



**San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
 Citizens' Advisory Committee**

MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, June 20, 2023
 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 525 Golden Gate Ave., 3rd Floor Tuolumne Conference Room**

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY OBSERVE AND PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM
 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SOFTWARE**

Meeting URL

<https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/81864367530?pwd=MTVHRWtsaDBIZm1wc3hKTkdtdcjFJQT09>

Phone Dial-in

669.219.2599

Find your local number: <https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/81864367530?pwd=MTVHRWtsaDBIZm1wc3hKTkdtdcjFJQT09>

Meeting ID/Passcode

818 6436 7530 / 452534

Mission: The purpose of the SFPUC CAC is to provide recommendations to the SFPUC General Manager, the SFPUC Commission, and the Board of Supervisors regarding the agency's long-term strategic, financial, and capital improvement plans ([Admin. Code Article XV, Sections 5.140 - 5.142](#))

Members:

Moisés García, Chair (D9)

VACANT (D1)

Suki Kott (D2)

Steven Kight (D3)

Douglas Jacuzzi (D4)

Emily Algire (D5)

Barklee Sanders (D6)

VACANT (D7)

Amy Nagengast (D8)

Steven Lee (D10)

Jennifer Clary (D11)

Maika Pinkston (M-Environmental Org.)

Nicole Sandkulla (M-Regional Water Customers)

Jodi Soboll (M-Engineering/Financial)

Eliahu Perszyk (M-Large Water User)

Andrea Baker (B-Small Business)

Michelle Pierce (B-Environ. Justice)

D = District Supervisor appointed, M = Mayor appointed, B = Board President appointed

Staff Liaisons: Mayara Ruski Augusto Sa, Lexus Moncrease and Jotti Aulakh

Staff Email for Public Comment: cac@sfwater.org

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to order and roll call at 5:48 pm

Members present at roll call: (9) García, Jacuzzi, Algire, Sanders, Nagengast, Clary, Soboll, Perszyk, and Baker

Members Absent: (6) Kott, Kight, Lee, Pinkston, Sandkulla, and Pierce

OUR MISSION: To provide our customers with high-quality, efficient, and reliable water, power and sewer services in a manner that values environmental and community interests and sustains the resources entrusted to our care.

London N. Breed
 Mayor

Newsha Ajami
 President

Sophie Maxwell
 Vice President

Tim Paulson
 Commissioner

Tony Rivera
 Commissioner

Kate Stacy
 Commissioner

Dennis J. Herrera
 General Manager



Staff: Tim Ramirez and Jennifer Ly

Members of the Public: None

2. Approve [February 21, 2023 Minutes](#)

Motion was made (Clary) and seconded (Nagengast) to approve the February 21, 2023, Minutes.

AYES: (9) García, Jacuzzi, Algire, Sanders, Nagengast, Clary, Soboll, Perszyk, and Baker

NOES: (0)

ABSENT: (6) Kott, Kight, Lee, Pinkston, Sandkulla, and Pierce

Public Comment: None

3. Report from the Chair

- Welcome members, staff, and the public
- Ohlone Tribal Land Acknowledgement
- Chair García updated members on the press conference he attended to discuss WIFIA (Water infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act) loans that the SFPUC received in the amount of \$1.2 billion

Public Comment: None

4. Public Comment: Members of the public may address the Committee on matters that are within the Committee's jurisdiction and are not on today's agenda

Public Comment: None

5. Discussion and Presentation: [SFPUC Land Use Presentation](#), Tim Ramirez

Presentation

-
- San Francisco Water System
- "Watershed" System Map
- Tuolumne River Watershed
- OSD Instream Flow Management Program – Poopenaut Valley
- Lower Tuolumne River and Dos Rios Ranch - \$2M contribution to purchase
- Lower Tuolumne River and Dos Rios Ranch 1600 acres, 6 miles of river frontage
- Lower Tuolumne River – Dos Rios Ranch and restored floodplain habitat
- Lower Tuolumne River riparian habitat
- Map of Spring Valley Water Co. from 1922
- Bay Area Watersheds
- WEIP Acquisitions Alameda Watershed

- SCU Lightning Complex SFPUC Alameda Watershed
- SCU Lightning Complex Arroyo Hondo post-fire
- Peninsula Watershed Lightning Fires
- Meet Environmental Legal Requirements-Bioregional Habitat Restoration Program
- Alameda BHR Sites
- Peninsula BHR Sites
- Alameda Creek Watershed Center
- Southern Skyline Boulevard Ridge Trail Extension
- Manage and operate Water Enterprise assets consistent with the Environmental Stewardship Policy

Discussion

- **Member Nagengast** asked what the yellow portion on the map was for slide 12.

Staff Ramirez responded that the yellow portion was where Spring Valley had purchased riparian water rights from the landowners.

- **Member Soboll** asked if the rain was the only potential source for the plastic molecules.

Staff Ramirez responded that if mercury is in the atmosphere, then it tends to fall and land on things. He noted that there was a state advisory for lakes and reservoirs in the Sierra because they all have mercury in the food chain due to the rain.

- **Member Clary** commented that it was not all from deposition and was due to mining.

Staff Ramirez responded that although there is a legacy of mercury mining in the Valley, the Tuolumne was never an area for mining.

- **Member Nagengast** asked if the SFPUC still owned the yellow portion on the bottom left of the map for slide 12.

Staff Ramirez responded that some of that land has been returned because the map is from 1922.

- **Member Soboll** asked who Spring Valley was buying the land from.

Staff Ramirez responded that they were buying from private landowners.

- **Chair García** asked what the SFPUC's process was for buying property.

Staff Ramirez responded that the Watershed Environmental Improvement Program (WEIP) is a willing seller program, which is why the SFPUC coordinates with other entities who might be interested in protection. He noted that they do not send letters out to landowners asking if they are willing to sell, but they are always open to the opportunity.

- **Member Clary** asked if the SFPUC had already spent the funding for the WEIP.

Staff Ramirez responded that they have spent the \$20 million from bonds for WEIP, but the SFPUC has other money and used the money in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to purchase land recently. He noted that there was now a line item in the budget for land acquisition.

- **Chair García** asked if the SCU (Santa Clara Unit) fire mentioned in slide 16 took place in 2017.

Staff Ramirez responded that it took place in August 2020.

- **Member Clary** asked if the SFPUC intended to expand the easements shown on slide 24.

Staff Ramirez responded that the SFPUC was not planning on expanding because they tried to pick areas that were sustainable on their own. The areas are heavily burdened with requirements that are expensive, and the SFPUC does not want to be over-burdened unnecessarily.

- **Member Perszyk** commented that Adobe Gulf was one of the prescribed burns.
- **Member Soboll** asked if the SFPUC was hoping to jump start some native grasses.

Staff Ramirez responded affirmatively and noted that the SFPUC was allowed to do prescribed burns as one of their management strategies.

- **Member Nagengast** asked if this was in response to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) or NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act).

Staff Ramirez responded that the driver was the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), which covers plant and animal species.

- **Member Nagengast** asked how the SFPUC picked the sites shown on slide 24.

Staff Ramirez responded that the SFPUC tried to pick areas on the east side of the watershed for some of the plant species and to allow the grassland habitats to be restored. He commented that some sites, like the San Andreas Reservoir, were harder because they needed a wetland habitat. Staff Ramirez noted that there is a Venn diagram of things that overlap to flag a site, and the SFPUC tried to pick the best places that could be restored while keeping cost in mind. He added that with climate change, the species that are now native to those sites might change, which is a tricky thing for the SFPUC to navigate.

- **Member Clary** asked when the Alameda Creek Watershed Center would open.

Staff Ramirez responded that the Alameda and Peninsula watersheds are governed by the SFPUC's Watershed Management Plans that were created in the late 90s and adopted by the Commission in the early 2000s. He noted that anything done to the watersheds is run through the Watershed Management Plans first. Staff Ramirez commented that the highest goal in the plans is drinking water quality

along with ecological restoration and environmental education. He added that the Alameda Creek Watershed Center was in those plans and noted that the outside of the Center is done while the inside is not. Staff Ramirez commented that hopefully it will open later this year.

- **Member Nagengast** asked if the CAC had passed a resolution in support of the Southern Skyline Boulevard Ridge Trail Extension.

Staff Ramirez responded affirmatively.

- **Member Nagengast** asked if the extension would complete the loop.

Staff Ramirez responded that the extension would complete the six-mile gap that exists in the 500-mile loop.

- **Member Clary** asked if the trail was only going to be open to docent tours.

Staff Ramirez responded that the new trail will be permit based and the SFPUC wants it to be more accessible to people if it will be used to navigate and connect to other systems.

- **Member Clary** asked Staff Ramirez if he had seen the report that Dutch Slough, which is in eastern Contra Costa, is the largest carbon sink in the world.

Staff Ramirez responded affirmatively and added that Big Break Visitor Center purchased private property and knocked the levee down to make it accessible to the tides. He commented that the fluctuation of the tides and the plants that grow there are the carbon sinks, which is a huge restoration project on the Delta that the SFPUC is not a part of.

- **Member Clary** asked if having a separate natural resources division was more beneficial than being lumped in with the Water Enterprise.

Staff Ramirez responded that it makes a difference and SFPUC staff before him wanted to elevate the profile of land management. He commented that the platform his division has in the organization allows them to do new things in a transparent way. Staff Ramirez added that it also gives them a platform with their neighbors who previously did not have a good relationship with the SFPUC, and it allows people to learn and ask questions. He noted that having a natural resources division was especially helpful in emergencies and collaborative projects involving neighbors because they have already established those relationships. Staff Ramirez commented that other utilities that rely on watersheds also look to the SFPUC as an example to see how they manage to obtain certain profiles.

- **Member Clary** commented that the State passed a law, which has not been implemented, that says watersheds should be maintained as a water supply source.

Staff Ramirez responded that he would not be able to do what he does without the support of the General Manager, the Commission, and bodies like the CAC asking the important questions.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked if Spring Valley started Lake Merced and expanded outward.

Staff Ramirez responded that there were four water companies initially with different sources of water, but Spring Valley eventually bought all the companies. He noted that Lake Merced was a local drinking water source, but it is currently used for backup supply, which the SFPUC owns, and San Francisco Recreation and Parks manages.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked if the native grassland was the Spanish barley that was brought in during the 1600s.

Staff Ramirez responded that California had a variety of native grass and flower species, but the Spanish barley came in later, which cannot compete with the native species in some cases.

- **Staff Ly** asked if salmon migration was a concern.

Staff Ramirez responded that there are salmon and steelheads, and steelheads are everywhere including the Tuolumne River, Alameda Creek, Pilarcitos Creek, and San Mateo Creek. He commented that steelheads are protected under federal law and drove the SFPUC's permit requirements for the dams at Calaveras Reservoir and Crystal Springs Reservoir. Staff Ramirez noted that the SFPUC monitors those species year-round in coordination with neighboring landowners. He added that the Tuolumne River was bigger and indirect for the SFPUC because the fish are below Don Pedro and La Grange dams, which are owned by Turlock and Modesto. Staff Ramirez commented that there is no sport fishing this year in California, Oregon, and Washington because the fish population is so low. He noted that it had been a long time since there was a new FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) agreement for Don Pedro that had increased flows and money for habitat restoration. Staff Ramirez added that the San Joaquin Chinook salmon are in the worst shape of all.

- **Member Soboll** asked if there was pressure on San Francisco to avoid opening the dams and to commit to recycling wastewater better to help with the salmon flow.

Staff Ramirez responded that when the SFPUC's capital program went through its own CEQA process at a programmatic level in 2008, the SFPUC committed to not increase surface water diversions.

- **Member Soboll** asked how that was going.

Staff Ramirez responded that this is another division's project.

Member Clary responded that they are using about 2/3 of the water that the SFPUC set aside as their cap in 2008.

Public Comment: None

6. Staff Report

- Reminder that District 1 and District 7 seats are still vacant
- Reminder to attend CAC meetings because the ordinance requires that they meet 9 times per year

Public Comment: None

7. SFPUC Communications

- [Water and Wastewater Customer Assistance Policies](#)
- [Social Impact Partnership Program Rules and Regulations](#)
- [Quarter Budget Report, Q3](#)
- [Quarterly Audit and Performance Review Report, Q3](#)
- Water Enterprise
 - [Water Supply Conditions Update \(June 5, 2023\)](#)
 - [Alternative Water Supply Program Quarterly Update, Q2](#)
 - [CIP Quarterly Update Q3](#)
 - [Water Pipeline Assessment, Q1 & Q2](#)
- Wastewater Enterprise
 - [WSIP Quarterly Update Q3](#)
 - [CIP Quarterly Report, Q2](#)
- Power Enterprise
 - [Annual Power Risk Management Plan 2022 Update](#)
 - [CleanPowerSF Report, Q2](#)
 - [PG&E Interconnection Report, Q3](#)
- **Chair García** asked if the SFPUC Communications section was useful to which CAC members expressed their support in keeping this section.

Public Comment: None

8. Future Agenda Items and Resolutions

- [CAC Advance Calendar](#)

Public Comment: None

9. Announcements/Comments Please visit www.sfpuc.org/cac for confirmation of the next scheduled meeting, agenda, and materials.

- **Member Algire** shared with the CAC that the Power Subcommittee got an update on the SFPUC's efforts to update their maps to include Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island.
- **Member Clary** expressed concern about holding the CAC meetings at 525 Golden Gate Avenue due to ID requirements. Chair García noted that the CAC could start looking into a new venue for CAC meetings.
- **Member Nagengast** commented that rates are increasing, there will be a new stormwater charge, and the spire artwork on Yerba Buena Island is complete.
- **Chair Garcia** commented that the CAC adopted a resolution on labor standards and that this same topic will be heard by the Commission on June 27, 2023.

Public Comment: None

10. Adjournment

Motion was made (García) and seconded (Nagengast) to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:26 pm.