San Francisco Water Power Sewer
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San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Citizens' Advisory Council
Water Subcommittee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 27, 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.

Zoom Recording:
https://sfwater.zoom.us/rec/share/F6iFzkVFpPOs5DXdon21y77D6EdQjzI2UDewtNw8-wL2y9KorDqmC-036oJ5Vjp_.bEYkRl6bHkUb1upH

Meeting Passcode:
051563

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)

Members:

Aaron Hebert (Chair) (D9)	Jennifer Clary (D11)	Katie Zheng (M-Large Water User)
Douglas Jacuzzi (D4)	Thomas Smegal (M-Reg'l Water Customers)	Sarah Atkinson (M-Enviro. 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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. **Call to order and roll call at 5:32 pm**

   Present (4): Hebert, Jacuzzi, Smegal, Zheng

   Absent (2): Clary, Atkinson*

   Staff/Presenters: Nick Johnson, Obi Nzewi, Tim Ramirez

   Members of the Public: Daneil Sonnenberg, Georgia Hodges, Walter Van Riel, Anonymous, Cesme

   *Atkinson marked present at 5:37pm. Quorum maintained.

2. **Approve July 28, 2026, Meeting Minutes**

   A motion was made (Jacuzzi) and seconded (Smegal) to approve the July 28, 2026, meeting minutes.

   The minutes were approved without objection.

   Public Comment: None.

Daniel Lurie Mayor
Stephen E. Leveroni President
Kate H. Stacy Vice President
Avni Jamdar Commissioner
Meghan Thurlow Commissioner
Joshua Arce Commissioner
Dennis J. Herrera General Manager

3. **Report from the Chair**
    - Chair welcomes committee members, staff, and the public

    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: Westside Basin Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model Update**, Nick Johnson, Water Operations Analyst/SFPUC

    Presentation:

    - Westside Basin (WSB) Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model (HCM) Update
    - Speaker Introduction
    - Acronyms
    - Hydrogeological Conceptual Model (HCM)
    - Update of the Westside Basin (WSB) Hydrogeological Conceptual Model (HCM)
    - WSB Groundwater Flow Model
    - Objectives for Improving WSB HCM & Computer Model
    - Elements of WSB Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model (HCM)
    - HCM Boundaries
    - Basin Structure
    - Designated Aquifer Zones A-E
    - Interpolation of Aquifer Zones
    - Interpolation of Aquifer Zone Boundaries
    - Aquifer Properties Control Groundwater Flow and Storage
    - Estimates of Aquifer Transmissivity (ft^2/day)
    - Groundwater Interactions with Lake Merced
    - HCM Reports
    - Westside Basin HCM Update

Discussion:

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented this was a fantastic presentation and asked what the name of the model is.

  Staff Johnson responded it is MODFLOW which stands for modular flow model and is a United States Geological Survey (USGS) model.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented the EIR for the Vista Grande project it is expected relative to city datum and a low of 18.5 and high range of 20.5 for surface water elevation in Lake Merced and asked if this was correct.

  Staff Nzewi responded yes.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented there was a term mentioned force main flow from wetland main A to wetland main B and asked if staff could explain this.

  Staff Nzewi responded there are two pumps in the wetlands but there is one for the force main. One reason is during the dry season you do not want the wetlands to have no water because they will dry up and die and wanted the ability circulate water during the dry season. The regional board wanted us to have the ability to remove lower quality water from Lake Merced so they required we modify the design the

force main to include this fan like structure where we can now pump in water from South Lake to the wetland with the idea being you can have high surface algae blooms you may be able to pump water out to get treatment and improve water quality.

Member Jacuzzi asked approximately how many gallons per minute does it pump.

Staff Nzewi responded he does not recall but will follow up with staff to provide a number.

Member Jacuzzi asked if it was gravity flow back to the lake.

Staff Nzewi responded no since it is pumped from the lake to the wetlands and then there is a pump from the wetlands to the diversion structure which is then gravity flow. It is flowing in both directions.

Member Jacuzzi asked if there are any publicly available technical drawings to share.

Staff Nzewi responded they are in construction and will look into what drawings can be publicly available.

Member Jacuzzi commented staff mentioned they were lowering the tunnel and asked about the pipe elevation to maintain the lake level.

Staff Nzewi responded they are not lowering the tunnel and are lowering the overflow structure that exist right now that sits about 23 feet city datum that lets water go from the lake to a canal to Vista Grande Tunnel finally out to the ocean. When the lakes gets over a certain level, it will help flush the lake. Similar to what the regional water board was asking us to do with the force main, they are interested in us managing water quality and water levels in the lake by being more active with the overflow structure.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented this was great technical information and asked intuitively, if SFPUC identified that 2/3 of the surface area in the primary zone of recharge by Golden Gate Park and mid Sunset region and we know 2/3 of the Westside is covered by impervious surfaces that has 4.01 billion gallons that drain out from those surfaces and asked why is not the water enterprise working more closely on wastewater to accelerate groundwater recharge on the westside when we know we can do it.

  Staff Johnson responded you enter a groundwater recharge project when the basin is not able to sustain what you are pumping. The projects SFPUC has were designed to be sustainable based on existing conditions. The yield SFPUC designed for is the yield we want. If we started to see concerns we are pumping more than can be replenished under existing conditions, then you will have to figure out how to get the water in the ground and find where there is additional space in the aquafer where you can mound additional water without going into people's basements and figure out if you put recharge wells or injection basins which are problematic.

  Member Jacuzzi commented there are no basements out in the Westside and the water goes straight out and the properties are by enlarge 400 square feet per rooftop.

  Staff Johnson responded you can have nuisance high water levels and would want to avoid this. There are good land use practices but as a water supply project we have not identified the need to supplement recharge. It would be great if land use practices did exactly what Member Jacuzzi stated but it is not a water supply project

that SFPUC would enter in because it is not clear and hard to prove how much water would be yielded.

- **Member Zheng** commented the boundary encompasses more than a different model and asked what the difference is.

  Staff Johnson responded there is a dash orange line in the map, and a blue line and a lot of the boundaries were contested and changed. The basin boundary we are using is the watershed boundary.

- **Member Smegal** asked if the zone boundary slide implies there is fresh water below the ocean level.

  Staff Johnson responded yes.

  Member Smegal asked if it was interpolation and if there were any monitoring wells out there.

  Staff Johnson responded at some point it changes the salt and there have been artesian wells.

- **Member Atkinson** asked if we can tell when recharge is coming from.

  Staff Johnson responded if it is really hard, it's like a leak on the roof. Water flows more easily horizontally than vertically. Recharge is the most difficult thing to measure.

- **Chair Hebert** asked if Lake Merced is groundwater dependent ecosystem under the model.

  Staff Johnson responded this is a phrase used under SGMA and if we were under that model, we would use it. It is clear Lake Merced is full of groundwater.

- **Chair Hebert** asked is there a predominant direction of flow in the basin or are there subbasins that have their own unique flow path.

  Staff Johnson responded they flow to pumping wells.

- **Chair Hebert** asked does the MODFLOW model incorporate sea level rise or salt water intrusion.

  Staff Johnson responded sea level rise is easy because you change the base level of the model. Salt water is difficult to model because it changes the density of the water.

  Member Smegal asked if it flows from salt water to fresh water or vice versa.

  Staff Johnson responded salt water can pushed in because it has the higher density and come in as a wedge at the bottom of the aquafer and this is hard to model.

  Member Atkinson commented there was a federal bill that was going to direct USGS to build the shallow groundwater and sea level rise model into MODFLOW. It hasn't gone anywhere but USGS is aware of the need to build this out.

Public Comment: None.

6. **Presentation and Discussion: Environmental Stewardship Policy 20 Year Report**, Tim Ramirez, SFPUC Natural Resources and Land Management Division Director
    - *Resources* - Water Enterprise Environmental Stewardship Policy Implementation 20-Year Report June 2026

Presentation:

- Water Enterprise Environmental Stewardship Policy Implementation
- Background – where did the policy come from, and why do we need one?
- Tracking the spending by region
- Tracking the spending over time
- Land Acquisition
- "…mimic the variation of seasonal hydrology…"
- Sunol Native Plant Nursery
- Alameda Creek Watershed Center
- Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail
- Skyline Watershed Ridge Trail Features
- Watershed Discovery Trail
- Fifield-Cahil Ridge Trail Components
- Educational Components
- It all starts and ends with Watersheds!
- Making Connections among Communities and People

Discussion:

- **Chair Hebert** commented the CAC had a role in creating this policy and the genesis of this presentation was to get an update on the work Natural Resources and Land Management (NRLM) has done. There was recently an update to the SFPUC Commission.

- **Chair Hebert** asked if the data is inclusive of operations and maintenance (O&M) stewardship and acquisition.

  Staff Ramirez responded no O&M, and we tried make a decision to capture that was not O&M. There is a full listing of this detailed in the report submitted to the Commission.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked if there was any data further back than 2020.

  Staff Ramirez responded these were picked because they were representative of the change made at the same time, but the data does exist.

  Member Jacuzzi commented he loves what is happening in 2023 but 2020 to 2023 does not look good in the outflow.

  Staff Ramirez responded very consciously in the years there was no water, there were no releases to create those peaks. The extreme dry and wet are harder to create those peaks and we try to do what we can every year.

- **Member Smegal** commented he heard there would be school tours at the Alameda Creek Watershed Center and there would be dedicated days open to the public.

  Staff Ramirez responded yes this is correct.

- **Member Atkinson** asked if wildfire management is under NLRM purview and what does it look like.

Staff Ramirez responded it is and there is a section of the report that describes the prescribed burns on the peninsula watershed.

Member Atkinson commented she works with individuals in San Mateo County who are thinking about raising funding for shoreline work and wildfire work and would like to connect SFPUC with them.

- **Chair Hebert** commented there seems to be growth over time and asked where the emergent areas are for the next 5 years.

  Staff Ramirez responded it is the education outreach programs and asset management.

- **Chair Hebert** asked if NLRM had an increased budget, where would he focus the additional funds.

  Staff Ramirez responded he would hire more staff.

Public Comment: None.

7. **SFPUC Communications (Information Only)**
   a) Future Agenda Items & Resolutions
   b) Correspondence Log
   c) Water Supply Conditions Update
   d) Annual Alternative Water Supply Program Report
   e) Annual Street Light Program Update
   f) Water System Improvement Program Quarterly (Q4) Report FY 2025-26
   g) Green Infrastructure Grant Quarterly Report Pursuant to Board of Supervisors Ordinance 207-24

   Public Comment: None.

8. **Staff Report**
   - Next meeting is November 24 where we will be discussing Water Subcommittee Priorities and Resolution Planning.

   Public Comment: None.

9. **For announcements/comments Visit sfpuc.gov/cac for final confirmation of the next meeting date.**

   Public Comment: None

10. **Adjournment at 7:02 pm**

For more information concerning the agendas, minutes, and meeting information, please visit sfpuc.gov/cac. For more information concerning the CAC, please contact by email at cac@sfwater.gov or by calling (415) 517-8465.

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Task Force, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244 San Francisco, CA 94102-4683; by telephone 415-554-7724, by Fax 415-554-7854, or by email: sotf@sfgov.gov

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