

Staff Levine responded affirmatively and shared that the SFPUC uses schedules that are adjusted based on the water year type. The release schedules for Calaveras and Crystal Springs were recently updated, and there is not a release schedule at San Antonio, but they have been talking about it. SFPUC has agreed to a voluntary release at Pilarcitos with the National Marine Fishery Service to protect steelhead salmon downstream. The Hetch Hetchy schedules have been in place for a very long time, and the SFPUC is looking at adjusting to improve ecosystem function and response.

- **Chair García** asked for more information about the Calaveras rebuild.

Staff Levin responded that it was found to be unsound, and in preparation it was drawn down in 2001, and was just refilled it this year for the first time because the precipitation was not there for several years to refill it. Calaveras was rebuilt to previous capacity (was not enlarged); the rebuild process required permitting and SFPUC got a revised release schedule for Calaveras. SFPUC also built a fish ladder on Alameda Creek, on the diversion dam, which allows fish to be carried over the barrier.

- **Member Baker** asked how frequently reservoirs are rebuilt.

Staff Levin responded that there is not a set expectation; the hope is that they don't have to be rebuilt. There is a Division of Safety of Dams which is reviewing all of the dams and the potential impacts a dam failure and may recommend rebuilding a spillway.

- **Chair García** asked with the planned three-month shutdown at Hetch Hetchy, what impact there is to the groundwater mix and impact to customers.

Staff Levin responded that SFPUC has five local reservoirs, and that treated water is mixed in with our water regularly, though the majority comes from Hetch Hetchy.

- **Member Clary** asked about algae monitoring.

Staff Levin acknowledged that the SFPUC does monitor for algae and that this is becoming an issue everywhere with warmer temperatures persisting into the fall. Algae can create taste and odor issues, so SFPUC avoids taking from the reservoirs when there are algae blooms.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked about the percentages of blended water.

Staff Levin responded that it's usually about 15% from reservoirs. In SF groundwater is less than 1 MGD of the blend (less than 2%).

Member Sandkulla commented that CAC members should familiarize themselves with water supply reports so they can interpret the changes as they come.

- **Chair García** asked Member Sandkulla to explain more about BAWSCA.

Member Sandkulla explained that BAWSCA represents SFPUC wholesale customers outside of SF. By April 15th SFPUC notifies wholesale customers whether use reductions are needed based on the water year, and there is then a drought allocation plan negotiated amongst the 26 agencies. She explained that it is not uncommon for the SF system to be at a different level of drought than rest of state—and generally SFPUC is calling for wise use of water before the rest of the state. Ultimately SFPUC is a locally owned system under regulation from but independent of the state.

- **Member Clary** commented that during the first year of drought you saw North Coast agencies really having to make some hard calls because they have much more restricted sources of water. Many agencies outside SF are critical of the SFPUC's system.

Member Sandkulla responded that it's because SFPUC is not in the state system, has high reservoir capacity, senior water rights, etc.—and SF also has a constituency that has some of the lowest water usage per capita in the state. SF is at 41 gallons per customer per day.

Member Clary noted that the state is getting ready to set goals for each water agency in the state to meet, and this may face some resistance from some geographies. Thursday is "Imagine a day without water", a public education campaign.

Public Comment: None

- **Discussion: Full CAC FY 2022-2023 Priorities**, Moisés García, Full CAC Chair

Resource: [2021-2022 Annual Report](#)

- **Chair García:** Water and Power Subcommittees have completed their priorities, and Wastewater will be completing theirs. These will help the

CAC develop a framework which will guide future topics and CAC-wide priorities.

- **Member Clary** shares Water Subcommittee priority topics:
 - Groundwater
 - Infrastructure (Water Capital Plan)
 - Hiring Practices/Labor Force Turnover
 - Demand Projections
 - Bay Delta Plan and Voluntary Settlement
 - Water Assistant General Manager (presentation with focus on budget/priorities)
- **Member Alguire** shares Power Subcommittee priority topics:
 - Climate Change Impact and Weatherization
 - Strategic Investments in Power Infrastructure for Resiliency
 - Power Programs and Affordability
 - Equitable Power Reliability

Discussion:

- **Member Sandkulla:** Related to the Water Subcommittee priorities, the issue of demand projections has come up from members of the public, wanting to know if SFPUC is projecting demands correctly. There has been some discussion about including a sensitivity analysis, related to external factors like assumptions about housing development. On the Bay Delta voluntary agreement, Member Sandkulla indicated support of watching the workshops and suggested requesting a presentation from SFPUC and then separately a presentation from Tuolumne River Trust or one of the other Dela groups.
- **Chair García:** Some of the items under the Water priorities probably are appropriate to be CAC-wide, like Infrastructure (which is also a Power priority) or Hiring Practices.
- **Chair García:** Affordability should continue to be a priority, there are many aspects to this conversation that are important for us to track. Overall, while we are still waiting on Wastewater's priorities, there is enough content here that we can identify a solid priority and presentation for every one of our meetings in the coming year.

Public Comment: None

- **Staff Report**

- The District 7 seat is still vacant.
- **Chair García:** The SFPUC Commission has moved public comment back to the beginning of the meeting.

Public Comment: None

- **SFPUC Communications**

- [Approve Amended Commission Rules of Order](#)
- [Social Impact Partnership Program Rules and Regulations](#)
- [Biennial Budget and 10 Year Capital Plan FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26](#)
- [Capital Planning Improvement Initiative Update](#)
- [Capital Financing Plan for Fiscal Year 2023-24](#)

- Water Enterprise
 - [Water Supply Conditions Update \(October 2, 2023\)](#)
 - [Hetch Hetchy Capital Improvement Program FY 2022-23 Q4](#)
- Wastewater Enterprise
 - [Wastewater Capital Programs Quarterly Update, FY 2022-23 Q4](#)
- The SFPUC Commission has moved public comment back to the beginning of the meeting.

Public Comment: None

- **Future Agenda Items and Resolutions**
 - [CAC Advance Calendar](#)
 - Reminder that the upcoming November meeting will include a visit from Commissioner Kate Stacey (the last of the Commissioner visits to the CAC) and Capital Improvement Plan Review item.
 - The CAC will be on recess in December.

Public Comment: None

- **Announcements/Comments Please visit www.sfpuc.org/cac for confirmation of the next scheduled meeting, agenda, and materials.**
 - **Member Clary** asked about the practice of CAC members calling in remotely.
 - **Staff Moncrease** responded that CAC members who would like to attend and participate remotely must request a formal accommodation, and she can provide that information to any interested members.
 - **Member Jacuzzi** shared that the Far Out West Community Garden is partnering with the Surfrider Foundation to hold a film festival this coming Saturday relevant to water issues, and will ask Lexus to share the flyer with CAC members.
- **Adjournment at 7:01 PM.**