

ELAINE HOWE, CHAIR  
 BART FARIS, VICE CHAIR  
 JOSÉ CERRATO

DARRELL KUNDARGI  
 PAUL VAN GULICK  
 JONATHAN GONZALES

CHRIS WELCH

**January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**

**Location:** Water Authority Customer Service Room 204, Microsoft Teams

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**Board Members Present:** Bart Faris, Steve Glass, Elaine Howe, Jonathan Gonzales, Paul van Gulick, Darrell Kundargi, Chris Welch

**Board Members Absent:** José Cerrato

**PIC Members Present:** Kelsey Bicknell (*Water Authority*), Rowan Hannan (*Water Authority*), Diane Agnew (*Water Authority*), Robert Mullin (*Bernalillo County*), Kali Bronson (*Bernalillo County*), Corbin Carsrud (*Bernalillo County*), Patrick Chavez (*Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority [AMAFCA]*), Jeff Pompeo (*Water Authority*), Danielle Shurny (*Water Authority*)

**Guests Present:** Mark Kelly (*Water Authority*)

**Call to Order**

Chair Faris called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM when quorum was established.

**I. Approval of Agenda**

**A. January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Agenda**

Mr. Glass moved to approve the January agenda; Ms. Howe seconded the motion.

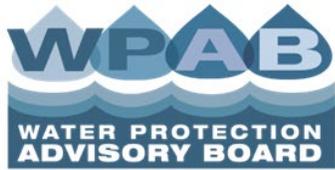
Board Member	Vote on Motion
Bart Faris	Yes
Steve Glass	Yes
Darrell Kundargi	Yes
José Cerrato	Absent (excused)
Jonathan Gonzalez	Yes
Elaine Howe	Yes
Chris Welch	Yes
Paul van Gulick	Yes

**II. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**A. November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

Mr. van Gulick moved to approve the November meeting minutes; Ms. Howe seconded the motion.

Board Member	Vote on Motion
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Bart Faris	Abstained
Steve Glass	Yes
Darrell Kundargi	Yes
José Cerrato	Absent (excused)
Jonathan Gonzalez	Yes
Elaine Howe	Yes
Chris Welch	Abstained
Paul van Gulick	Yes

### III. Policy Implementation Committee (PIC) Updates

*Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (Water Authority) – Update from Ms. Kelsey Bicknell, Environmental Manager*

#### **Hewlett-Packard (HP)/Digital Site:**

Ms. Bicknell reported that drilling for the Water Authority’s source water protection well is scheduled to begin on January 21st and is anticipated to be completed by mid-February.

#### **Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB) Bulk Fuels Facility:**

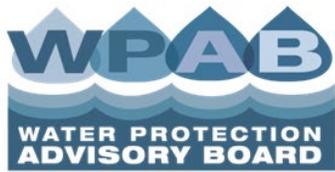
- **Groundwater Monitoring Work Plan:** Ms. Bicknell informed the Board that the Air Force (AF) submitted its consolidated groundwater monitoring work plan, requested by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). The Water Authority provided comments requesting additional detail and clarity on the methods described. The NMED issued a conditional approval, with the revised work plan due in January.
- **Source Characterization Wells:** The AF is required to drill two new groundwater monitoring wells to constrain the extent of the total petroleum hydrocarbon plume. These wells will be located on the outer east and west sides of the source area at the BFF Site. The Water Authority submitted comment recommending the AF be required to use sonic drilling rather than ARCH (Air Rotary Casing Hammer) drilling, as sonic drilling provides continuous core samples that can obtain detailed geological data and allow for precise soil sampling. NMED review is pending.

#### Questions & Discussion:

Ms. Howe asked if the AF plans to analyze soil samples for hydrocarbons.

Ms. Bicknell noted that the AF did not include soil sampling in the work plan but that the Water Authority recommended to NMED that they require soil sampling.

Ms. Howe asked if the wells being installed could support soil vapor extraction.



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Ms. Bicknell clarified that the wells are intended for groundwater monitoring, but soil analysis results could inform future vapor extraction efforts.

Mr. van Gulick shared his observations from the November public meeting hosted by the AF and NMED, noting that the AF appeared focused on compliance with the RCRA Corrective Action process and seemed uninterested in engaging with the Water Authority earlier in the process. He observed that NMED was more receptive to the idea of involving the Water Authority and asked Ms. Bicknell whether NMED has been open to its input.

Ms. Bicknell affirmed that NMED has been receptive to the Water Authority's input as a critical stakeholder at the Site. She explained that NMED often incorporates the Water Authority's comments into requirements or work plans and has publicly expressed openness to facilitating more technical meetings between the AF and the Water Authority. However, the AF has consistently maintained that public input should occur only during the corrective measures evaluation (CME) phase, when the process is opened to public comment and has resisted stakeholder engagement earlier in the process. Ms. Bicknell argued that engaging the Water Authority earlier in the process could streamline the CME public comment phase, reduce delays, and potentially avoid a public hearing. She noted that having the critical stakeholders aligned with proposed remedies earlier would make the overall process more efficient.

Mr. Faris advocated for reinstating technical working groups, which were historically used at the Site to foster collaboration among stakeholders and reach consensus before work plans were submitted to NMED. He emphasized the success of these groups but noted the challenge posed by the AF relying on the RCRA process to limit engagement to only public comment during CME.

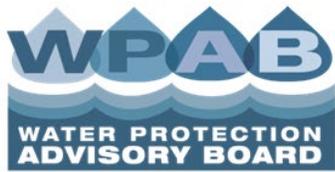
Ms. Agnew supported reinstating technical working groups, citing their role in developing the current pump-and-treat interim measure at KAFB and noting that this approach aligns with practices at other RCRA sites, such as Los Alamos National Labs. She explained that early stakeholder involvement allows for agile, technically informed consensus-building, avoiding delays caused by extensive public hearings. She referenced the Sandia National Labs Mixed Waste Landfill, where hearings during the CME phase delayed corrective measures by a decade.

Ms. Howe asked how technical working groups could be reestablished.

Ms. Bicknell explained that the Water Authority has made this request repeatedly, but broader support from other agencies would strengthen the effort.

Ms. Agnew added that pressure from other agencies could make the request more difficult for the AF to dismiss, compared to the request coming solely from the Water Authority.

Mr. Faris agreed and suggested that the Board push NMED to require technical working groups.



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### *Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA) – Update from Patrick Chavez*

- **News Coverage:** Mr. Chavez referenced an article in Downtown Albuquerque News "[Flood Control agency tracks pollutants in the water it's keeping out of your living room.](#)" The article details how AMAFCA manages flood risks in Albuquerque while addressing the challenge of contaminants like PFAS, uranium, and E. coli in stormwater runoff.
- **PFAS Sampling:** Mr. Chavez reported that lab results from samples collected during the early November 2024 snowstorm were received last month. AMAFCA sampled for PFAS concentrations in the North Diversion Channel before the storm and downstream at Isleta Lakes (south of the Albuquerque metropolitan area) after the storm. Results showed that PFAS concentrations at Isleta Lakes were approximately half of those measured in the North Diversion Channel.

### Questions & Discussion

Mr. Glass asked whether the samples were timed relative to the flow of the Rio Grande between the North Diversion Channel and Isleta Lakes.

Mr. Chavez explained that the samples were timed to the best of his team's ability using flow gauges and AMAFCA's standardized procedures for qualifying precipitation events. He added that while he has previously observed PFAS levels increase as water leaves the urbanized area, this sampling event showed the opposite trend.

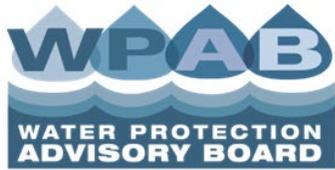
Mr. Glass asked whether sediment-associated PFAS accumulation could be contributing to this pattern.

Mr. Chavez suggested that it could be possible that the PFAS is depositing on the riverbank while moving south. He also speculated that the observed spike could be linked to a first flush after a prolonged dry period.

Ms. Bronson noted that stormwater runoff is expected to have higher concentrations of contaminants like PFAS due to it having less natural dilution compared to native water of the Rio Grande.

### *Bernalillo County (County) – Update from Ms. Kali Bronson, Stormwater Compliance Program Lead*

- **NMED NPDES Permitting:** The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) is working to assume primacy over the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Ms. Bronson, along with Ms. Shurn, has participated in the [Surface Water Advisory Panel \(SWAP\)](#) along with other NPDES permittees to provide input on how NMED's program should function. NMED's current focus includes establishing permitting fees, addressing point source discharges, and industrial usage. Due to the loss



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of Waters of the United States (WOTUS) designations and protections through the Clean Water Act’s 404 program, NMED is also exploring permitting for Waters of the State.

- **Tijeras Creek Watershed Restoration Project:** The project is moving forward, with a contractor selected to implement the restoration with a focus on nature-based solutions, for example, using rootwads to slow water flow and provide nutrients to the watershed. Construction is tentatively set for the week of January 20, pending the completion of remaining preparations.
- **Land & Water Summit 2025:** Scheduled for March 5–7, 2025, the Summit will include two days of presentations on March 6–7, and a field trip and community night on March 5. The community night will feature a screening of *Thinking Like Water* by filmmaker Renea Roberts, followed by a Q&A with Roberts and Bill Zeedyk. More information is available on the [Land & Water Summit website](#).

#### IV. Board Business

##### A. Service Acknowledgement, Steve Glass

Mr. Faris announced that this meeting formally marks Mr. Glass' last meeting on the Board and highlighted Mr. Glass’ career. Mr. Faris expressed gratitude for Mr. Glass’ contributions to the WPAB, noting his long tenure as a member of the Board.

##### B. Elect 2025 WPAB Officers

Motion(s):

Mr. Glass moved to nominate Ms. Elaine Howe as WPAB Chair; Mr. van Gulick seconded the motion.

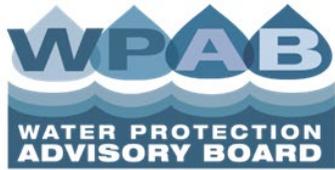
Mr. Glass moved to nominate Mr. Bart Faris as Vice-Chair; Mr. van Gulick seconded the motion.

Vote(s):

The Board voted unanimously to approve Ms. Howe for Chair (hereafter referred to as Chair Howe.)

Board Member	Vote on Motion
Bart Faris	Yes
Steve Glass	Yes
Darrell Kundargi	Yes
José Cerrato	Absent (excused)
Jonathan Gonzalez	Yes
Elaine Howe	Yes
Chris Welch	Yes
Paul van Gulick	Yes

The Board voted unanimously to approve Mr. Faris for Vice-Chair (hereafter referred to as Vice-Chair Faris.)



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Board Member	Vote on Motion
Bart Faris	Yes
Steve Glass	Yes
Darrell Kundargi	Yes
José Cerrato	Absent (excused)
Jonathan Gonzalez	Yes
Elaine Howe	Yes
Chris Welch	Yes
Paul van Gulick	Yes

**C. Approval of WPAB Open Meetings Resolution**

Ms. Bicknell explained that the Open Meetings Resolution for 2025 includes an update to describe the two in-person hybrid meetings that will be held each year to accommodate in-person attendance.

Mr. Welch asked whether the Open Meetings Resolution is renewed annually and if the Board is legally required to hold open meetings. Ms. Agnew clarified that the Board is not legally required to host open meetings but chooses to do so voluntarily.

Motion:

Vice-Chair Faris motioned to approve the 2025 WPAB Open Meetings Resolution, Mr. Glass seconded.

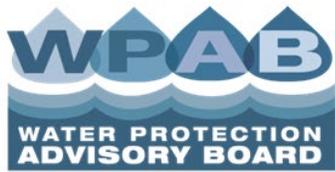
Vote:

The Board voted unanimously to approve the [2025 WPAB Open Meetings Resolution](#).

Board Member	Vote on Motion
Chair Elaine Howe	Yes
Vice-Chair Bart Faris	Yes
Darrell Kundargi	Yes
José Cerrato	Absent (excused)
Jonathan Gonzalez	Yes
Steve Glass	Yes
Chris Welch	Yes
Paul van Gulick	Yes

**D. Approval of 2025 WPAB Work Plan**

Mr. Glass emphasized the importance of continued focus on monitoring PFAS to protect surface waters. He recommended that Section 6 of the 2025 Work Plan include regular updates on emerging contaminants, including Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). Additionally, he suggested adding a focus on tracking progress related to New Mexico’s efforts to gain primacy over the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).



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Motion:

Mr. Glass motioned to approve the 2025 WPAB Work Plan as amended, Chair Howe seconded.

Vote:

The Board voted unanimously to approve the 2025 WPAB Work Plan.

Board Member	Vote on Motion
Chair Elaine Howe	Yes
Vice-Chair Bart Faris	Yes
Darrell Kundargi	Yes
José Cerrato	Absent (excused)
Jonathan Gonzalez	Yes
Steve Glass	Yes
Chris Welch	Yes
Paul van Gulick	Yes

**V. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Subcommittee Report**

After assuming coordination of the DEI Subcommittee following Ms. Feibelman’s departure from the Board, Mr. Kundargi reported that his current focus is on standardizing the subcommittee’s operations to ensure continuity and effectiveness as his own term on the Board nears its conclusion. He emphasized the importance of keeping DEI considerations at the forefront of the Board’s decision-making and presentation topic selection.

Mr. Kundargi shared that in its recent meeting, the subcommittee clarified its interest in EPA Region 6’s management of Superfund sites within the Board’s jurisdiction, particularly in regard to how the Board could help with any challenges the EPA may have with outreach.

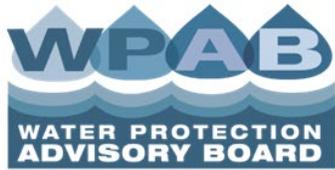
Mr. Kundargi encouraged the Board to assist staff by contributing to the development of language and frameworks that integrate DEI principles across Board activities. He noted that the subcommittee currently has one vacant position, with a second vacancy expected in August when his term concludes.

**VI. Other Board Business**

**A. Next WPAB Meeting – February 14, 2025 @ 9:00 AM**

Agenda item: To be determined.

**WPAB Meeting (4/11/2025) Cancellation:** Ms. Bicknell proposed canceling the April 11th WPAB meeting, as it conflicts with the New Mexico Water Workshop.



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The Board agreed to cancel the meeting. Chair Howe approved the cancellation and suggested that the Board consider presenting at future conferences as a means of outreach to recruit water professionals to the Board.

**Board Conference Participation:** Mr. Faris asked whether PIC agencies could cover conference expenses for Board members to attend or present on behalf of WPAB at relevant events.

Ms. Bicknell agreed to raise this request at the next PIC meeting.

**Public Attendance at WPAB Meetings:** Chair Howe asked for ideas to increase public attendance at WPAB meetings.

Ms. Bicknell explained that WPAB agendas are publicly posted on Legistar and electronic displays at City Hall. She also encouraged Board members to share meeting details with their personal and professional networks.

Mr. Faris recommended forwarding meeting topics to neighborhood associations to raise interest.

Ms. Agnew observed that public interest varies based on meeting topics, citing a presentation on the water quality of the To'Hajiilee pipeline project that attracted public participation. She also mentioned that some University of New Mexico professors require students to attend public Board meetings, which has resulted in occasional student participation.

Mr. van Gulick advised outreach should be targeted, and suggested the engineering community, noting that public participation is most productive when attendees have the technical background to engage with the material.

Mr. Kundargi emphasized the importance of making meetings accessible to individuals without technical expertise, noting demographic trends in technical fields that can create barriers to participation. He encouraged the Board to focus on improving accessibility and reducing those barriers.

Mr. van Gulick suggested exploring ways to collaborate with local schools or develop school projects related to the Board's work.

Mr. Faris supported this idea, highlighting the value of engaging young water professionals and suggesting the Board participate as judges in local science fairs.

## VII. Public Comment Period

There were no comments from the public.

## VIII. Adjourned at 10:47 AM