



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

MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, March 14, 2023
 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
 525 Golden Gate Avenue, 3rd Floor Tuolumne Conference Room**

Please be advised that Members of the SFPUC CAC will attend this meeting in-person. Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting in-person or remotely online as described below. Members of the public attending the meeting in person will have an opportunity to provide public comment on every item. In addition to in-person public comment, the SFPUC CAC will hear remote public comment on each agenda item.

Meeting URL

<https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/81256741493?pwd=VkF4SkhEQWZuYXdlUDU1Rlg5OFpldz09>

Phone Dial-in

669.219.2599

Find your local number: <https://sfwater.zoom.us/j/81256741493?pwd=VkF4SkhEQWZuYXdlUDU1Rlg5OFpldz09>

Meeting ID / Passcode

812 5674 1493 / 688082

Mission: The Wastewater Subcommittee shall review sewage and stormwater collection, treatment, and disposal system replacement, recycling, and other relevant plans, programs, and policies ([Admin. Code Article XV, Sections 5.140 - 5.142](#)).

Members

Amy Nagengast, Chair (D8)	Maika Pinkston (M-Enviro. Org)	Michelle Pierce (B-Enviro. Justice)
Douglas Jacuzzi (D4)	Moisés García (D9)	Andrea Baker (B-Small Business)

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

D = District Supervisor appointed, M = Mayoral 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 5:33 pm

Members present at roll call: (4) Nagengast, Jacuzzi, García, and Baker

Members Absent: (2) Pierce and Pinkston

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.



Staff: Autumn Ross and Idil Bereket

Members of the Public: None

2. Approve [January 10, 2023, Minutes](#)

Motion was made (Jacuzzi) and seconded (García) to approve the January 10, 2023 Minutes.

AYES: (4) Nagengast, Jacuzzi, García, and Baker

NOES: (0)

ABSENT: (2) Pierce and Pinkston

Public Comment: None

3. Report from the Chair

- Welcome members, staff, and the public
- Introductions
- Update on the Green Infrastructure Watershed Approach Resolution. Chair Nagengast explained that the subcommittee is no longer going to consider the resolution that the Chair has been working on with Member Jacuzzi because the Water Board has chosen the pipe project over the watershed approach to the Islais Creek area. Chair Nagengast added that the Water Board rejected the green infrastructure approach and adopted the pipe project instead because of the timelines of the two options. CAC members had questions about the Water Board's decision and discussed how they could incentivize green infrastructure for future projects.

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. Presentation and Discussion: [Sewer Laterals Management](#), Autumn Ross, SFPUC Pollution Prevention Specialist

Presentation

- Sewer Laterals Management
- Background: Sewer Collection System
- Sewer Lateral Typical Configuration in SF
- Sewer Laterals Responsibilities and Jurisdictions
- Challenges of Managing Sewer Laterals
- Sewer Lateral Program
- Proposed Solution
- Impacts to Property Owners
- Where We Are and Next Steps

- General Outreach
- Outreach – Rules and Regulations
- Outreach – Ordinance
- Back to Next Steps

Resources

- [Sewer Lateral Notice No. 1](#)
- [Sewer Lateral Notice No. 2](#)

Discussion

- **Member Baker** asked if Mission Bay has a separate storm water and sewer system.

Staff Ross responded affirmatively.

- **Member García** asked if the Presidio is connected to the system.

Staff Ross responded that portions of the Presidio are connected and portions of it are not.

- **Member García** asked if the presentation applies to Treasure Island or if their infrastructure is different.

Staff Ross responded that Treasure Island is treated separately in the collection system and is in the process of being revamped. She commented that she was unsure if it was going to be a combined or separate system.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that he could not see a horizontal dashed line separating the jurisdiction between Public Works and the SFPUC.

Staff Ross responded that Public Works has jurisdiction in the above pieces for the lower lateral such as the street, pavement, and in between the street and the lower lateral.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that it was necessary to reach out to plumbers and contractors, and he recommended presenting to plumbers who are licensed in San Francisco. Jacuzzi noted that every single lateral that he has worked on for the last 25 years has been a problem because people do not know what they are doing, including the City employees at DPW (Department of Public Works) and the SFPUC.

Staff Ross responded that it was great advice and noted that she has conversations with the engineer working on the sewer lateral program about whether they are engaging early enough with the plumbing and contractor community. She noted that the SFPUC should be engaging with them now because it will impact them and make for a better permitting process on the SFPUC's end. Staff Ross commented that the SFPUC would like to provide training.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that he would recommend a certificate as well as a manual.

Staff Ross responded that the rules and regulations will have several documents that can be referenced including inspection and construction guides.

- **Member Baker** commented that the sewer backed up into her bathroom and that the plumber recommended replacing her waterline as well. She noted that she was unaware that this was necessary and added that the SFPUC should consider other things that could be problematic when looking into sewer laterals.

Staff Ross responded that things that are helpful to property owners could be included in the training.

- **Chair Nagengast** asked what the goal of the program was.

Staff Ross responded that the program was first introduced in the 2019 Business Plan. She commented that the goal of the Sewer Laterals Program was to better manage laterals. Staff Ross added that it is a multifaceted program with components such as asset management, general outreach, and legislation. She commented that the SFPUC wants to be proactive instead of reactive when managing sewer laterals.

- **Chair Nagengast** asked if the program is intended to cover lower and upper laterals or just what is listed for the repair and replacement of structural defects.

Staff Ross responded that the SFPUC only has jurisdiction over the lower lateral, so they can only develop a program for the lower lateral. She noted that they also work closely with DBI (Department of Building Inspection) on reimagining how they manage sewer laterals because DBI has jurisdiction over the upper lateral, which people need to access to get to the lower lateral.

- **Chair Nagengast** commented that it seemed that the SFPUC was taking a more holistic approach. She then asked how the program's success is measured.

Staff Ross responded that she does not know but she stated she would ask her counterpart, Michael Tran.

- **Chair Nagengast** asked if the central permitting center includes the SFPUC.

Staff Ross responded that the new permit center has people in-house from each agency, and there are two SFPUC staff people at DBI to provide guidance on SFPUC permits.

- **Member Jacuzzi** asked if an applicant needs a SFPUC permit to connect the house trap on the downhill side to the lower lateral.

Staff Ross responded that an applicant would only need a permit when connecting the lower lateral to the main.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that the bottleneck is not with DBI but with DPW, and DBI is good with responding while DPW is not.

Staff Ross responded that part of DPW was folded into sewer operations for that reason.

- **Member García** recommended that the SFPUC reach out to the Plumbers and Pipefitters Labor to make sure that they are aware of this and can include it in their training processes. He then asked about the outreach for this program and whether the SFPUC is considering the financial burden for homeowners.

Staff Ross responded that it was a good point to consider the social equity side of things.

- **Member Baker** asked if the SFPUC had a program to support those who cannot afford the repairs.

Staff Ross responded that it is important to Assistant General Manager Greg Norby that there be some form of financial assistance through grants or rebates. Staff Ross added that it can be difficult but is important regardless.

- **Chair Nagengast** asked how the SFPUC identified the 3,000 addresses for the spot repair.

Staff Bereket responded that the SFPUC must notify San Francisco residents of nighttime work, so they take advantage of that opportunity to include language about sewer laterals in the mailings. She commented that they use GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping to pull addresses and those addresses receive a direct mailer. Staff Bereket noted that the SFPUC uses sewer rehabilitation and replacement projects as an opportunity to send two separate notices to educate homeowners on sewer laterals and suggesting inspecting laterals as well.

- **Member Baker** asked if the notices are sent to homeowners or tenants.

Staff Bereket responded that the SFPUC sends notices to both homeowners and tenants.

- **Chair Nagengast** asked if the two notices could be attached to the meeting minutes as supporting documentation and asked if there was pipe inspection data where sewer lateral conditions were evaluated to then send out notices that laterals might need additional repair.

Staff Ross responded that the SFPUC does not inspect laterals unless there is an issue because it is not their responsibility.

- **Chair Nagengast** commented that the sewer main has a connection to the lateral and asked if that might be a good opportunity to inspect the lateral.

Staff Ross responded that the lateral inspection starts at the top, so the lateral cannot be seen from the sewer main.

- **Member García** asked if there was a typical area of failure.

Staff Ross responded that the two main failures are in the upper lateral where tree roots get in or at the connection point where the lower lateral connects to the main.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that there should be a requirement that the vents and vent brackets be galvanized steel and the screws should be stainless steel because half of them are missing as the vents, brackets, and screws are made of materials that rust and degrade with time.

Staff Ross responded that the vents and traps are under DBI jurisdiction, but the SFPUC is having ongoing conversations with DBI to figure out a solution that both agencies are happy with.

Public Comment: None

6. Staff Report

- Reminder that future CAC meetings will be in person
- Reminder about vacant seats: District 1, District 7, District 10, and the Finance/Engineering seats

Public Comment: None

7. Future Agenda Items and Resolutions

- WW Rate Study Messaging and Outreach – *tentatively May*
- Treasure Island and Wastewater (Waste and Collection) – *tentatively July*
- WW Enterprise's Racial Equity Plan – *tentatively July*
- Upper Islais Creek Pipe Project Update
- Level of Service Goals Update and Annual Report
- SFEI: San Francisco Estuary Institute Presentation – possibly for Full CAC
- Green infrastructure Grants Reform
- Westside Water Resources Presentation (Member Jacuzzi)
- WW Southeast Air Quality Presentation
- WW Emergency Notification and Communication
- Stormwater Management Ordinance and Southeast Treatment Plant
- Wastewater Enterprise Competency Based Training System Update
- Regulation and Legislation for PFAS, Microplastics, and BPA
- Floodwater Grant Program
- Watershed Stewardship Grants
- Next Generation Green Infrastructure
- Job Creation at the Plant – City Works and Apprenticeship Program
- Wastewater CAC staff
- Asset Management Integration – policy and capital projects
- Wastewater Communications Update
- Upcoming Construction
- Workforce Programs and Qualifications
- Treasure Island Field Trip

- Environmental Justice Analysis briefing
- Environmental Justice in Capital Projects

Adopted Resolutions for Follow Up

- Resolution in Support of SFPUC Class A Biosolids Local Distribution Program [adopted August 21, 2018](#)
- Resolution in Support of Cityworks Interns Recommendations [adopted on November 21, 2017](#)
- Resolution in Support of Equitable Green Infrastructure Implementation throughout the Southeast Sector of San Francisco and throughout the City [adopted on June 20, 2017](#)
- Resolution Urging SFPUC Commission to Initiate Planning and Environmental Review for Building a New Community Center at Third and Evans and to Direct Staff to Develop an Interim Greenhouse Environmental and Workforce Development Program [adopted on October 18, 2016](#)
- Resolution Supporting the SFPUC to Conduct Robust Community Engagement to Determine the Community's Preference for Remodeling Southeast Community Facility at 1800 Oakdale or Building a New Community Center at 1550 Evans [adopted on January 19, 2016](#)

Public Comment: None

8. **Announcements/Comments** Visit www.sfpuc.org/cac for final confirmation of the next meeting date.

- **Member Jacuzzi** commented that he received a letter about the upcoming rate changes from the SFPUC. He noted that the letter states that there will be no additional revenue to the SFPUC and that this statement seems to be contradictory to the presentation about upcoming changes to stormwater charges.
- **Chair Nagengast** responded that there are many factors in the revenue and rate process and that it is entirely possible that the change in rates will not mean a revenue increase. Chair Nagengast encouraged the members to join the Rate Fairness Board meetings as they oversee Water and Sewer rates, and they are currently considering the rate study and the rate changes. She noted that the messaging and strategy is the charge of the CAC while the Rate Fairness Board's charge is figuring out rates. Chair Nagengast recommended having a future presentation to better understand the messaging and outreach efforts related to the rate changes and the letter mentioned by Member Jacuzzi.

Public Comment: None

9. **Adjournment**

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

Meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm.