



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

MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, November 22, 2022
 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SOFTWARE

Meeting URL

<https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/89221510044?pwd=MUdHeENyM0xJM3loUGdsVVdjSjJ3QT09>

Phone Dial-in

669 219 2599

Find your local number: <https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/89221510044?pwd=MUdHeENyM0xJM3loUGdsVVdjSjJ3QT09>

Meeting ID / Passcode

892 2151 0044 / 908473

Mission: The Water Subcommittee reviews water supply system reliability, water conservation, recycling, regional cooperation efforts and other relevant plans and policies. ([Admin Code 5.140-142](#))

This meeting is being held by Teleconference Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 and the Sixteenth Supplement to Mayoral Proclamation Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency Dated February 25, 2020

During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) emergency, the San Francisco Public Utilities Citizens Advisory Committee's (SFPUC CAC) regular meeting room, 525 Golden Gate Ave., 3rd Floor Tuolumne Conference Room, is closed. CAC Members and SFPUC staff will convene CAC meetings remotely by teleconference. Members of the public are encouraged to submit their public comment on agenda items in advance of the teleconference meeting by emailing comments to cac@sfwater.org. Comments submitted no later than 12 PM the day of the meeting will be read into the record by SFPUC CAC Staffing Team members during the teleconference meeting and will be treated as a substitute to providing public comment during the meeting. Persons who submit written public comment in advance on an agenda item or items will not be permitted to also provide public comment on the same agenda item(s) during the meeting.

Members:

Jennifer Clary (Chair) (D11)	Suki Kott (D2)	Amy Nagengast (D8)
Nicole Sandkulla (M-Reg'l Water Customers)	Eliahu Perszyk (M-Large Water User)	Douglas Jacuzzi (D4)

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

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

Anson Moran
 President

Newsha Ajami
 Vice President

Sophie Maxwell
 Commissioner

Tim Paulson
 Commissioner

Ed Harrington
 Commissioner

Dennis J. Herrera
 General Manager



ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order and Roll Call at 5:30

Members present at roll call: (5) Clary, Perszyk, Nagengast, Jacuzzi, and Kott

Members Absent: (1) Sandkulla

Staff presenters: Julie Ortiz and Betsy Rhodes

Members of the Public: None

2. Approval of the [September 27, 2022](#), Minutes

Motion was made (Perszyk) and seconded (Jacuzzi) to approve the September 27, 2022 Minutes.

AYES: (5) Clary, Perszyk, Nagengast, Jacuzzi, and Kott

NOES: (0)

ABSENT: (1) Sandkulla

Public Comment: None

3. Report from the Chair

- Chair welcomes committee members, staff, and the public
- The Chair expressed her gratitude for the SFPUC sending out the Board of Supervisors update every week

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 (*2 minutes per speaker*)

Public Comment: None

5. Discussion and Possible Action: [Resolution Making Findings to Allow Teleconferenced Meetings Under California Government Code Section 54953\(e\)](#), Jennifer Clary, Water CAC Chair

Motion was made (Kott) and seconded (Perszyk) to adopt the resolution.

The motion PASSED with the following votes:

AYES: (5) Clary, Perszyk, Nagengast, Jacuzzi, and Kott

NOES: (0)

ABSENT: (1) Sandkulla

Public Comment: None

6. **Presentation and Discussion:** [Water Conservation Presentation](#), Julie Ortiz, SFPUC Water Conservation Manager

Presentation

- Drought Response and Conservation Update
- SFPUC Drought Response Actions
- SFPUC Retail Conservation Assistance
- Extensive Drought Outreach
- 14 Calls to Action in Rotation
- 14 Calls to Action in Rotation In Four Languages
- Advertising (January – June 2022)
- Direct Outreach to Retail Customers (Ongoing)
- Earned Media Outreach (Ongoing)
- Advertising (July 2022 – November 2022)
- Partnership with the San Francisco Giants
- Metrics as of November 2022
- Future Drought Response Actions

Discussion

- **Member Nagengast** asked what the budget was and what was spent for the different types of initiatives.

Staff Ortiz responded that for the phase one and two paid ads, the SFPUC has spent approximately \$300,000 for which a third of was aimed toward the retail service area and the other portion towards wholesales to ensure messaging across the region. Staff Ortiz added that the SFPUC does have a system where costs are allocated back to their wholesale customers and noted that some of their direct outreach does not have a paid component but has staff time and effort.

- **Member Nagengast** commented that the electricity world has demand response programs that are intended for quicker, shorter events and asked if there was something similar on the water side that incentivized behaviors to reduce use.

Staff Ortiz responded that Nagengast might be referring to time of use rates and incentives and noted that the SFPUC does not have this for water, but they have other tools such as an automated metering infrastructure system, which provides SFPUC customers with their water use information down to the hourly basis. She added that many of the alerts are based on the SFPUC being able to see hourly usage, and some of those thresholds are for large multi-family and commercial customers to see whether they have had a big spike in night-time use between certain hours. Staff Ortiz clarified that although not being exactly what Nagengast was referring to, it is related because the SFPUC does use the data for analysis of use at periods of time that enables it to send out courtesy notices to customers that warns them about possible anomalies.

- **Member Nagengast** commented that the SFPUC does need the data to prove that consumers have reduced their consumption by a certain amount for which they would receive a credit in the power world, but it might be slightly different for the water enterprise.

Staff Ortiz responded that the SFPUC does not have such a program set up for the Water Enterprise, but they do have a leak adjustment

program where customers can get a bill reduction if they show that they have repaired a leak.

Chair Clary commented that there was less opportunity in the water world than in the energy world because energy is exempt from Prop 218 and water is not, so the cost-of-service calculation can make that difficult to figure out.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked if the SFPUC had considered evaluating the local groundwater while evaluating future water supplies and doing a calculation on groundwater use that can complement and help diversify the Sierra snowpack water.

Staff Ortiz responded that groundwater assessment was rolled into the SFPUC's overall evaluation of supply and demand. Staff Ortiz noted that she was not a part of the team that does the forecasting, so she cannot elaborate on the subject. She added that the SFPUC is certainly considering it as a local source and important contribution to their overall supplies, and the SFPUC reports on that in their Urban Water Management Plan and in other reports that the SFPUC is required to submit to the State which include the SFPUC's supply portfolio.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that groundwater is rarely mentioned unless they are specifically talking about it and added that he would like it to be taken into consideration more often.
- **Member Perszyk** commented that having just gone through the green infrastructure grant application program at UCSF, he found the technical assistance to be helpful. He then asked what type of technical assistance was available to homeowners for the greywater incentive and the rainwater cistern incentive programs to assist them in fully developing the projects for their property.

Staff Ortiz responded that the SFPUC has different levels of greywater and rainwater assistance. She commented that SFPUC offers rebates to single family and small residential properties that purchase rain and install rain barrels or a cistern that meet qualifying criteria. Staff Ortiz added that they also have a similar program open to single family customers that have purchased parts to install a laundry to landscape greywater system. She noted that they have looked at different models and previously had a program that was run through a vendor who would provide the parts while the SFPUC would provide onsite guidance and training courses but not construction. Staff Ortiz commented that the SFPUC looked at different ways to get people to participate in the training, which means that they have tried different approaches with different programs to increase conservation. She noted that there were pros and cons to the programs, but that the SFPUC provides assistance, such as a thorough guidebook on how to install a laundry to landscape greywater system or guidance on rain barrels and cisterns, which are all available on the SFPUC website. Staff Ortiz added that the SFPUC has considered doing a direct install program, which is where the SFPUC would completely pay for the installation, but they have found downsides there with people being less invested because they did not do it themselves and did not realize the full scope of the maintenance. She commented that the training guides provided by the SFPUC contain a great deal of information about ongoing maintenance and break it down in a simple way to highlight that there is some care and feeding once they are installed.

Staff Ortiz added that for large scale new developments or a large retrofit, the SFPUC still has onsite reuse grants if they are not required by local ordinance, which is like the grant program that Perszyk went through at UCSF where the money can help cover some of the design and construction. She noted that in terms of technical resources, there are several guidance documents such as water budget calculators to help, but the SFPUC welcomes thoughts and comments from people like Perszyk who have been through these programs to inform the SFPUC on how to best understand the grant requirements to be selected for the grant opportunities.

- **Member Perszyk** commented that it was helpful having a subject matter expert who has done these kinds of projects and to have guidelines to help frame the projects and know what needs to be done to meet the grant requirements.

Member Jacuzzi responded that Westside Water Resources does exactly that by playing the liaison between the property owners and the SFPUC. He noted that Westside Water Resources provides all the technical assistance, the construction, and private money to help aid, but they have a difficult time getting the SFPUC up to the plate.

- **Member Kott** asked who were the top water users that the SFPUC was notifying.

Staff Ortiz responded that the SFPUC has increased notifications to residential customers with excessive use during this drought due to various state legislation and local regulations that are not activated but could be triggered. She commented that there have been stories in the press about homes in the East Bay Municipal Utility District's (MUD) service area that are using 12,000 gallons of water a day, which has been triggered by East Bay MUD's equivalent of their excessive residential use regulations. Staff Ortiz noted that the SFPUC set their excessive residential use regulation at a threshold of 500 gallons per day averaged over 30 days, so they do not need to technically activate it. She added that in lieu of that, the SFPUC opted to increase their outreach to those customers, so every quarter they have been generating a list and reaching out to customers who meet that usage level.

- **Member Kott** asked if that was ten times the average.

Staff Ortiz responded affirmatively and noted that the average is figured to 150 or less for billing units or under per single family customers, so while it is quite a bit less than what a number of the other urban water suppliers across the State are setting for theirs, the SFPUC believes that it is at a reasonable level for their retail service area within San Francisco.

- **Chair Clary** asked what success the SFPUC has found by doing direct outreach to those heavy users.

Staff Ortiz responded that sometimes they find reasons why that is occurring such as many people living at the property, a leak, and old appliances and fixtures. She added that their outreach is done through letters, emails, and door hangers, and the door hangers seem to work well in getting people's attention. Staff Ortiz noted that the outreach does have an impact overall because it helps remind customers that the SFPUC offers free services where they could come out to the

customer's property to identify leaks or other issues. She commented that they also do this outreach to give people plenty of opportunity to understand that their usage was higher and provide the SFPUC with what their circumstances might be in case the SFPUC has to activate the regulations. Staff Ortiz noted that the SFPUC also does that with multi-family customers. However, that is different because they must make assumptions about average use per dwelling unit. She added that they have not done this in the past year with top commercial sector customers due to the recovery from Covid, which has had such a big impact, nor was the CII (commercial, industrial, and institutional) water use indicative of where it might go with post Covid trends.

- **Member Kott** commented that the outreach goes to top residential water users and asked what was happening with top commercial water users.

Staff Ortiz responded that they have done that in the past and have been doing outreach through groups like the Golden Gate Restaurant Association, but it is not targeted to individual commercial account holders. She noted that in the past, the SFPUC has reached out to the overall top non-residential users, which did not necessarily mean they were inefficient but were instead large operations. Staff Ortiz added that the SFPUC did this to understand if they had water use plans in place. She commented that this was a periodic and ongoing effort from the SFPUC to learn what their largest non-residential customers are doing, but it was harder to set and send out outreach that was comparing them to another entity in the same type of business.

- **Chair Clary** asked if the SFPUC was able to measure their success in reaching communities who spoke English as a second language, if at all, or who are monolingual.

Staff Ortiz responded that they have metrics in terms of response rate to the ad campaign that the SFPUC did in other languages and had a high engagement rate for Tagalog and Spanish speakers, but she did not have the metrics on hand.

Staff Rhodes commented that the SFPUC does track web hits and people who reach out to customer service. She noted that after the SFPUC did some Cantonese and Mandarin radio commercials, the Chinese language request to water conservation spiked at the same time, so the outreach was successful. Staff Rhodes added that they have drought resource guides listed on the SFPUC website very plainly in multiple languages and that can be monitored to see who opens them and when and this allows them to make a direct correlation between which piece of outreach received more traffic. She commented that this is a successful tool, and it informs which tactics work with each community. The SFPUC was able to learn from their CAP (Customer Assistance Program) outreach what different tactics resonated best with their audiences.

- **Chair Clary** asked if the SFPUC was still doing the direct install program for low-income households.

Staff Ortiz responded that they still have a direct install toilet program that is open to any qualifying single family or multi-family qualifying resident and is not just specific to low-income residents. She commented that the SFPUC tries to make sure that information goes out to people who apply to CAP programs.

- **Chair Clary** asked whether the CAP was the existing low-income program that replaced the CAP during Covid.

Staff Ortiz responded affirmatively and noted that she was referring to it generally. She commented that there has been a great deal of outreach about affordability programs, and they try to make sure that all the conservation assistance programs are referenced, which the free toilets are a key part of.

- **Chair Clary** asked if that was combined with the SFPUC's regular audit program, which includes faucets, aerators, and shower heads.

Staff Ortiz responded that it could and the SFPUC continues to have their free water wise evaluation program, which includes indoor and outdoor evaluations where the SFPUC's technicians will look for leaks, replace old appliances, and take other water saving actions. She added that in some cases, they could provide and install aerators, shower heads, and pre-rinse free valves while assessing the opportunities, and encourage customers to apply to the toilet replacement program if they discovered old toilets. Staff Ortiz commented that some customers will apply to the toilet replacement program but not qualify, so the SFPUC will use that opportunity to provide other services that might benefit them because even though the toilet is new, it could be leaking or have the water level set too high.

- **Chair Clary** asked whether a water audit is automatically triggered if someone is applying to the CAP.

Staff Ortiz responded no and that previously the CAP required a water wise evaluation to be approved, but during a comprehensive review of that, the Finance and External Affairs folks looked at ways to reduce barriers to participation in the CAP and to reach more low-income people and found the water audit requirement to be a barrier. She noted that the water wise evaluation is encouraged but is not a requirement.

Public Comment: None

7. Staff Report

- No report from staff

Public Comment: None

8. Future Agenda Items and Resolutions

Standing Subjects

- Groundwater
- Water Quality

Specific Subjects

- Water Climate Action Plan – *Jan*
- Budget – *tentatively Jan*
 - How CAC priorities are being treated in the budget (Natural Resources Division – funding to maintain acres)

- How the capital plan was impacted by budget fixes
- How the SFPUC is budgeting for drought
- Overall budget
- Trends over time in budget and conservation
- Incentive Programs – *tentatively 2023*
- Environmental Stewardship Policy – *tentatively 2023*
- Groundwater Update – *tentatively March/May*
- Capital Programs and Budget Changes
- Affordability - *confirmed for the Full CAC*
- Green Infrastructure - *tentatively WW Topic*
- Integrating Tribal Leaders into SFPUC Land Management Decisions
- State Board Water Rights
- Water Enterprise Environmental Stewardship Policy Implementation Report
- Debate about Bay Delta – Member Sandkulla suggested everyone watch the February 5, 2021, Commission workshop about the Voluntary Agreement
- COVID and Long-term Affordability Program
- Implementation if the Bay Delta Plan Flow Requirement
- Hetch Hetchy Water and Power Division Update
- State Policy and Programs on Affordability or Low-Income Rate Assistance (LIRA)
- Bay Delta Plan and voluntary settlement agreement
- Legislative Update
- State of the Regional Water System Report – Bi-annual report
- Drought resilience: 3-year water supply update
- Water Equity and Homelessness
- State of Local Water Report
- Retail Conservation Report
- Emergency Firefighting Water System Update
- Natural Resources and Land Management Division Update
- Harry Tracy Water Treatment Plant tour

Adopted Resolutions for Follow Up

- Resolution in Support of a Resilient Water Supply [adopted August 17, 2021](#)
- Resolution in Support of the Southern Skyline Boulevard Ridge Trail Extension Project [adopted April 20, 2021](#)
- Resolution in Support of Interim Emergency Rate Assistance Program and Revised Community Assistance Program [adopted July 21, 2020](#)
- Resolution in Support of Improved Communications Related to the San Francisco Groundwater Supply Project [adopted August 21, 2018](#)
- Resolution in Supporting Stewardship and Public Access in the Redeveloped Lake Merced West Property [adopted in March 15, 2016](#)
- Resolution on Impacts of Drought on System Maintenance and Improvements [adopted January 19, 2016](#)

Public Comment: None

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

- Staff Sa commented that the Full CAC Chair was scheduled to present the CAC Annual Report to the Commission on December 13, 2022 at 1:30 pm

- Staff Sa commented that the D1, D10, and Engineering/Finance seats were still vacant and asked members to encourage possible candidates to apply
- Member Jacuzzi thanked Chair Clary for sending out the notification for the climate action workshop on December 30, 2022

Public Comment: None

10. Adjournment

Motion was made (Clary) and seconded (Jacuzzi) to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm.