

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

**May 29, 2024**

**Santa Fe, New Mexico**

1. A. This special meeting of the Santa Fe County Water Policy Advisory Committee (WPAC) was called to order at approximately 5:35 p.m. by Sara Smith, County Manager's Office, Operations Manager, 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:**

Carl Dickens [virtually]  
Peter Gowen  
James Mike Henry  
Amy Jordan  
John Kadlecek  
Jeff Montoya  
Darrin Muenzberg  
Stephen Schmelling  
Shann Stringer  
Emily Wolf  
Commissioner Camille Bustamante [non-voting member]

**Member(s) Excused:**

None

**Others Present:**

Sara Smith, Manager's Office, Operations Manager  
Cristella Valdez, Assistant Attorney  
Gary "Brett" Clavio, Growth Management Division Planning Manager  
Jacqueline Beam, Sustainability Manager  
Brittney Montoya, Constituent Liaison  
Hvtce Miller, Intergovernmental Outreach Coordinator  
Travis Soderquist, Water Resources Manager  
Paul Choman, Utilities Division Director  
Alicia Jones, Interested resident

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### **C. Approval of Agenda**

There were no changes and Mr. Gowen moved to approve the agenda as published. Mr. Kadlecek seconded. The agenda was unanimously approved.

### **D. Introduction of New Members and County Support Staff**

Those present introduced themselves and this is a snapshot of what was said.

Amy Jordan: Ph.D. in hydrology from New Mexico Tech with a focus on water contamination. Water conservation is of high interest. A resident of Area 1B, off West Alameda.

Carl Dickens: A native New Mexican and a 40-year resident of La Cienega with a passion for water. He serves on the Santa Fe River Community Collaborative and the Pipeline Coalition and is currently employed by the City of Santa Utility Department Water Division.

Darrin Muenzberg: An eighth-generation resident of La Bajada, vice president of the La Bajada Community Ditch & Mutual Domestic Water Association. He also works as a Master Mariner.

Emily Wolf: Resident of Agua Fria Village with a background in water resources and a focus on nutrient uptake and water quality along the Rio Grande and the east part of the Jemez. Experience in education and watershed restoration along the Santa Fe River. Starting a new position with American Rivers as the Rio Grande Coordinator.

Mike Henry: Five-year resident of Edgewood and prior to that was an extension agent in Orange County and Riverside County in California. His background is in plant and crop water use and urban water conservation.

Jeff Montoya: Pojoaque Pueblo Council member, point person for the regional water system which affects the pueblo, and works with the mayordomos of the eight acequias on the pueblo.

John Kadlecek: Resident of Rio en Medio living in a straw bale house built by his wife and serving as the mayordomo and president of the Mutual Domestic. His interest is keeping water usage and available. Currently, working for Boeing as a technical writer.

Peter Gowen: A recent resident of Santa Fe, retired master-level hydrologist and lawyer. Worked on water quality with the EPA, BLM and State of Wyoming. His legal practice focused on local government/special districts that provided water and sewer services. Currently, serves on the Santa Fe Watershed Association.

Shann Stringer: Worked for the NMED Surface Water Quality Bureau as a biologist/ecologist, Tetra Tech, currently with Energy Minerals and Natural Resources.

Stephen Schmelling: Serving on the City Water Conservation Commission and a resident of the City. Retired EPA employee where he served as the director of groundwater research program.

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Alison Jones: Interested in joining WPAC and specializes in permitting, well design, aquifer testing with a strong focus on groundwater. Recently worked in Tucson on PFAS contamination issues.

County staff introduced themselves using their title listed on page one and highlighted their commitments to assist WPAC.

Commissioner Bustamante thanked the committee members for their interest in working on WPAC and said she too was committed to working with the group. Her background is in environmental epidemiology.

Mr. Dickens apologized that he would be leaving the meeting early. He recommended the committee tour lower Santa Fe River, announced he would be resigning from the committee due to other commitments but will remain as an *ex officio* member.

#### **E. Election of Chair and Vice Chair of Water Police Committee**

There was committee consensus to move this item to the end of the agenda.

#### **2. Request Approval of the April 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Stringer moved to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Wolf seconded and the motion passed without opposition.

Previous members of the committee were identified as Ms. Wolf, Mr. Stringer and Mr. Dickens.

#### **3. Discussion Items**

##### **A. Overview of Rules Regarding Conduct of Meetings**

Cristella Valdez, Assistant Attorney, reviewed the County's rules of orders for meetings, the resolution establishing WPAC, which states that it will comply with all applicable state laws and County policies for public notice, open meetings and rules of order. She noted that she or another attorney from the office will be present at WPAC meetings.

Ms. Valdez reviewed the keys points of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and the rules of order. WPAC will comply with OMA in terms of noticing, insuring a quorum and only discuss the items on the agenda. WPAC's quorum is a majority of the voting members appointed by the Board. At this time, there are 10 appointed members and six constitutes a quorum. Outside of the public meeting, Ms. Valdez discouraged the members from having communications which could appear to be a rolling quorum. Subcommittee discussions are not rolling quorums.

Determining the order of business is part of the rules of order. The County will publish an agenda pursuant to the OMA at least 72 hours before the meeting. Action should not be taken on any item not listed on the posted agenda. If a quorum is lost during a meeting, the only action allowed is adjournment and/or recess.

She reviewed the rules of order that included the Chair's duties, motion making, amending motions, and voting. The OMA discourages remote participation unless it is difficult or impossible for a member to attend in person. Ms. Valdez said the meetings will be hybrid for public participation and if a member cannot attend because of reasons beyond their control they can participate telephonically. The NM Attorney General Office has opined that participating remotely is not intended to encourage participation in cases where personal attendance would merely be an inconvenience.

Commissioner Bustamante expressed concern about the AG's guidance discouraging virtual attendance. She noted that the County has many meetings that are hybrids.

A couple of the members noted that there are times when coming downtown is not possible and a hybrid could resolve that issue. In the event a member is not able to attend in person, Ms. Valdez said to contact Ms. Smith to make appropriate arrangements. Commissioner Bustamante requested that staff review this item to ensure members can participate remotely.

Committee chairs have all the rights as any other member for the purposes of voting, making and seconding motions.

Ms. Valdez highlighted the conflict of interest portion and said that no member may take part in any deliberation, testimony or vote on any matter in which such member has immediate family member, financial interest either direct or indirect in the outcome of the issue.

Ms. Valdez said as the administrative contact, Ms Smith can shared information a member wants to share with the committee. She especially discouraged copying emails to the members with a conversation point because that creates the risk of a rolling quorum.

Commissioner Bustamante appreciated conducting meeting via Roberts Rules of Order but felt the OMA was not applicable to this group. Perhaps reworking the enabling resolution to make this a "working group" or task force to permit broader communicating. Mr. Stringer noted that he serves with a group that discusses items via group emails and then meets before the public to discuss and enact regulations.

It was noted that the enabling resolution has a section on suspension or amendment of rules requiring BCC action at a public meeting.

Commissioner Bustamante advised the members that Ms. Valdez has a wealth of information regarding environmental law.

#### **B. Presentation concerning the Establishment and History of the Water Policy Advisory Committee**

Ms. Smith, using a power point, said it is in the County's interest to address the issues that impact water quality and quantity in Santa Fe County and the region in a comprehensive manner. WPAC serves as an augment resource for Santa Fe County staff. WPAC was established April

2013. In 2018, the BCC established new guidelines for a quorum as a majority of appointed member. In 2019 a resolution was adopted updating the purpose and activities of WPAC and basically defined the expectations.

Commissioner Bustamante noted that the last time WPAC presented a recommendation to the BCC was in 2017.

Commissioners Hamilton and Bustamante introduced a resolution, #2024-038, in March of 2024 which reorganized the membership and updated the purpose and activities of the WPAC. The membership was expanded from 12 to 19 voting members, representation from pueblos with tribal land within the County, a members from the City Water Conservation Committee and one County Commissioner to serve as a non-voting member as well as providing staff support. A representative from the Buckman Direct Diversion Board will also be appointed.

There are currently 10 voting members. An individual from Galisteo is needed. The districts referred to as being represented are internal County planning districts. Commissioner Bustamante suggested the committee may want to align districts with the State Engineer.

**C. Review and Discussion of the Purpose and Activities of the Water Policy Advisory Committee as Defined in Santa Fe county Resolution No. 2024-038**

The resolution defines WPAC's purpose to ascertain and provide factual information and recommendations to the BCC regarding sustainable utility services, domestic water supply and conservation, wastewater management and reclamation, irrigation, drought management, flood prevention and control and water reuse in the County and region.

In summary of the resolution, Ms. Smith highlighted that it calls for:

- A results based accountability framework for addressing water issues in the County and develop SMART goals – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound objectives for all of its work.
- Incorporate geographic and culturally appropriate best practices into its recommendations and assure that the interests and voices of current County youth are reflected in its work
- Ensure that its work is based in diversity, equity, and inclusion principles
- Engages youth, and that the voices of youth – perhaps have a youth visitor, e.g. Yucca Group, Acequia Youth Leadership Institute
- Support the City of Santa Fe & County Utilities Santa Fe Water 2100: 5-year Water Resource Planning Cycle and all subsequent revisions and planning cycle
- Develop a work plan to assure adequate water quality and quantity for seven generations ahead, approximately 100 years
- Analyze and make recommendations concerning wastewater, including, but not limited to, County wastewater service options for rural and non-densely populated areas of the County, such as distributed wastewater treatment
- Provide such other analysis and recommendations as directed by the BCC

WPAC is asked to present annually to the BCC at the second January meeting that details progress of adopted goals from the previous year, a draft work plan and meeting calendar for the

upcoming year. The resolution also calls for WPAC to present an activity report to the BCC four times a year. Commissioner Bustamante acknowledged that presenting before July 2024 was not possible.

**D. Discussion on Training Schedule for Results Based Accountability**

**E. Determine Dates and Times for Future Special Meetings**

Ms. Smith said the training consists of two virtual three-hour sessions for a total of six hours. The training will be specific for WPAC, conducted live virtually and interactive. WPAC members would meet in-person with the trainers attending virtually.

This committee typically meets on the second Thursday at 4 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 13<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Smith said that meeting will include onboarding information regarding sustainability and utilities.

Following discussion, Mr. Gowen moved to hold the orientation on June 13<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m and the training dates of June 27<sup>th</sup> and July 2<sup>nd</sup> from 2 to 6 p.m. Mr. Muenzberg seconded and the motion passed without opposition.

Ms. Smith said she will finalize the dates with the contract trainer.

**F. Election of Chair and Vice Chair of WPAC**

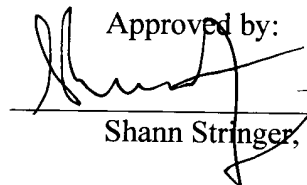
Chair: Mr. Kadlecsek nominated Shann Stringer and Mr. Muenzberg seconded. There were no other nominations and Mr. Stringer was unanimously elected Chair.

Vice Chair: Mr. Muenzberg nominated Emily Wolf and Ms. Jordan seconded. Ms. Wolf was elected vice chair by acclamation.

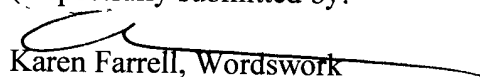
4. **Matters from the Public** - None were presented.
5. **Matters from the Committee** - None were presented.
6. **Concluding Business**
  - A. **Adjournment**

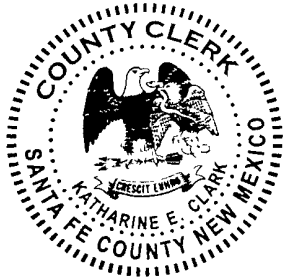
Following a motion and second and upon unanimous voice vote, Chair Stringer declared this meeting adjourned at approximately 7:10 p.m.

Approved by:

  
Shann Stringer, Chair

Respectfully submitted by:

  
Karen Farrell, Wordswork



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STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ss PAGES: 7

Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for  
Record On The 12TH Day Of December, 2025 at 03:54:28 PM  
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 2073301  
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office  
Katharine E. Clark  
Deputy [Signature] County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM



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