

FRAMEWORK FOR WATER POLICY ADVISORY (WPAC) – STAFF COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

v05.15.26

(includes edits agreed by consensus
at WPAC 05.14.26 regular meeting)

This framework for WPAC-Staff coordination and collaboration provides protocols for developing agendas and arranging meetings, settings deadlines, parliamentary guidance, staff support for working groups, communications with stakeholders and stakeholder involvement.

This document replaces the WPAC Working Groups Form & Procedures Guidance Sheet which was approved by WPAC 02.13.25.

Definition of Roles:

- Staff Liaisons: representatives from Public Utilities, Public Works, Growth Management, and Sustainability. One staff liaison (from Growth Management or other Departments) will be designated to provide communications and logistical support for the Committee.
- Outreach with Federal, State, and Local Government agencies: Staff liaisons will initiate contact between WPAC and other entities, which may include informational presentations about regional water issues and collaboration on policy initiatives. WPAC members, in communicating with external agencies do not represent the County.

Developing WPAC Agendas and Arranging Meetings:

- Within seven days following a WPAC meeting, the County Liaison (CL) or their designee will contact the Chair to discuss the next meeting's agenda.
- Two weeks prior to the scheduled WPAC meeting, staff from all departments (Public Utilities, Public Works, Sustainability, and Growth Management) will hold a pre-WPAC meeting to discuss the Chair's draft agenda and add additional items or clarifications as necessary.
- 8 days before the meeting, Chair and the CL will finalize the agenda and attachments.
- Approx. 7 days before meeting, the CL will email WPAC members to confirm attendance and request response by Monday the week of the meeting. The CL will confirm attendance with the Chair the following day (Tuesday).
- Staff will publish the agenda and upload the attachments, including working group reports, on the WPAC page and the County's meeting calendar 72 hours in advance of the meeting (Friday of the preceding week).

Drafting, Publishing, Recording Meeting Minutes and Parliamentary Guidance:

- Minutes will be drafted in summary form and published within 10 business days on the WPAC page per NM Open Meetings Act (OMA).

- Approved minutes are to be signed by Chair and Vice-Chair, and the CL will submit them to the County Clerk for recording.
- The CL will follow-up with the County Clerk as needed to ensure recorded minutes are uploaded to WPAC page.
- Parliamentary guidance during the meeting will be provided by the County's legal staff. The Court stenographer if present may also provide parliamentary guidance as requested by the Chair or County staff.

WPAC Working Groups:

- Resolution 2024-038 established Working Groups made up of a maximum of five WPAC members, organized by interest and experience.,
- Each Working Group will designate a lead for prioritized activities and a staff liaison to provide support. County staff can provide limited support to the Working Groups, including reserving County meeting space or assisting with virtual meetings, and providing information, expertise and data that's accessible as part of their job duties.
- Working Groups should meet as often as necessary, as determined by members.
- Working Groups should aim to hold monthly standing meetings with staff so updates can be shared and Working Group members and staff can identify tasks and next steps toward achieving prioritized activities on the WPAC work plan. A summary of the monthly meeting will be put together as a standing item on the WPAC meeting agenda. Each Working Group will produce a quarterly progress summary for WPAC prior to the Committee's quarterly presentation to BCC;
- Working Group meetings may be open to other stakeholders and subject-matter experts upon invitation, including public, private, and non-profit stakeholders as appropriate, while aiming to maintain small meeting size to ensure discussion is targeted;
- Starting March 2026, monthly standing Working Group meetings are scheduled as follows:
 - Stormwater Management: 2nd Friday of the month 10-11am
 - Drinking & Wastewater Management: 2nd Friday of the month 3-4pm
 - Outreach: 4th Monday of the month 4-5pm

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) for Communication:

- WPAC is subject to the Open Meetings Act which requires adherence to certain communication protocols. Communications about basic logistics (time, date, location of meetings for instance) are *not* subject to these protocols:
 - Use staff as intermediaries to send information relative to an upcoming vote or discussion item individually rather than using group emails.
 - Use "BCC" field for names of Committee members rather than "reply-all" relative to group communications to avoid a group discussion.

- Avoid “daisy chain” communications where member A speaks to member B and B speaks to C about an issue that will come before the WPAC for a vote.
- A “rolling quorum” can exist even when members are not present in the room or later added to an email if a communication about a policy vote is shared with a quorum of members.
- If a quorum of WPAC members is present at a social or community event, keep conversations away from items that will be subject to a WPAC vote.
- If a discussion requires a quorum, wait for a legally published public meeting to discuss the item.
- Working Groups generally have attendance of fewer than 50% of WPAC members so communications within the Working Group are not subject to quorum considerations. However, Working Group members should be aware that communicating about policy work that will be subject to a WPAC discussion or vote should be confined to the Working Group membership. Updates on these items will be communicated to the rest of the WPAC membership during a publicly noticed WPAC meeting.