

MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE COUNTY
WATER POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 14, 2018

Santa Fe, New Mexico

I. Lacking a quorum, this meeting of the Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) study session was called to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. by Mary Helen Follingstad, Chair, on the above-cited date at the Santa Fe County Projects Complex, 901 W. Alameda, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

II. The following members were present:

Members Present:

Mary Helen Follingstad, Chair
Ken Kirk, District 2
Bryan Romero, District 1
Steve Rudnick, District 5

Member(s) Excused:

Shann Stringer, Soil & Water Conservation
Denise Fort, BDD Board
Martha Trujillo, Acequia Association
JC Helms (BDD Alternate)
[Five vacancies]

Staff Present:

Jerry Schoeppner,, Geohydrologist
Rita Bates, Utilities, Project Manager

Guest(s):

Dyan Oldenburg, Interested Citizen

III. Approval of Agenda

There was consensus to accept the agenda.

IV. Approval of Minutes: March 8, 2018, April 12, 2018 and May 10, 2018

Postponed pending quorum.

V. Introduction of WPAC members, staff and guests

Those present introduced themselves. Dyan Oldenburg said Denise Fort invited her to attend and consider serving on the committee. She stated she has been involved in water quality and conservation issues for the last 40 years. The committee indicated her participation would be welcomed.

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VI. Matter from the Public

None were offered.

VII. Action Items

- A. Resolution on WPAC Membership - change wording to “a quorum is a majority of appointed members: Resolution to be presented at BCC June 26th meeting**

Mr. Kirk said he met with Commission Chair Anna Hansen yesterday and she is supportive of the resolution.

It was mentioned that the absence of membership from the southern part of the county is a lost opportunity for representation.

VIII. Discussion Items

- A. Drought Management**
- 1. Approve framework for discussion of drought management trigger options**
 - 2. Review options for drought triggers: City of Santa Fe, Eldorado area Water Utility, etc.**
 - 3. Develop recommendations for the BCC**
 - 4. Present recommendations to BCC**

Chair Follingstad said there is committee consensus that the County needs its own backup supply of water. Mr. Schoeppner said the County and other partners of the Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System (PBRWS) pushed hard against the decision made by BOR to not have a backup supply. The original plan was to have existing tribal wells act as backup. Depending on the customer base there may be adequate water in the system to serve as backup. Following the well election survey, which has begun, it is expected the County will determine the customer base. With an inter-connect to serve water within the County, the PBRWS could serve as the County's backup supply. The same drought-related concerns will apply to the PBRWS as it does to the BDD. BOR reviewed historical flow records and according to BOR the intake structure is designed to avoid having an issue in drawing water. The water level has never dropped below the minimum design criteria.

Mr. Romero said he received the well/hookup survey from the County which appears to gauge connect interest but there is no commitment. If one elects to connect, they would be eligible to tap the connection funds. He understood well water will be for exterior use only and mentioned a water quality issue that would arise by mixing well water with PBRWS water.

Mr. Schoeppner said there were a variety of items brought up in regards to well use in the Pojoaque Basin. A wellfield made up of the transferred water rights could serve as a backup. Referring to the BDD, he said the County has to contend with water rights and the BDD's capacity. The capacity could be increased but that would require opening up the NEPA permitting process. The cost of water rights is escalating and currently runs around \$20,000 an

acre-foot. In an effort to preserve traditional uses of irrigation water, the County passed a resolution that prohibits the purchase of water rights from any acequia without the acequia association's approval. Another positive of regional systems is they would maximize the use of the water resources and eliminate the competition in purchasing water rights.

Mr. Schoeppner said currently the County defers to the City to declare drought water conservation measures. It was important that the City and County BDD customers are on the same page. The County may want to participate in the City's review of its Chapter 25 drought management plan and provide recommendations. Eldorado has drought management restrictions that should be reviewed. PBRWS could have different restrictions than the City. Recognizing it was a significant effort, he supported the notion of this committee reviewing and recommending updates to Chapter 25. The City may be willing to amend a section within the chapter to address County concerns. The County Sustainable Land Development Code will also need to be amended.

The City's hesitancy to support regionalization relates to an incorrect understanding of the regional area which would be the service area, not the entire county. The committee mentioned that with a new mayor and Public Works Division Director this may be an effective time to reopen the discussion.

Regarding water restrictions, the question of whether the County has the resources to monitor/review meter readings and consumer bills and then apply a penalty. Mr. Schoeppner said the County recently reduced the water use tiers to encourage conservation and perhaps generate more revenue from the high consumers. He said a "drought management" or "surcharge" could be added to a consumer's bill if they use more than x amount. The County utility goes to great lengths to assist a consumer in getting current.

On the subject of well users in Santa Fe County, Mr. Schoeppner estimated that probably half the residents are on wells and the other half on some kind of public system. The County imposes a .25 acre-foot water restriction, and requires a well meter and annual reporting which is rarely done. All new development will be required to install an automated well meter that the County will be able to monitor.

Mr. Schoeppner said the Santa Fe Basin Study completed in 2016/2017 documents water usage for agriculture, domestic wells, etc. OSE's database is useful, however, a lot of people have wells that are not registered. He suggested that the County could reach out and advise domestic well-users of drought conditions and conservation efforts.

Ms. Oldenburg mentioned that wells are going dry in the La Cañada de los Alamos area with well users having to make choices on what to use their water for. Additionally, many of the shallow wells are contaminated.

There was agreement that two work groups would be beneficial:

- Regionalization concepts – to be developed with City participation
- Determination of drought triggers

OSE requires meters on shared wells and lacking adequate resources OSE has trouble with compliance and reporting. At this point, the drought restrictions would only apply to the service area because the County lacks authority for domestic well users.

Backup supply was discussed as a work group issue and it was determined that because of the many components, it would be addressed later. Mr. Kelley and Mr. Dupuis will provide additional backup related information. Backup options could include Rancho Viejo's ASR (Aquifer Storage and Recovery) project that they are not interested in pursuing.

Mr. Romero pointed out that in the Aamodt Settlement, OSE has deemed that if well rights are not being used, they are lost. It competes with concepts of conservation. Mr. Schoepner said this dichotomy could be addressed by this group.

VIII. Matters from County Staff

A. Update on Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System

Rita Bates, County Aamodt project manager, discussed the connection fund survey that went out to 2,300 properties within 250 feet of where the pipeline for the system is planned. The question was whether people wanted to access the connection fund. The state is providing \$4 million for connections that the County will administer. The connector will be granted up to \$10,000 per connection. The survey is not a commitment to hookup. The County is not conducting the well election rather the mailing was to ascertain how many residents were interested in hooking up to the regional system.

Ms. Bates said the County has been talking to the BOR about the 1.14 million gallon water tank in Tesuque located close to Bishop's Lodge. The County wants to have reverse flow from that tank as well as the entire system. The only backup for the PBRWS would be the tanks. She mentioned a 10-million gallon tank on Tano Road that could be part of the backup system.

Mr. Rudnick pointed out that Eldorado keeps its tanks full and the trigger for drought management is when the tanks cannot be maintained at capacity.

Ms. Bates said the County continues to work on the system design with BOR and its contractors and the pueblos. Phase 1 is 90 percent completed which includes the water treatment plant, Raney wells and the diversion from the Rio Grande. Time is money and the construction as well as the experts/resources increase in cost. Mr. Romero said the recent tariff will have a negative impact on cost.

B. Update on Community Systems

Mr. Schoepner said there were no updates from last month's report. The Board of Hyde Park Estates will review the surcharge and determine whether they're interested. A well location was selected for Chupadero.

C. Status of Member Vacancies

Two individuals have expressed interest and provided resume materials.

D. County Water/Wastewater Master Plan Rate Study update

Mr. Schoeppner said the BCC approved the HDR rate study and voted to approve the increase. The master plan is not yet completed. The County manager wanted the rate increase presented to the BCC before the end of the fiscal year. He said it was a very comprehensive study and offered to forward it to the members.

Chair Follingstad recommended that HDR attend a WPAC meeting and make a 15 minute presentation/overview of what they're doing regarding the master plan study.

Mr. Schoeppner mentioned that staff would like to store and use the effluent from the Quill Plant for reclamation, irrigation and to offset the gap; it is anticipated that La Cienega will lobby hard for that effluent. Chair Follingstad opined that this committee should be involved in this.

VIII. B. Regionalization

The City will be starting up the meetings again regarding its feasibility study that Carollo Engineering has been working on. The study addressed how to close the City's water gap and did not consider cultural or riparian uses – only how the resource can be used to fill the gap. It was deemed appropriate for this committee to have Carollo's meeting schedule.

IX. Matters from the Committee

Agenda Items: August or September invite HDR to provide an overview of the study and determine what role the committee would have to interface with them.

X. Adjournment

Having completed the agenda and with no further business to come before this Committee, this meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

WATER POLICY ADVISORY
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Approved by:

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 16TH Day Of July, 2019 at 01:34:52 PM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1891355
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Mary Helen Follingstad

Mary Helen Follingstad, Chair

Estrella Martinez
Deputy _____
Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Geraldine Salazar
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

Respectfully submitted by:

Karen Farrell, Wordswork



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