

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE COUNTY
WATER POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING

December 12, 2024

Santa Fe, New Mexico

1. A. This meeting of the Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) was called to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. by Chair Shann Stringer on the above-cited date in the Plaza Conference Room, 100 Catron Street Santa Fe, New Mexico. The meeting was conducted as a hybrid with people attending in person and on line.

B. A quorum was achieved with the following members present:

Members Present:

Shann Stringer, Chair
Amy Jordan
Peter Gowen
James Mike Henry
John Kadlecek
Darrin Muenzberg
Stephen Schmelling [Webex]
Emily Wolf [Webex]
Commissioner Bustamante [Webex- non-voting member]

Member(s) Absent:

Jeff Montoya
Laird Graeser [excused]

County Staff Present:

Sara Smith, Manager's Office, Operations Manager
Hvtce Miller, Intergovernmental Outreach Coordinator
Jacqueline Beam, Sustainability Manager
Michael Carr, Public Works, Compliance Officer
Brett Clavio, Planning Manager
Leandro Cordova, Deputy Manager
Andrew Harnden, Open Space Resources
Mike Hart, Public Works
Brickman House, Sustainability
Alexandra Ladd, Growth Management Director
Travis Soderquist, Utilities Deputy Director
Brittney Montoya, Constituent Services Liaison
Paul Olafson, Community Development

Others Present:

Carl Dickens, Pipeline Coalition
Genell Ziciya, Interested citizen [Webex]
Jamie Gagan, Tesuque citizen

C. Approval of Agenda

There were no changes, and Mr. Gowen moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Muenzberg seconded and the agenda was unanimously approved. [Ms. Wolf was not present for this action.]

D. Introduction of WPAC Guests

The guest introduced themselves.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. November 14, 2024

Mr. Gowen moved to approve the November 14th meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Muenzberg seconded and the motion passed without opposition. [Ms. Wolf was not present for this action.]

3. Discussion Items

A. This item was deferred to later in the agenda pending Ms. Wolf's arrival.
[See page 3]

4. Miscellaneous Action Items

A. Future Presentation Concerning the Community Need for Well Mapping Data

Chair Stringer noted that, through the Water Data Act, more well-related data is available through the OSE. The site is based out of New Mexico Tech (NMT). The goal is to compile all of the well-related data within one link for efficient searchability. NMT is an interim step to getting to there. The site contains graphs/images of well data in Santa Fe County.

Ms. Jordan said that the maps are available for use by WPAC. She indicated that she has been reviewing this data for years. The data is available via OSE's web-based data explorer. By clicking on a well, one can see all of the entries within the OSE database. One of WPAC's priorities is to get information beyond depth, allowed diversion, and location of well, but to indicate its actual use. As far as NMT's efforts go, current depth to water data is available from there and how the depth to water has changed. The City and County have available GIS layers – arroyos and septic to name a few. The OSE well data is not particularly easy/clean and has location discrepancies.

Ms. Jordan suggested that the working groups consider what sort of maps would be useful to answer questions, and/or assist in developing analyses for WPAC priorities.

Mr. Dickens recalled that when Andrew Erdmann was employed with the City, he developed a graphic of the number of wells in Santa Fe County and water to depth changes over time. There are 20,000 wells within the County, of which 2,000 were in the City.

Chair Stringer noted that according to Doug Crosby a number of the County wells are livestock watering wells.

Ms. Jordan said that the data could be useful in identifying the next area that needs to be on County water because the wells are going dry.

Mr. Dickens mentioned a property that Peter Komis has for sale, which could serve for slowing/holding stormwater. Mr. Muzenberg mentioned an issue with beavers in the area. Commissioner Bustamante said that beavers have not been seen since the mitigation of the lower part of the river.

Septic system latitude/longitude data is housed with NMED; although, lacking staff, it has not been updated, but the data exists.

Ms. Jordan said that the City's GIS-layered websites have been the most helpful in finding arroyos, floodplains, etc. She offered to assist in finding data.

3. Discussion Items

A. New Mexico Environment Department: Primacy of NPDES Program and Formation of Surface Water Permitting Program

Ms. Wolf provided an update on the primacy and surface water permitting program legislation for the upcoming session. NMED is developing a surface water permitting program which fills the gap left by the Supreme Court ruling, which exempts 95 percent of New Mexico waters from the protections of the Clean Water Act, as well as taking primacy on NPDES surface water permitting – taking over from the EPA.

Two bills will be introduced. One for NPDES and one for the formation of NM's own surface water permitting program. The state convened a Surface Water Advisory Panel to receive input and discuss what will be covered in the program. The panel lacked tribal representation, but since then the agency has reached out for government-to-government consultation. The bills were heard by the Water & Natural Resources Committee before Thanksgiving. She offered to keep WPAC updated on the bills.

The Outreach Working Group has primacy on their list.

Aside from New Mexico, New Hampshire and Massachusetts do not have their own primacy programs. It was noted that those two states fall under EPA Region 1 which is an effective, good region to be within.

Mr. Gowen informed that he reached out to NMED Surface Water Bureau through its website and, as a WPAC member, requested to be included on their mailing list for primacy and the

surface water permitting program progress.

4. B. Formation of WPAC Working Groups and Establishment of Performance-Based Measures

Working groups were identified as follows:

- Outreach: Members Jordan, Kadlecek, Henry, Gowen, and Wolf
- Stormwater: Members Muzenberg, Stringer, Gowen, Dickens, and Wolf
- Drinking & Wastewater Management: Members Jordan, Gowen, Muzenberg, Kadlecek, and Schmelling

Mr. Gowen removed himself from Stormwater and moved to Outreach.

Ms. Beam reminded the participants that, to avoid quorum issues, five members would be the limit on a working group.

Updated information will be posted on Boarddocs. The notion of having a website dedicated to WPAC came up.

Mr. Kadlecek asked to what extent WPAC was proposing deliverables which would go directly to the BCC, compared to materials that go straight to the public with no BCC involvement. For example, can Mr. Gowen's document for establishing a 501(3)(c) for a water shed association be posted without BCC's interaction? Does it need Legal's review?

Chair Stringer mentioned City's water resource manager Christine Chavez's website, which may be an appropriate place for that posting. As an advisory council to the BCC, it was his opinion that items need to go through the BCC.

Speaking remotely, Commissioner Bustamante said that when the government arm is needed for leverage in policy/city-county relationships, the BCC is the appropriate level. However, posting documents regarding the establishment of a non-profit is different. As a citizens group, she recommended reaching out and listening to other groups to build on WPAC's effectiveness in addressing the public's concerns.

As a body representing the County, Ms. Beam said that anything policy-related will need to be approved by the BCC.

Mr. Kadlecek recommended that the working groups employ, along with input from the staff liaison, the methodologies from the training that WPAC received. It was noted that a refresher on the training was probably necessary.

Ms. Beam repeated that any policy product needs to have BCC approval

Mr. Soderquist said that the initiatives were originally generated by staff, and in terms of performance metrics, it would be best for staff to explain to the working groups the background on the initiatives and the concerns regarding those initiatives. Staff will be able to identify where

the priorities originated.

The problem with incomplete feedback came up and the importance of WPAC reviewing contracts, i.e., PFAS scope.

Future agendas should include working group updates in order to provide the full WPAC and staff necessary information and feedback.

Mr. Muenzberg mentioned “Plan, Do, Check, Act” which refers to a continuous cycle the working groups can implement. He also mentioned the “Observe, Orient, Decide, Act” loop.

Commissioner Bustamante asked whether WPAC would have a presentation for the BCC in January. Chair Stringer said he hoped to have something developed by February.

Ms. Beam said that having staff meet with the working groups in the early stages will be helpful in establishing result-based deliverables.

6. Matters from Staff

A. Current County Projects, Utilities Capital Projects, and Planning Efforts [Full listing available on Boarddocs]

Mike Hart from Public Works provided a detailed utility capital projects review which included funding, phases and current status.

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Arroyo Hondo SR 14 Sewer Interceptor:

- Connects Richards Avenue to NM 14
- Interconnects Oshara and the County’s Abajo Lift Station
- Eventually the project will connect to the Quill Plant
- Finalizing design, scheduled to go to construction bid in Q1 2025

Hyde Park Estates MDCWA:

- Project Budget: \$2,131,341
- Install new meters and key valve
- Circulating system in existing tanks and rebuild booster station
- Project Scope: Replace existing water lines and meters that have reached the end of their useful lives
- Awarded to design firm

Hondo Bulk Water Station:

- Construct a residential only bulk water station.
- Under design

Bulk Water Turquoise Trail

- Construct 2.3 miles of water main along NM 14 up to the Turquoise Trail Fire Station and construct a residential only bulk water station
- Water comes from Buckman

- Work to start in February 2025

Abajo Lift Station

- Design and construct wastewater lift station off of Highway 14 to divert waste flow from City to Santa Fe County Quill Reclamation Facility
- Quill's current capacity is 500,000 gpd and is using 150 gpd
- Recent bond money will provide for design build expansion
- Intent is to produce effluent for construction water
- Currently under design

Agua Fria Wastewater

- Project to accommodate 38 streets within Agua Fria Village.
- This is Phase 3 of a 4-phase project

Deputy Manager Cordova said the County will be doing the work, and once completed, the project will be handed over to the City, who will provide the services and collect fees.

Romero Park Waterline

- City water from South Meadows Road along West Alameda Street to Caja del Oro Gran Road for use at Romero Park, La Familia Clinic, Fire Station and Nancy Rodriguez Community Center to replace well water use
- Currently being prepared for bid

Mr. Hart identified the funding sources as GO Bonds, GRT, ARPA, and other funding sources. ARPA sources that were to expire have been consolidated into projects that are ready to be spent.

CR-78: Camino Chupadero

- Design and construct drainage, create new infrastructure roadway and water system improvements, meters
- It will triple the storage capacity and acquire the land the tanks sit on
- Replacing the water lines for fire protection/new hydrants
- Source of water is well
- The project will go out for design-build

Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System (AAMODT)

- Water intake from Rio Grande, water treatment plant and transmission lines are under construction. Booster stations and water transmission mains are under design
- Land acquisition and condemnation to provide space for the project
- Construction costs have gone up exponentially

Pojoaque Fire Station #1 Connection to Community Sewer

- Construct sewer and connect to Pojoaque sewer system, and remove fire station from failing septic system
- Project on hold to finalize long term lease with Pueblo of Pojoaque

Glorieta Sewer

- Project to replace or line the existing sewer systems and man holes that are failing and collapsing
- Initial portion of design is to film existing system to determine what can be done
- An engineer has been selected and contract pending

Mr. Muenzberg pointed out that none of the projects were in District 3.

Mr. Soderquist provided an update on the planning projects currently underway as follows:

Effluent Management Plan:

- 100 percent submittal to the County
- Purpose of plan was to evaluate the current system, what is expected, and expanded the expectation to a longer time period
- Capacity of existing facilities and how well they function
- Water quality reviewed and reliability of that quality
- Reviewed all current facilities
- Currently, Quill is designed for 500,000 gpd and can expand to 2 million gpd
- Expansions are being considered by 500,000 gpd – with more growth blocks being added to encapsulate wastewater in the most effective manner
- Explore options for reuse and reclamation, etc., which is part of the aquifer storage and recovery project. The ASR project may require an additional monitoring well

Mr. Soderquist said that the plan will be presented to County staff who will respond with comments to the consultant and then it will come back to the County. WPAC requested that the draft plan, before it is presented to the BCC, come to WPAC for review, with the understanding that information contained within the plan will not be disclosed to the public.

Mr. Hart noted that the Quill plant is on State land and the County is working to acquire the property to gain access off Highway 14.

Mr. Soderquist said that the County's plan is to produce high-quality effluent, but the current plant infrastructure makes it problematic. The feasibility study will address those issues.

Mr. Hart noted that the current volume of development exceeds what was projected in the 35 year plan conducted in the past.

Chair Stringer asked that staff check with Legal to determine the appropriate stage for WPAC to review the plan. He appreciated that December was a difficult time to pin staff down given the holidays, and suggested talking about it again in January.

Santa Fe County Water Utility Master Plan

- Similar to the wastewater plan but for water
- A contractor is evaluating the existing water systems and looking at future growth within SDA 1 and 2
- Evaluate existing infrastructure to meet future water demands

- Prioritize water system improvements and provide budgetary cost- level estimates
- Develop 5-year, 10-year, and 20-year water capital improvement plan with prioritized projects

Preliminary Engineering Report for La Cienega, La Cieneguilla and El Canon –

- At this point RFP is being developed for the PER
- Advertising will start 12/22/24

Noting that there was only one house in El Canon, Mr. Dickens questioned why it was included.

[Mr. Gowen excused himself from the remainder of the meeting.]

Santa Fe Water 2100

- The Santa Fe Water 2100 MOA recently passed through the BCC, and is being forwarded to City Council for action
- Once approved, the planning process begins
- The goal of 2100 is to plan for the next 40 and 80 years – future demand, future development
- What can the current systems handle
- Models will be used to run different scenarios and variables
- Funds have also been set aside for the wastewater plan

Regarding the return-flow credits, Mr. Dickens said that the City is preparing a presentation to the OSE to explore the possibility of getting return-flow credits to the Santa Fe River. The cost of the proposed pipeline has perhaps tripled since initial consideration, and now there is a sincere effort to see what can happen with the Santa Fe River. Chair Stringer said he hoped that the new emotional intellect at the ISC will present a reality-based concept to the OSE. Chair Stringer asked that the return-flow pipeline be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Soderquist said that Mr. Dickens' group is assisting in writing an RFP for the lower Santa Fe River below the plant.

Mr. Dickens noted that the City and the Watershed Association will be applying for an aquatic restoration grant through the BOR waterSMART for the entire Santa Fe River.

Chair Stringer suggested WPAC encourage the BCC to bring in the Santa Fe Watershed Association as a partner. Mr. Kadlecek said that the Outreach Working Group has been discussing this. Mr. Muenzberg said that he was prepared to make a motion reflecting the Chair's recommendation, and this too was added to the next agenda as an action item.

5. B. Process and Expectations of WPAC Working Groups

Ms. Beam recommended that the working groups:

- Set timelines upfront
- Invite staff to initial meetings to reduce any duplication of efforts
- Managerial staff may assign other staff members

- Consider three meetings with staff attendance
- Define results-based architect – the needs, measurable goals and desired outcomes, and what is the determination of success for that outcome
- Review every opportunity to track and document information sources

6. **Matters from the Public**

None was presented.

7. **Matters from the Committee**

Chair Stringer said that the BCC's approval to move forward with the Santa Fe 2100 Plan was fantastic.

8. **Next WPAC Meeting: January 9, 2024**

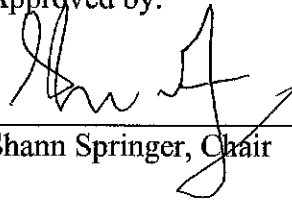
Agenda idea:

- Discuss - the return-flow pipeline
- Updates – from the working groups
- Action – develop a recommendation to the BCC in support of bringing the Santa Fe Watershed Association in as a partner/consultant

9. **Adjournment**

Following a motion by Mr. Muenzberg and second by Ms. Jordan, this meeting adjourned at approximately 6:25 p.m.

Approved by:



Shann Springer, Chair

Respectfully submitted by:

Karen Farrell, Wordswork