



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

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, March 23, 2021  
 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

**PARTICIPATE VIA BLUEJEANS VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SOFTWARE**

**Meeting URL**

<https://bluejeans.com/147066236>

**Phone Dial-in**

[408.317.9253](tel:408.317.9253)

**Meeting ID**

147 066 236#

**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@sfgwater.org](mailto:cac@sfgwater.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)**  
 Nicole Sandkulla (M-Reg'l  
 Water Customers)

Suki Kott (D2)  
 Eliahu Perszyk (M-Large  
 Water User)

Amy Nagengast (D8)

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

**London N. Breed**  
 Mayor

**Sophie Maxwell**  
 President

**Anson Moran**  
 Vice President

**Tim Paulson**  
 Commissioner

**Ed Harrington**  
 Commissioner

**Newsha Ajami**  
 Commissioner

**Michael Carlin**  
 Acting  
 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.



## ORDER OF BUSINESS

### 1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Members present at roll call: (5) Sandkulla, Kott, Perszyk, Nagengast

Members Absent: (1) Clary\*\*

Staff: Betsy L. Rhodes; John Fournet; Mary Tienken; Nicholas M. Johnson; Obiajulu Nzewl; Paula Kehoe; Timothy Ramirez

Members of the Public: Liz Westbrook; Matthew Blain; Shane Hunner; Simone Nageon de Lestang; Austin McInerney

\*\*Chair Jennifer Clary joined at 5:36pm.

### 2. **Approval** of the [January 26, 2021](#) Minutes

Motion was made (Clary) and seconded (Kott) to approve the amended January 26, 2021 Minutes.

AYES: (5) Clary, Sandkulla, Kott, Perszyk, Nagengast

NOES: (0)

Public Comment: None

### 3. **Report from the Chair**

- Chair welcomes committee members, staff, and the public
- Reminder about upcoming Full CAC and Water CAC meetings about the Urban Water Management Plan
- Requested Staff to share information about upcoming Water Workshop.

### 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

Public Comment: None

### 5. **Presentation and Discussion:** [Southern Skyline Boulevard Ridge Trail Extension California Environmental Quality Act \(CEQA\) Update](#), Tim Ramirez, Manager, Natural Resources and Lands Management Division, Water Enterprise

#### *Presentation:*

- SFPUC Southern Skyline Boulevard Ridge Trail Extension Project
- SFPUC Peninsula Watershed
- Existing and Proposed Trails
- Southern Skyline Boulevard Ridge Trail Extension Project: EIR included projects for trail operation
- Proposed Project and Proposed Trail Operation

- High Level Overview Map
- Proposed Bay to Sea Trail
- Final EIR to be released in April

*Discussion:*

- **Member Sandkula** asked if there were any surprising questions that complicated the plans moving forward.

**Staff Ramirez** answered that the most controversial comments when City Planning was getting comments was about crossing the highway at 92, which is not part of the project. The SFPUC is not proposing to tackle that. There is always concern about the watershed, disturbing the natural world that is part of the peninsula, and fire risks.

- **Member Kott** asked about if access will be done by permit and if it will be a day permit.

**Staff Ramirez** answered that there will be a new trail head and access to the trail at that location. Staff Ramirez responded that there will be different types of permits. The plan is to make it as simple as possible. The trail will be patrolled.

*Public Comment:*

- **Liz Westbrook** thanked the SFPUC staff for advancing the project. The funding comes from the Ridge Trail Planning Conservation Plan. Excited about the public access by permit, which is inclusive and will get people to use the trail. The trail is a great opportunity to recreate responsibly on the watershed lands.
- **Austin McInerney** wanted to express his support for this project. New outdoor public access is highly desirable and more use to tour and visit will help educate the next generations about the importance of protecting the watershed. As a holder of a watershed permit, McInerney attested the ease of using the permit system and the trails.
- **Matthew Blain** expressed his support for this project as well. Blain clarified that he is a San Francisco resident, a leadership member of SF Urban Riders and a member of Mountain Biking Coalition. The organizations support the project and they also support the access policy. The southern extension would allow the PUC to create a permitting system that might be more restrictive as necessary to access the trail. It would provide a great balance between the needs of protecting the ecological resources, providing education, and providing more flexible opportunities for educational and recreational uses. More flexibility would allow the SFPUC to have more flexibility in the future.
- **Simone Nageon de Lestang** clarified she is a trail planner with the Bay Area Ridge Trail and thanked the staff for their work on this project. Lestang supports the project as described in the EIR and support the public access permit system, which works very well. The trail is well designed and minimized environmental impacts. The Bay Area Ridge Trail would like to work with the SFPUC to make all trail connections safe.
- **Shane Hunner** thanked staff for the awesome work and asked where the PowerPoint presentation is available, what are the proposed trail standards, what uses will be permitted (ped, horse, bike?). Finally, Hunner remarked that he supports extending the ridge trail.

**Staff Sa and Member Kott** posted the presentation materials on the chat.

**Staff Ramirez** answered that pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians are all welcome. There are ongoing discussions regarding construction standards and that the goal is to be less disruptive and minimize the footprint. Staff Ramirez also offered to continue the conversation offline.

**Shane Hunner** explained that he would like to see a trail that is low maintenance and that would not wash out by heavy rains.

**Staff Ramirez** answered that the goal is to have a trail that is low maintenance. Some locations will require more work. When the bid goes out, everyone will have access to the specifications and construction documents. The project will be taken to the Commission late May.

**Mary Tieken** added that the expectation for the bid is July.

- **Chair and Members** discussed writing a resolution supporting the project.

## 6. Presentation and Discussion: [Groundwater Update](#)

### *Presenters:*

- Paula Kehoe, Manager, Water Resources Planning
- Nicholas M. Johnson, Water Operations Analyst
- Obiajulu Nzewi, Regulatory Specialist

### *Presentation:*

- San Francisco Groundwater Supply Project (SFGW); Regional Groundwater Storage and Recovery Project (RGSR); Westside Basin (WSB) Groundwater Management
- SFGW Wells: Map
- SFGW Wells: Operational Status
- SFGW Wells: 2020 Pumping Record
- SFGW Wells: Water Quality: Nitrate (as Nitrogen) Concentrations
- SFGW Wells: Water Quality: Hexavalent Chromium Concentrations
- SFGW Wells: Planned Future Use
- RGSR Wells
- RGSR Wells: Status
- Southern Westside Basin Groundwater Levels
- RGSR: Agreement: RGSR design storage-and-recovery cycle
- Groundwater Management Program

### *Discussion:*

- **Member Nagengast** asked about the split between potable and irrigation and if the intent is to place all 4 mgd in the potable system.

**Staff Johnson** answered affirmatively and explained that this is the intention of the project. There will be a time before 2025 when the wells are no longer being used and the water will go into storage. The plan is to roll it out slowly and using the resources to do it right. The EIR established that the wells are up to 6 mgd during a crisis.

- **Member Nagengast** asked what the 60,000 square feet storage goal means and asked for more context.

**Staff Johnson** answered that it is 60,000 acre-feet and not square feet. A foot of water over an acre. The water level history shows the effect of pumping and how the water is being stored, but that must be interpreted differently according to depth. The deepest water is confined and under pressure and it responds to changes in pressure very dramatically. We are limited based on how much our partners pump. The 60,000 is based on how much can be requested to not be pumped.

- **Member Perszyk** asked when recycled water gets delivered to Golden gate park, will it be used for direct groundwater recharge, in addition to irrigation? And is SFPUC treating water for hexavalent chromium, or just relying on blending?

**Chair Clary** asked if the SFPUC is planning on doing well head treatment for nitrate and hexavalent chromium.

**Staff Johnson** answered that he does not decide that. The blend is approved by the State. At this time, the SFPUC is only exercising what has been approved (nitrate and chromium). For projects in San Mateo County, the treatment alternatives are under study.

- **Chair Clary** asked what the water quality is there.

**Staff Johnson** responded that there is also nitrate and chromium, and some wells have ammonia. The quality will likely change as the wells are being pumped.

- **Chair Clary** commented that the SFPUC had said before that this project would exceed state regulations and asked when well head treatment will be added and under what conditions that might happen.

**Staff Johnson** responded that the statement related to the delivered water. This is just one element of the water sources that goes into our system. The blended and served water will meet all standards.

**Chair Clary** said she understand drinking water standards and regulatory requirements and said there are still perception issues, especially on the west side, and want to understand what is being done through communications or installing treatments for well that have high levels.

**Staff Johnson** responded that the SFPUC is blending and testing before is an expensive way to show that the quality is okay. Education is a lot cheaper than treating unnecessarily at great cost to show that all water from the well is drinkable.

**Chair Clary** commented that the CAC has been supporting the Westside Groundwater project since its inception and the members have gotten push back about water quality. The CAC wants to understand how the SFPUC is communicating better on the new website, how determination about serving or not serving the water are being made, and at what point it is appropriate to add well head treatment considering how the blending program works. The CAC is looking for substantive answers to those questions.

**Staff Kehoe** said there are communications tools and the approach of well head treatment can be a topic for a future meeting. The SFPUC can come back to answer the questions posed by Chair Clary.

Public Comment: None.

7. **Staff Report**

Staff had nothing to report.

8. **Future Agenda Items and Resolutions**

*Standing Subjects*

- Ground Water
- Water Quality

*Specific Subjects*

- Urban Water Management Plan & Alternative Water Supplies – *April 20 Full CAC Meeting and follow-up discussion Water Subcommittee meeting on April 27*
- Annual Water Quality Report - *tentatively Spring 2021*
- Groundwater Management Plan
- Debate about Bay Delta – Member Sandkulla suggested everyone watch the February 5, 2021 Commission workshop about the Voluntary Agreement
- Groundwater Projects Update
- Climate Change – report update
- Affordability
- Racial Equity Plan Water Enterprise
- Natural Resources and Land Management Division Update
- COVID and Long-term Affordability Program
- Impact of Climate Change on Water Supply
- 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 – *tentatively Fall 2021*

*Adopted Resolutions for Follow Up*

- 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 in March 15, 2016](#)
- Resolution on Impacts of Drought on System Maintenance and Improvements [adopted January 19, 2016](#)

9. **Announcements/Comments** The next meeting for the Water CAC will be on April 27, 2021. Please visit [www.sfpuc.org/cac](http://www.sfpuc.org/cac) for final confirmation of the next scheduled meeting, agenda and materials. There will be no Water CAC meeting in May 2021.

10. **Adjournment**

Motion was made (Sandkula) and seconded (Perszyk) to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:04 pm.