



San Francisco Water Power Sewer

Services of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Citizens' Advisory Committee

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MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

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 Recording URL

<https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/81110530684?pwd=jsHaszUbk5ci6Zc5YQaeb4f1jaO1rO.1>

Meeting Passcode

879530

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:

Douglas Jacuzzi (Chair) (D4)

Cal Law (D1)

Erin Roach (D2)

Sally Chen (D3)

VACANT (D5)

Barklee Sanders (D6)

Julia Alicia Hernandez (D7)

Amy Nagengast (D8)

Aaron Hebert (D9)

VACANT (D10)

Jennifer Clary (D11)

Andrea Baker (B-Small Business)

Arthine Cossey van Duyne (B-Environ.
Justice)

Eliahu Perszyk (M-Large Water User)

Maika Pinkston (M-Environmental Org.)

Thomas Smegal (M-Regional Water
Customers)

Jodi Soboll (M-Engineering/Financial)

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

Staff Liaisons: Lexus Moncrease and Lupita Garcia

Staff Email for Public Comment: cac@sfwater.org

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order and Roll Call at 5:31 pm

Members present (11): Jacuzzi, Law, Chen, Sanders, Nagengast, Hebert, Clary, Cossey van Duyne, Perszyk, Smegal, Soboll.

Members absent (14): Roach, Hernandez, Baker, Pinkston

Staff/Presenters (2): Laura Busch, Nikolai Sklaroff

Members of the Public: Dave Warner, Peter Drekmeier, Georgia Hodge, Lila Holzman

Daniel Lurie
Mayor

Joshua Arce
President

Stephen E. Leveroni
Vice President

Avni Jamdar
Commissioner

Meghan Thurlow
Commissioner

Kate H. Stacy
Commissioner

Dennis J. Herrera
General Manager

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.



2. Approve [November 18, 2025, Minutes](#)

A motion was made (Clary) and seconded (Smegal) to approve the November 18, 2025 Minutes.

The minutes were approved by the following votes:

AYES (10): Jacuzzi, Law, Chen, Sanders, Hebert, Clary, Cossey van Duyne, Perszyk, Smegal, Soboll.

NOES (0):

Absent (5): Roach, Hernandez, Nagengast, Baker, Pinkston.

Public Comment: None.

3. **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.

4. **Presentation and Discussion:** [Overview of SFPUC's Biennial Budget and Capital Plan Proposal](#), Laura Busch Deputy CFO, SFPUC Business Services

Presentation:

- SFPUC Budget and Rates for CAC
- Budget Process & Timeline
- SFPUC Priorities for this Budget
- Balancing Our Priorities
- EPA's affordability threshold is 4.5% of *Median* Household Income
- SFPUC's Affordability Policy is *much more stringent*
- Reminder: Legal Framework for Rate-setting
- History Lesson: A Century of Declining Federal Investment in the Water Sector
- What is Causing High Rate Increases in SF Today
- Efforts to Limit Cost Growth
- Operating Budget Growth Drivers
- Plan Grew by ~\$700M, Driven by Power
- Capital Plan by Enterprise
- Rigorous Prioritization & Strategic Reductions
- The Other Upsides: Investing in the Local Economy and the Environment
- Proposed Rates – Water and Wastewater
- Remains under low income target if enrolled in CAP
- SF Residents Will Still Pay Less Than Other CA Ratepayers
- The Other Bill: Power Rates Holding Steady
- Proposed Rates – Hetch Hetchy Power
- Proposed Rates – CleanPowerSF
- Our Ongoing Commitments to Ratepayers
- Debt and Bond Rating Outlook
- Why Does the SFPUC Issue Debt?
- High Ratings Allow SFPUC to Borrow at Low Rates
- Outstanding Borrowing Obligations

- SFPUC Works Hard to Reduce Borrowing Costs
- New 10-Year Debt Issuance Plan
- Capital Finance Summary
- In Closing...

Discussion:

- **Member Sanders** asked if this presentation would cover Treasure Island.

Staff Busch responded this is an overview of the entire SFPUC budget and will not have any specific focus on Treasure Island. There are investments in Treasure Island that are included in the operating and capital budgets and more information will be presented as it gets closer to Commission adoption on February 10th.

- **Member Clary** commented the median household income (MHI) are being compared as percentages and asked what the MHI is for San Francisco.

Staff Busch responded she does not know and will explain why in her next slide.

- **Member Nagengast** asked what the numbers equate to and commented it would be helpful to include these figures to help internalize the data.

Staff Busch responded she does not have that answer of the top of her head and this is publicly available data the SFPUC gets from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and will send out the report to the CAC.

- **Member Hebert** asked to clarify why it means that the demand is lower than projections for regional customers.

Staff Busch responded the SFPUC is very conservative when we do our financial planning forecast, and we want to make sure that we go low on demand projections to make sure we are being as conservative as possible in our forecast. We work with the Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), and we have other measures of actual usage and demand that we factor into to come up with demand projections. The 10-year financial plan is forthcoming that will be adopted by the Commission on February 10th.

Member Soboll commented a couple years ago the CAC saw a similar presentation where a lot of the forecast was conservative and really high and many people were bringing this issue up and it seemed the SFPUC is trying to make sure that we had the infrastructure in case things grew but the projections seem really high considering how much the City and residents try to conserve water and asked as the discussion continues can there be more discussion around how the SFPUC can have more realistic demand calculations.

Staff Busch responded the SFPUC continues to try to do a better job of this and we have different volume projections for different purposes for example, in the Water Enterprise they are trying to figure out much infrastructure needs to be built to meet demand or how much

alternative water supply do we need if there's a drought so for them being conservative means projecting high demand. In finance, we are worried about running out of money, so we tend to have a lower demand projection than folks on the water side because it is for a different purpose. This year we made a concerted effort to try and align those two goals and we've done a better job but we're still using a conservative measure of demands that's based on actuals.

Member Smegal commented there is a big iterative process when it comes to the regional rates, involving a dialogue back and forth and its short-term and has to do with what water was sold last year and what is expecting to sell this year.

- **Member Soboll** asked if the renewable energy that will be needed will have a future impact to lower rates.

Staff Busch responded it is possible, and a lot of the investments made are to support the grid infrastructure needed to bring on new customers and the goal is to build this more into our financial planning where the more customers we have the more we can spread fixed cost of the systems across the customers. The trajectory for power rates is increases in the short term and then leveling up in the long term as we bring customers on board which include the airport, private sector and the steam loop for the City, Cordia.

Member Soboll asked if this information will be included in future slides on this presentation.

Staff Busch responded this is not contained in this deck but that is in the expenses.

- **Member Clary** commented the MHI in San Francisco is \$141,400 and 40th percentile is \$62,200 and 3% of that is \$155,000 and the 20th percentile is \$33,000. The monthly water and wastewater bill at 5% is \$137.
- **Member Cossey van Duyne** asked if the purchase of power on page 11 could be explained.

Staff Busch responded if you looked at a pie chart what the cost drivers in SFPUC's budget are two: capital and purchase power. The purchase of power is the Power Enterprise purchasing power for both CleanPowerSF and Hetch Hetchy Power to purchase electricity needed to serve our customers. In CleanPowerSF, more than 90% of their cost is driven by the power that they must purchase by customers and for Hetchy Power it is driven by when we do not have enough generated in the system, so we need to buy power on the wholesale markets. The SFPUC relies on the market and in recent years it has been volatile where prices increased dramatically due to supply chain constrains, war in Ukraine and other factors outside of our control and are anticipating these costs will moderate over the next few years based on projections from our power team.

- **Member Perszyk** asked how much revenue is covering the budget.

Staff Busch responded there are two ways in which the operating budget supports the capital budget. The first is it pays the debt services on the debt we've issued much like a mortgage payment and the second is we put revenue towards capital projects every year to pay for a portion of those capital projects every year to pay for a portion of the projects in cash.

- **Member Sanders** asked in the operations and maintenance budget growth driver if it included assets only owned by the SFPUC.

Staff Busch responded yes it only includes SFPUC owned assets.

- **Member Nagengast** commented one of the things that is very interesting the capital investment would decrease the amount of deferred maintenance that the SFPUC has a large amount of and asked if they track or publish what is the current differed maintenance.

Staff Busch responded she does not know the answer and it would be a great question to bring up at the enterprise-specific subcommittee meetings.

- **Chair Jacuzzi** asked if the general reverse at the very bottom on slide 11 could be explained.

Staff Busch responded this is being driven by the fact in the last budget, money was put into the reserves which is like a savings account. In this budget to meter the impacts on rates and in alignment with our fund balance reserve, we're dipping into reserves to balance the budget. This was strategically planned over the long term in our financial planning documents which are forthcoming.

- **Member Nagengast** asked what the budget pays for, are they things like consultants and studies.

Staff Busch responded a lot of it is in the capital budget.

Member Nagengast asked if a consultant were brought on for a service study would that come out of the operating budget and where does it live on the chart.

Staff Busch responded it lives in the Operations & Maintenance. This graph is about changes to the budget so to the extent that there's a new proposal to hire a consultant it would show up here. If you look the total pie chart for SFPUC's budget, there would be a non-labor item which is all the operating budget money that goes towards non-labor items which includes consultants.

- **Member Soboll** asked who is in the discount program.

Staff Busch responded it's broadly the 20% income. There are different discount programs that are available, and it is run by the Customer Service Team. Overall SFPUC puts around \$8 million annually into the discount program from non-rate revenues.

- **Member Clary** asked if SFPUC is assuming aggressive increases in income.

Staff Busch responded this assumes a 3% increase in income every year which is conservative. If income is going up higher than 3%, the line would rise. Currently SFPUC does not have the latest numbers for this year because of the government shutdown that delayed statistics publishing.

Member Soboll asked if these graphs consider inflation and is it set to assume if inflation goes up 3%, salary goes up 3%.

- **Staff Busch** responded all the costs are built into rate forecast that do consider inflation and median household income. It is set to assume variable interest rates on all cost drivers. The red and yellow line are a gross income measure so that's how much the average household and low-income household makes.

- **Member Clary** asked if there is a similar graph for drought conditions.

Staff Busch responded that is not included here and a drought is not assumed in this outlook, but drought is a sensitivity that is driven in the financial plan.

- **Member Chen** asked how the discounts are applied and how does it work for renters who water and sewer is usually wrapped into rent.

Member Clary commented this was presented at the Water Subcommittee and asked for Staff Moncrease to send that presentation to Member Chen.

Member Hebert responded his recollection from the presentation is that this is tough to do.

- **Member Soboll** asked how often this is updated.

Staff Busch responded every year.

- **Member Soboll** asked if inflation costs go up significantly, but salaries don't, how would the SFPUC respond in next year's budget to help people.

Staff Busch responded there are two different things going on. The first is income lines are going up at an assumed 3% wage growth and then the SFPUC at the best of our knowledge tried to assume the inflation that will impact SFPUC's costs. We get a chance to do this annual planning process and set rates for a few more years frequently so we can always adjust plans.

- **Member Hebert** asked if the rise of wastewater cost is due to the wastewater capital projects.

Staff Busch responded yes and recommends going to see the Southeast Treatment Plant to see the scale of investment going on. The SFPUC has redone four digesters, redone the headwork facility

and have a new pump station. The SFPUC will embark on the nutrients project which is \$1.4 billion and later in the capital plan is to replace the Southeast outpour which is where the effluent is discharged to into the Bay. These projects together exceed \$7 billion all funded on San Francisco ratepayer funds due to the lack of federal support.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented the SFPUC is already dipping into reserve today and asked if we keep dipping into our reserve what will happen when we reach 2034?

Staff Busch responded the SFPUC carefully and strategically plan our future reserve levels which is governed by SFPUC's fund balance reserve policy which states we must have at least 25% of operating expenses in our fund balance reserve. While we plan for a 10-year period, we look at a 20-year period.

Chair Jacuzzi asked if 25% is enough.

Staff Busch responded it will always reflect 25% of our operating expenses so it would go in proportion and not stay absolute.

Chair Jacuzzi asked if we have unexpected expenses in 2034, the reserve will cover these costs so the SFPUC will not go over the affordability objections.

Staff Busch responded she cannot guarantee anything but the reason for the reserves is like a savings account so unforeseen circumstances can be dealt with, and it is a major factor in SFPUC's credit rating – having the additional liquidity to deal with unforeseen events. This is detailed out in the report being presented to the Commission on February 10th. The fact that we publish this, have a 20-year forward look at what rates are going to be and have an affordability policy is rare in the utility industry.

Staff Sklaroff further responded this is a financial plan which is not predictive, and it is not a forecast. It is a tool that allows us to see where there are issues in the future and start planning for those now.

- **Member Soboll** asked what is an SRF?

Staff Sklaroff responded it is a State Revolving Fund (SRF), and it is one of the ways we obtain low-cost financing basically allowing us to borrow at half the State's borrowing rate.

- **Member Soboll** asked if the SFPUC ends up paying down like you would in a mortgage, so you pay less interest later?

Staff Sklaroff responded with homes, you are paying down because you are not purchasing additional homes, but we are doing additional projects, so it does not work.

- **Member Smegal** asked are we losing debt associated with older projects as the SFPUC amortizes the debt or is it being refinanced and rolling?

Staff Sklaroff responded as the SFPUC is doing their planning, the bonds issued 30 years ago are paying down and it would be equivalent to credit card debt, and this is planned out in terms of how it is amortizing. We do want to limit the growth.

- **Member Law** asked if the Westside Portal Emergency Firefighting Water system a capital project and how will it be funded since it will be a ballot measure in 2028.

Staff Busch responded it would be a geobond funding which is separate from the debt the SFPUC issues and that external funding is factored into the financial capital plan.

Staff Sklaroff further responded the Controller's office of Public Finance manages the City's general obligation bonds and other borrowing, so if there are voter-approved bonds they will manage it within the tax rate.

Member Clary commented it is on your property tax.

Member Smegal further commented this is a good question that came up in a previous presentation and the water bill is not paying for the emergency firefighting system.

- **Chair Jacuzzi** asked if bonds are amortized like front-ended loaded interest on home mortgages.

Staff Sklaroff responded with a mortgage, you may have a 6% and regardless of when you repay it, you are paying 6% and with the bonds, the first year may be 1% and the next would be 1.25% and so on. You can typically still structure it as level debt service, and we have the opportunity shape our debt services for example the SFPUC structured the lithium loans where we locked in early when rates were low at 1.45%.

- **Member Clary** commented we are paying for investments that were not made in the 1980's and '90s and during this time, we had artificially low rates and because of Prop 13, the City siphoned between \$25 to \$50 million a year out of the SFPUC into the general fund. Thanks to a 2002 ballot measure, the SFPUC was able to get out from a 6-year rate freeze and gave the ability to issue revenue bonds without going to the voters and was banned from transferring funds from the SFPUC to the General Fund. One of the reasons we have so much debt now is because we are trying to catch up and there is an idea of a more intensive public process to identify what debt to incur now and what to hold off and the CAC received a letter asking why the SFPUC is not using the Department of Public Works (DPW)'s model and asked why can we not use it and give the commissioners more agency to determine what debt is appropriate.

Staff Sklaroff responded by the time we get to debt projects are underway and the issue isn't debt it is what is being spent.

Member Clary commented the issue is debt because the fact is rates are high and are going to keep increasing and the ask is for more

transparency in the process and asked if there are discussions with the commissioners on what to postpone or if staff make recommendations on what to postpone.

Staff Busch responded the capital plan prioritization process is an internal process done at the budget executive steering committee involving all enterprise AGM staff and leadership. Number of commission presentations were done throughout the fall and January allowing the Commission to weigh in on priorities and overall policy setting. Each time the SFPUC issues debt, Staff Sklaroff goes and presents to the Commission.

Member Smegal commented we do not want too little investment because this is what was done in 2019, and we need to have a balance.

- **Member Perszyk** commented from the debt issuance plan, it looks like there will be \$11 billion of debt at the end of the year and it would be helpful if a visual was included to show the explanation of how SFPUC is managing debt through financing.
- **Member Sanders** asked if there was going to be investment in Treasure Island to stop the power outages.

Staff Busch responded on Friday, there will be a special Commission hearing discussing the Power Enterprise CIP and budget and this would be a good forum to hear more what is included for Treasure Island and ask questions.

Member Soboll left the meeting at 7:00 pm. Quorum maintained.

Public Comment:

- Dave Warner commented this financial plan still shows stunning rate increases over the long term with a projected \$389 bill in 10 years for the average family. If it was just at the inflation rate, it would only be \$208. There is little visibility on capital decisions and the Commissioners are not given enough information when capital projects are presented since there is no rate impact information.
- Peter Drekmeier, Policy Director for the Yosemite Rivers Alliance commented the finance department is doing a good work given what they inherited. The rate increases for combined water and wastewater was 8.1% per year last year and this year it is up to 8.6%. There is also a slide that shows wholesale water rates for BAWSCA and last year they were projected to up 1% in fiscal year 2027 and again in fiscal year 2028. This year with the new budget it is 7.6% in fiscal year '27 and 7.2% in fiscal year '28 and the projection increases are going to be problematic. There is also a slide that shows water sales to wholesale customers that are now projected to decline over 10 million gallons per day which is \$28 million lost in revenue and in a fixed-cost system this is a big problem because this then needs to be spread out per unit with existing ratepayers.

5. Report from the Chair

- Welcome members, staff, and the public
- Ohlone Tribal Land Acknowledgement
- Due to time restraints, a discussion on better engagement with the community will be moved to the next Full CAC meeting.

Public Comment: None.

6. Staff Report

- No Staff Report

Public Comment: None

7. SFPUC Communications

- [SFPUC Capital Project Delivery Methods](#)
- [SFPUC Wildfire Mitigation Plan 2025](#)
- [Capital Financing Plan FY 2025-26 to FY 2034-35](#)
- [Quarterly Audit and Performance Report, FY 2024-25, Q2](#)
- [Hazards and Climate Resilience Plan 2025 Update](#)
- Water Enterprise
 - [Long-term Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan](#)
 - [Water Supply Conditions Update \(June 30, 2025\)](#)
 - [Water Enterprise Capital Improvement Program Report, FY 2024-25 Q4](#)
 - [Hetch Hetchy Capital Improvement Program Report, FY 2024-25 Q4](#)
 - [Alternative Water Supply Annual Progress Report](#)
 - [2009 Water Supply Agreement Quarterly Update](#)
 - [Onsite Water Reuse Projects](#)
 - [Supplemental Appropriation of Earthquake Safety and Emergency Response \(ESER\) 2010 and 2014 General Obligation Bonds Interest Earnings](#)
 - [Water System Improvement Program Report, FY 2024-25, Q4](#)
- Wastewater Enterprise
 - Recent Wastewater Enterprise Bond Sale Results – no update
 - [Wastewater Enterprise Quarterly Report \(Q4 FY2024-25\)](#)
- Power Enterprise
 - [CleanPowerSF Update](#)
 - [PG&E Interconnection Report, FY 2023-24, Q4](#)

Public Comment: None.

8. Future Agenda Items and Resolutions

- CAC Advance Calendar

Public Comment: Peter Drekmeier encourages the SFPUC CAC to agendize a presentation and discussion in partnership with the Yosemite River Alliance on prudence of the alternative water supply plan, the designed route and rate projections and whether the SFPUC could manage the Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan without investing a lot of expensive alternative water supplies. The budget the SFPUC CAC looked at does not include the alternative water supply plan and the staff is projecting the need between 92 to 122 million gallons per day and the cost of this would be between \$17 billion to \$25 billion. If SFPUC planned for the same drought as East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) or Valley water, they could manage the Bay Delta Plan without requiring any rationing or developing alternative water supplies. With

rationing, they could plan for a drop that's 35% more severe than the worst on record.

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

Public Comment: None.

10. Adjournment at 7:15 pm

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