

**MINUTES OF THE**  
**SANTA FE COUNTY**  
**WATER POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**August 9, 2018**

**Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**I.** This meeting of the Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) was called to order at approximately 5:00 p.m. by Bryan Romero, on the above-cited date at the Santa Fe County Projects Complex, 901 W. Alameda, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

**II.** Lacking a quorum, no action could be taken.

**Members Present:**

✓ Bryan Romero, District 1  
✓ Ken Kirk, District 2  
✓ JC Helms (BDD Alternate)

**Member(s) Excused:**

✓ Mary Helen Follingstad, Chair  
✓ Steve Rudnick, District 5  
Denise Fort, BDD Board  
Shann Stringer, Soil & Water Conservation

**Staff Present:**

Rita Bates, Utilities Project Manager

**III. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was accepted.

**IV. Approval of Minutes: July 17, 2018**

Action was postponed until the next meeting.

**V. Introduction of WPAC members, staff and guests - Deemed unnecessary**

**VI. Matter from the Public - None were offered**

**VII. Action Items - None were listed**

SFC CLERK RECORDED 07/16/2019

## **VIII. Discussion Items**

### **A. Drought Management Subcommittee**

Mr. Romero reminded those present that at a previous meeting, Utilities Director Dupuis said the department was interested in a governing document to address drought or emergency water situations. The Drought Management Subcommittee determined that identifying the type of document would be helpful. The subcommittee will arrange a meeting with staff to understand the mechanisms for management.

Mr. Kirk said he serves on the City's Water Conservation Committee, chaired by Councilor Romero Wirth, and they have been discussing getting a handle on wells in the city. The State Engineer has the authority over wells and with a specific area designation wells could be metered. The committee wants to meet with the County and this dovetails well with this County committee wanting to meet with the City.

Mr. Romero said metering the wells would improve the water supply in the aquifer. He commented on the commonality with regionalization and creating the boundaries for well monitoring.

Stating he has been in Santa Fe since 1947, Mr. Helms said if the drought situation worsens terminating watering of golf courses should be considered. He asked whether WPAC should consider that notion. As a member of the Las Campanas Golf Club, Mr. Kirk said the club has been part of the development since its inception. Las Campanas Co-op provides effluent to the golf course which meets 20 percent of the need. Mr. Helms said he wasn't challenging the legal rights to take/use the water; however, eminent domain could seize the water and compensate the owner(s).

Mr. Romero said seniority/priority water rights prevail. Subjectivity of the use is not part of the determination. Native rights have greater priority than those of the people who came in after. His family arrived in 1592 and his rights will pre-date many of the people in the valley. He said he was not disagreeing about water usage at golf courses but the courts have always found in favor of beneficial use. There are certainly cultural and societal norms that should be taken in consideration, i.e., sharing resources for crops. Quality of life determinations can vary.

Mr. Kirk pointed out that Las Campanas has been recognized by the Audubon Society as a bird sanctuary.

Mr. Romero said WPAC needs to be in a position that helps with drought management, assisting the County to meet with the City – and things can be spun off that for other ideas. There are strong feelings on how water should be used and who should have ownership. The community needs to be educated before restrictions are imposed.

## **B. Regionalization Subcommittee**

Mr. Helms reviewed a summary of the subcommittee's meeting prepared by Chair Follinstad. The following items were noted:

- Reviewing and revising the white paper was discussed
- Grassroot and community water system support would be needed to develop a regionalization plan
- Eldorado may not perceive benefits in regionalizing
- Without value to the parties, there is no reason to regionalize
- There have to be specific values
- The complexity of regionalization was acknowledged

Mr. Kirk said Mr. Dupuis introduced a discussion about using Las Campanas water rights to extend a pipeline to Eldorado that would assist in preserving Eldorado's wells. He mentioned that Mark Sanchez, executive director of the Albuquerque Bernalillo Water Utility Authority, said something similar to the authority could be done in Santa Fe. That authority was created by state law which overrode many of the issues that were preventing it from moving forward.

Mr. Helms said working system by system could be the start of regionalization.

Mr. Romero discussed the capital that the City invested in its system over the years. Community systems should identify their pros and cons to form relationships and/or assistance. The City purchased PNM's water to gain control of rates and development.

Regarding mutual domestics, a larger one can support smaller ones, which is more networking than regionalization.

Mr. Kirk said Mark Sanchez has offered to talk to WPAC.

## **IX. Matters from County Staff**

### **A. Update on Pojoaque Basin Regional Water System**

Ms. Bates said the connection fund survey generated over 815 responses. The survey was sent to those within the corridor of the pipeline and asked when the water becomes available would they want to access funding for connection to the system. Staff is mapping the responses. The well owner would be allowed to retain well use for the exterior.

The County is working with BOR, the State, the City and the four pueblos on the 611 G project (which is a section of the Act requiring BOR to facilitate cost discussions) project to address the rising cost of the Aamodt system. The numbers are not final. Phase 1, which is the diversion and the water treatment plant from Los Alamos, San Ildefonso, from the water treatment near El Rancho to Pojoaque and part of Nambe, is 90 percent designed. Phase 2 is 60 percent designed and a cost is not anticipated until the end of September. The consultant on Phase 1 is CDM Smith. Phases 2 and 3 are being designed by BOR's technical service center out of Denver.

Ms. Bates noted that the cost of steel is changing which affects the project. Phase 1 design plans are being reviewed and the County continues to work on a well monitoring plan. Chris Begay with BIA has been working on the project.

Mr. Helms requested that staff could provide a list of County water systems and contact information.

**X. Adjournment**

Having completed the agenda and with no further business to come before this Committee, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:55 p.m.

Approved by:



Mary Helen Follingstad, Chair

Respectfully submitted by:


Karen Farrell, Wordswork

COUNTY OF SANTA FE )  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ss

WATER POLICY ADVISORY  
PAGES: 4

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for  
Record On The 16TH Day Of July, 2019 at 01:34:54 PM  
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # **1891357**  
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Deputy  Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office  
Geraldine Salazar  
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM