



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

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, July 8, 2025  
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
525 Golden Gate Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Tuolumne Conference Room**

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VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SOFTWARE**

**Meeting Recording Link**

[https://sfwater.zoom.us/rec/share/6Xb\\_EUQdsIEo6o2QPNEFzMglbQpvRce6vmxzjPtklVe8IHto1F0DZM\\_iEFjam2o.oQ9UTi0rugeXnFCF](https://sfwater.zoom.us/rec/share/6Xb_EUQdsIEo6o2QPNEFzMglbQpvRce6vmxzjPtklVe8IHto1F0DZM_iEFjam2o.oQ9UTi0rugeXnFCF)

**Passcode**

250166

**Mission:** The Wastewater Subcommittee shall review sewage and stormwater collection, treatment, and disposal system replacement, recycling, and other relevant plans, programs, and policies ([Admin. Code Article XV, Sections 5.140 - 5.142](#)).

**Members**

<b>Amy Nagengast, Chair (D8)</b>	Erin Roach (D2)	Andrea Baker (B-Small
Douglas Jacuzzi (D4)	Maika Pinkston (M-Enviro.	Business)
	Org)	

**D = District Supervisor appointed, M = Mayoral appointed, B = Board President appointed**

**Staff Liaisons:** Lexus Moncrease and Lupita Garcia  
Staff Email for Public Comment: [cac@sfwater.org](mailto:cac@sfwater.org)

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**1. Call to order and roll call at 5:36 pm**

Members present at roll call (3): Nagengast, Roach, Jacuzzi

Members absent (2): Pinkston\*, Baker

Staff/Presenters: Joel Prather, Amy Chastain, Cirilo Espinosa, Jake Herson, Jignesh Desai

Members of the Public: Christopher Sproul, Karen Curtiss, Kyle Leftridge, Walter Van Riel, Lisa Dunseth, Anonymous (2)

\*Member Pinkston present at 5:42 pm. Quorum maintained.

**Daniel L. Lurie**  
Mayor

**Kate H. Stacy**  
President

**Joshua Arce**  
Vice President

**Avni Jamdar**  
Commissioner

**Steve Leveroni**  
Commissioner

**Meghan Thurlow**  
Commissioner

**Dennis J. Herrera**  
General Manager



## 2. Approve [March 11, 2025 Minutes](#)

A motion was made (Jacuzzi) and seconded (Roach) to approve the March 11, 2025, Minutes.

Approved without objection.

Public Comment: None.

## 3. Report from the Chair

- Welcome members, staff, and the public
  - Welcomed new committee member Erin Roach and did introductions.
- [San Francisco files final brief in SCOTUS case](#)
- [Public Memo re CCSF v. U.S.E.P.A.](#)
- [CCSF v. U.S.E.P.A. Oral Argument Audio](#)
- [U.S. and California take Enforcement action against S.F. for Clean Water Violations](#)

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*)

Public Comment: None.

## 5. Presentation and Discussion: [SFPUC Combined Sewer Discharges](#), Joel Prather, Assistant General Manager, SFPUC Wastewater Enterprise, Amy Chastain, Sewer System Improvement Program Regulatory Manager, SFPUC Wastewater Enterprise

- Resources:
  - [Ocean and Beach Monitoring](#)

### Presentation:

- Combined Sewer Discharges
- San Francisco's combined Sewer System
- San Francisco's Historic Watersheds
- What are Combined Sewer Discharges?
- San Francisco's CSO Control History
- San Francisco's CSD Event Design Criteria
- Wet Weather Treatment Capacity is 465 MGD (average dry weather flow is 54 MGD)
- Transport/Storage Structures Provide 200 MG of Storage
- Islais Transport/Storage Structure & Islais St. N. CSD Outfall
- Combined Sewer Discharges Occur Infrequently
- Clean Water Act Permit Requirements
- Maximize Treatment & Storage
- Monitor Start Time, Duration, Volume
- Collect & Analyze CSD Samples @ Designated Locations
- Collect & Analyze CSD Samples
- Sample & Post Beaches
- Report

*Discussion:*

- **Chair Nagengast** asked if the combined sewer discharge (CSD) event criteria were designed in 1979 and if what is shown on the slides is reflective of the improvements and investments made and if there are additional goals on what the SFPUC would like the discharges to be for a long-term average.

**Staff Chastain** responded yes, it was a series of orders issued by the regional water board to the City and County in 1979. The CSD design criteria set by the orders are in the graphic on the slide. The SFPUC actual average is 20 years, and we can go further back by any kind of data that is readily available. For example, the West Side design criteria is 8, our current 20-year average is 5, the North Shore design criteria was 4 and the current average is 4, Central Basin is design criteria 10 and 20-year average is 10 and the Southeast is where there is a difference, the 20-year average is 2 compared to the CSD of 1. The Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) control policy is rooted in both looking at water quality benefits but also doing a cost benefit analysis for the initial pass. The SFPUC is entering a new phase and are working closely with the regional water board on the reissuance of the Southeast permit, where the permit is going to require the SFPUC to take an additional look at opportunities to do better and control more. The SFPUC has continuously and iteratively as part of capital planning, looked at opportunities and costs of improving CSO control. The challenge is we have 200 million gallons of storage and massive treatment and if you were to look at the curve of a cost benefit analysis we are at the point where it is flattening out and the size of the infrastructure needed to go from 10 events to 8 in the central basin is enormous. Given all other capital needs that we face, just like other wastewater agencies, the subsidy of infrastructure is based on ratepayer funds due to the lack of influxes of cash opportunities in the Federal government. The SFPUC does do a great job at getting loans, but it is not enough to cover, and we have some of the highest rates in the country and the highest income inequality, so this is also an added challenge where the SFPUC needs to continually look at cost – effective opportunities to do better and have pursued them. An example of these projects is currently in Baker Beach and China Beach where there are pump stations associated with these overflows and the pump stations needed to be significantly rehabbed or replaced because they were old and flagged as high priority from an aging infrastructure perspective and currently there are projects under construction that are going to eliminate overflows to Baker Beach and China Beach in a typical long-term average basis.

**AGM Prather** further responded this is a perfect example of the other vertical assets we have out there that are decades old and need to be reinvested in. There are also other investments like the SFPUC's Biosolids Digesters Facility Project (BDFP), the Southeast Plant where the SFPUC is investing in future growth and our solid side of the operation where we're improving our biosolids distribution and it's the balancing act of rate-payer dollars. We have over 6 billion dollars in our last iteration of 10-year capital plan of projects that are either in construction or waiting to be built out with the biggest being the nitrogen removal project in the Southeast to reduce the nitrogen load in the bay to prevent future algae blooms. The SFPUC has also ramped

up its Green Infrastructure and optimizing opportunities to especially work with nonprofits, churches, and schools and other folks and the SFPUC has a great grant program for this.

- **Chair Nagengast** asked if the Clean Water Act permit had a threshold for how many discharges the SFPUC was allowed.

**Staff Chastain** responded we are required to utilize all the infrastructure we build and the reason there is not a limit is because it is driven by rainfall. When we built the infrastructure, we built it to a certain capacity and when we have such a high variable rainfall in California where the average rainfall is 24 inches per year but in the past five years, we've had one year with 9 inches of rain and one with 34 inches of rain and how is it possible to put an enforceable limit and say no matter how much rain falls, you need to meet this and the inverse is true as well where if we had a drought, our numbers would perceive us as doing great.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked if there is an equivalent slide for the Westside especially considering that the Supreme Court case was over Ocean Beach overflows and it would be important to acknowledge that we are missing the Ocean Beach information on the slides and commented that he represents District 4 and is part of the CAC because of his experience in nature and has been surfing Ocean beach since the early '70s and has been waiting through "polio ponds" as the surf community calls them and these ponds, unlike the graphic shown on the slide deck, sometimes compromise as much as several acres of the beach and last up to 2 weeks on the beach after overflow events and have seen kids play in these ponds and recently, kite surfers surf sail across these ponds and we know it's not polio but fecal bacterial that is off the charts by the measures presented on the SFPUC website. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year sitting in a presentation on Wastewater systems by the SFPUC and the picture painted by the SFPUC is frequently very rosy, and it's not actually for those experiencing reality and asked what the acceptable levels of fecal bacteria are.

**Staff Chastain** responded those were just provided as examples and didn't want to walk everyone through every single one. There are some similar ones that apply to the Westside. The SFPUC monitors for fecal indicator bacteria, enterococcus (e coli) and total coliforms. Those are indicators of the presence of fecal matter because they are found in the enteric systems. They are also present and naturally occurring, especially coliforms. The threshold the SFPUC uses are the ones written into the California State regulations of 104 NPN per 100 mil for enterococcus which is lower than the EPA's that was stopped by the State in 2018. The EPA's criteria for enterococcus is 110.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented the figures SFPUC is reporting after a combined discharge is reaching the 20,000 and it is important to acknowledge the severity of the issues since our allowable levels for human contact is less than 200 and how can an environmental progressive city think that even one overflow event on a national seashore which is now a City park okay and his count on overflows on Ocean Beach were 7 based on the times he has physically gone down

and watched the water come out. The baffle system does nothing for suspended Eco bacteria and every time he hears a presentation; it talks about how great the baffle system works and asked if we acknowledge suspended bacteria is not affected by the baffles and this is important to include in future presentations.

**Staff Chastain** responded yes, baffles do not do anything to control anything suspended in the water column and if you look at all of the EPA's guidance around designing overflow structures, baffles are something that they are repeatedly designed to minimize what pollutants reach our water, not control things that are suspended like zinc and copper.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented this group talks about nature-based solutions a bit and we don't get a fair response in our requests seeking nature-based solutions to some of the issues were presented today. With District 4, 1/3 of the developed area being open green space — rear yard, inner block green space which is highly amiable, 1/3 being roadways and sidewalks and 1/3 being rooftops and San Francisco had a long-standing policy with the Department of Building Inspections (DBI) requiring every 200 square feet of surface to be connected to the sewer system and if were to disconnect these homes one by one and lose 30% of impervious surface, we may be able to have 0 overflows.

**AGM Prather** responded he is not familiar with that DBI rule but for larger developments which many are not located on the Westside, we do require them to manage all their stormwater on site and are aware the Westside has better geotechnical ground for green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

**Staff Chastain** further responded disconnecting private property is something that has been discussed and unfortunately, a lot of folks have internal plumbing, so disconnecting isn't as simple for the private property owners and agree that downspout disconnect on the Westside would be phenomenal.

- **Chair Nagengast** commented that her understanding is the SFPUC does have level of service goals and metrics for our collection system and asked if there are any that look at risk reduction in terms of overflows.

**AGM Prather** responded we have multiple criteria when we're talking about different places to book projects and one of them is the economic risk associated with the socioeconomic health risk and there are different kinds of layers of levels of service that we look at and balance those out when we are talking about where we are going to invest in our system. We have a 5-year 3-hour design storm which is our goal to get any new project that we must meet that design criteria for below grade in the street.

**Staff Chastain** further responded we try to have every dollar spent advance multiple objectives and sometimes this is not always possible like the 1.4-billion-dollar nitrogen removal project is built just to remove nitrogen coming from human urine but when it comes to our collection system, an example is Baker Beach and China Beach pump stations.

We needed to make sure that they kept running and they were not in great shape, and we needed to invest a lot of money in them and asked if we are going to invest in infrastructure what other goals can we advance. In these projects, not only was it water quality but also sea level rise adaptation which really didn't apply to these pump stations since they are so high but for other pump station were going to look and see what needs to be done to make this more climate resilient.

- **Chair Nagengast** asked when these events occur, what are the communication protocols to ensure the members of the public are informed and if communications are sent out daily.

**AGM Prather** responded that first, everyone should sign up for the email on [sfbeaches.org](http://sfbeaches.org) since it will notify you whenever there is high hit of any bacteria regardless of any storm. We also post when we have these storms, and we know that is high bacteria level.

**Staff Chastain** further responded the website map is updated a minimum of daily when we have samples or when it overflows and that landing page also has instruction on how to sign up for the phone hotline and emails which are sent out daily. The sensors throughout the system tell us when there is an overflow, and they automatically generate these notifications that go out. SFPUC has a team of people that update the website, phone hotline and email listserv usually by 6 am. By 8 am we are required to have signs posted around the city and often staff are posting them in the dark during winter. Posting at Ocean Beach is challenging because we don't own the property and must coordinate closely with multiple divisions of the National Park Service and Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and Aquatic Park is managed by the National Maritime Division and we're currently working with SF Rec and Park as part of the Sunset Dunes project. An example of the communication protocol is let's say there is an overflow at Vicente, we will send an email that there is overflow at Vicente and we don't know the levels but do know they are high so we will post proactively. Then we will take a sample and sample results are usually available 18 to 24 hours later and if they are still elevated, an email will go out alerting levels are still elevated. We will go out and sample again and once the sample comes back below state threshold, we will send an email update stating concentrations are below. We are working with the Communications team to ensure some of the information is more accessible, understandable, and clear since there is still a lot of jargon.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that Vicente and Lincoln are bookends where you can have 500 people in the water after a rainstorm and sand shifting shifts seasonally that affects the pools draining time.

**Staff Chastain** responded that something they've talked internally is how to prevent people from encountering the overflow pools created by the sand depressions. Currently we have signs in 4 languages that are on each side and get covered by graffiti even after they are cleaned, and they are open to hearing ideas on how to better communicate to folks so that they can effectively communicate hazards.

Public Comment:

- **David Hooper** commented Member Jacuzzi spoke about the idea of water coming off a rooftop going into the sewer and this goes to the idea of everybody paving across their front setback or every opportunity in their backyard rather than let the water go into the soil depending on whether you're on the west side of town where there is sand and it goes in or in the east side where it doesn't do it as readily. There needs to be more done about the idea of saying you have the have permeable across the front of your property, if it's a setback this would commonly be 15 by 25 feet, and it would make a difference. They are concerned about the sewage that comes out of the catch basins into the communities commonly in the Mission or on Cayuga Avenue and now that Pierce Street Outfall is closed, into the Marina and asked what the acceptable level of fecal bacteria in people's homes.
- **Karen Curtiss** commented she has a combination of questions for the SFPUC and what is the SFPUC's ability to work across departments and other government agencies to implement more gray over green infrastructure that probably has a lower cost basis and knowing the system that is in place, is there a way to add point of overflow treatment besides the baffles for soluble materials if we have to continue with the system as it exists today and how can we get to 0 overflows.

**AGM Prather** responded the SFPUC has an order from the Water Board where we have large projects going in areas of our city which we understand don't meet the design standard 5-year 3-hour storm. These are lumped in that 6 billion over the next 10 year that we are spending on improvements. The SFPUC actively participates in groups around the City, and it can be difficult when we have a large project and everyone has their individual interests and their individual funds, but we do try to maximize those projects like the bullets and green infrastructure working with SFMTA and Public Works. We are also working actively with the Port and the Army Corps of Engineers down on the waterfront on the Bayside and how we can adapt to sea level rise. Regarding adding a point of overflow treatment, we look at our infrastructure as a whole and when we're going to perhaps rehabilitate an outfall or something, we look at opportunities to maximize treatment but with combined systems, it will never get to 0 overflows because there will always be a bigger storm that is going to cause an overflow or worse. We do the best we can balancing what we have for infrastructure and what we charge our ratepayers, and this is what we deal with every winter.

- **Kieran Farr**, Volunteer with the Sierra Club commented they appreciate the conversation and transparency. They have been working closely on the Folsom Stormwater Improvement Project and the team has been very responsive and while there have been issues around neighborhood disruption, they have been wonderful to work with. From the conversation, there is a foregone conclusion that the combines system will be here for eternity and as a rate payer in the

next 10 to 20 years there is no magical way for us to convert and is curious what the process is for us to start thinking about the 50 to 100 year time horizon and to acknowledge that ratepayers will not be able to fund this and there are plenty of other funding sources to help. An example is looking at the Folsom Stormwater Project, the estimated lifespan is unknown, and they will make assertions between 10 to 20 years but with increased stormwater and increased sea level rise that may actually not be a long-term solution and although we are choosing the cheaper solution of 1 billion dollars, the longer-term separation may actually be more cost efficient on a longer time horizon.

**AGM Prather** responded we are looking at those long-term solutions and a good example is the waterfront and the work we are doing with the Port and Army Corps and considering sea level rise and our infrastructure that is been directly impacted by sea level rise and are looking at opportunities to change the infrastructure on a huge scale. Since the system is combined, you can't just look at pockets, but at swaths and make sure the water goes somewhere and that's why the waterfront is a good opportunity to evaluate the different solutions.

#### 6. Staff report

- The District 10 and Environmental Justice seats on the Full CAC are vacant.
- Staff Garcia and Staff Noonan will facilitate the September Wastewater Subcommittee meeting.

Public Comment: None

#### 7. Future Agenda Items and Resolutions

- Adopted Resolutions for Follow Up
  - Resolution in Support of SFPUC Class A Biosolids Local Distribution Program [adopted August 21, 2018](#)
  - Resolution in Support of Cityworks Interns Recommendations [adopted on November 21, 2017](#)
  - Resolution in Support of Equitable Green Infrastructure Implementation throughout the Southeast Sector of San Francisco and throughout the City [adopted on June 20, 2017](#)
  - Resolution Urging SFPUC Commission to Initiate Planning and Environmental Review for Building a New Community Center at Third and Evans and to Direct Staff to Develop an Interim Greenhouse Environmental and Workforce Development Program [adopted on October 18, 2016](#)
  - Resolution Supporting the SFPUC to Conduct Robust Community Engagement to Determine the Community's Preference for Remodeling Southeast Community Facility at 1800 Oakdale or Building a New Community Center at 1550 Evans [adopted on January 19, 2016](#)

Public Comment: None

#### 8. **Announcements/Comments** Visit [www.sfpuc.org/cac](http://www.sfpuc.org/cac) for final confirmation of the next meeting date.

Public Comment: None

#### 9. **Adjournment at 7:03 pm.**



For more information concerning the agendas, minutes, and meeting information, please visit [www.sfwater.org/cac](http://www.sfwater.org/cac). For more information concerning the CAC, please contact by email at [cac@sfwater.org](mailto:cac@sfwater.org) or by calling (415) 517-8465.

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## **ACCESO A IDIOMAS**

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