
Meeting Date: June 17, 2015
Staff Contact: Frank Roth, Senior Policy Manager

TITLE: C-15-19 - Appointments to the Technical Customer Advisory Committee

ACTION: Recommend Approval

SUMMARY:

The Technical Customer Advisory Committee (TCAC) was established in 2006 to assist in and facilitate public review and discussion of Water Authority policies, plans and programs. The TCAC was established to provide a professional/ technical group of volunteer individuals who represent the five core functional areas of operating a water and wastewater utility. This group is intended to provide outside expertise in best practices and private sector applications for continuous business improvement.

At the January and May 2015 meetings, the Chair announced that there were vacancies on the committee and that an online application was created for customers who may be interested in serving on this technical committee. Board members were informed that if they know of anyone interested that they should apply on the Water Authority's website. In addition, a notice was placed on the Water Authority website's front page.

Qualified nominations were compiled and forwarded to Chair Maggie Hart Stebbins who through this communication is forwarding the nominations to the Board for confirmation. There are four vacancies on the TCAC. The following nominations are recommended for confirmation. All four are highly qualified and certified in their field of work. Below is a summary of nominee's professional and academic background.

- Michael Hightower representing Water Resource Planning
- Ege Richardson representing Water System Engineering
- Patrick Hall representing Customer Service
- Laura McCarthy representing non-profit water management advocacy/education

Michael Hightower

Mr. Hightower is a Distinguished Member of the Technical Staff in the Military and Energy Systems Analysis Department at Sandia National Laboratories. He is a civil and environmental engineer and has over 35 years of experience in research and development projects. His current efforts include research and evaluation of innovative environmental and energy technologies and the security and protection of critical water and energy infrastructures. He conducts research on the use of distributed and renewable energy technologies and distributed water and waste water systems to enhance sustainable economic development, global public health, and infrastructure resiliency and security. Mike has published over 120 technical papers and reports on his research. Since 2006, he has supported the US Department of Energy in developing a science and technology program for addressing energy and water interdependencies. Most recently, he has supported the US Senate on energy water legislation considerations, authored a research

roadmap for the US National Science Foundation on energy and water research, and assisted the National Research Council in identifying key energy water challenges and needs. Mike holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in civil engineering from New Mexico State University.

Ege Richardson

Ege Richardson is the sole proprietor of her consulting engineering business, Aegean Consulting. She has been evaluating, planning, and designing wastewater collection, treatment, disposal, and reuse facilities for several New Mexico communities for the past 14 years. Ege is a consultant on operational projects and problems for all aspects of wastewater treatment and disposal. She possesses an in-depth understanding of secondary and tertiary wastewater treatment processes that are suitable for a variety of disposal applications ranging from surface water discharge to direct potable water reuse. Prior to her consulting work, Ege spent 10 years researching activated sludge processes and biosolids reduction as well as teaching water/wastewater treatment, hydraulics, and lab courses at the University of Toledo and New Mexico State University. She has also been teaching classes on wastewater treatment for the New Mexico Rural Water Association since 2003. Ege Richardson holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Environmental Engineering in Turkey, a Master's degree in Environmental Engineering from New Mexico State University, and a PhD in Civil Engineering from New Mexico State University. Ege is a licensed Professional Engineer in New Mexico.

Patrick Hall

Patrick Hall has held several positions over a nine year period at PNM and is the Manager of the Key Account Team which is the primary interface between PNM and its Commercial and Industrial customers. The Team assists customers with planned and unplanned outages, billing, electric infrastructure design, and to ensure a high level of customer satisfaction. Patrick also manages PNM's Customer Experience Program to improve customer satisfaction. Some of the outcomes from this program included a brand new PNM.com website, a new Interactive Voice Response System, an Outage Communication project, Employee Engagement, and Enhanced Customer Communications. Prior to working at PNM, Patrick held business development, marketing, and management positions at Hewlett Packard Corporation, Cray Computer, and Digital Equipment Corporation. Patrick holds a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education from the University of New Mexico, and a Master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix.

Laura McCarthy

Laura McCarthy is Director of Conservation Programs for the Nature Conservancy in New Mexico. She oversees the Conservancy's conservation work in the Rio Grande, Gila and San Juan River basins. Laura developed the Santa Fe Water Source Protection Fund in 2009 and launched the Rio Grande Water Fund in 2014. Laura's prior work was with the USDA Forest Service, a state forest agency, and a community-based forestry NGO. Her professional life was significantly altered by the Cerro Grande fire in 2000 and Las Conchas fire in 2011, which became her inspiration to work on accelerating the pace and scale of restoration in forested watersheds, with a market-based approach to water source protection. Laura was recently selected by Governor Susana Martinez as New Mexico's Environmental Leader of the Year and in 2011 received a Neutrogena Naturals Champion of Clean Water award.

A total of twelve applicants were received since January 2015. In addition to the four listed and recommended above, eight other applications were submitted.

Julie Samora has over 25 years of experience in consulting engineering with communities throughout the State of New Mexico, and Mexico/U.S. Border communities. Julie's area of expertise is in the water and wastewater engineering fields including project planning and design, feasibility studies, project management, construction phase services, and business development functions. She has served as the President of the New Mexico Society of Professional Engineers, Trustee and Committee Chair of the Rocky Mountain Water Environment Association in New Mexico, Leadership Albuquerque Program member and curriculum committee, and is involved in various community activities. Julie holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in civil engineering from the University of New Mexico.

John Hawley is a Certified Professional Geologist, Emeritus Sr. Environmental Geologist at NM Tech (retired 1997), and visiting Sr. Hydro-geologist with the Water Resources Research Institute at NMSU. He has resided in Albuquerque since 1991, when he was assigned to the local NM Tech-Bureau of Geology Office, where he directed Bureau activities on developing a new hydro-geologic model of the metropolitan area aquifer system.

Matthew Earthman is a life-long New Mexico resident currently working as a Geoscientist with Souder, Miller and Associates here in Albuquerque. He grew up in Los Lunas, received a BS and MS in Geochemistry at New Mexico Tech in Socorro. He has been a resident of Albuquerque for five years. He enjoys the outdoors, utilizing open spaces and bosque areas often, and take great interest in our state's water resources.

Luis Aguirre works at the City and County of Santa Fe's Buckman Water Treatment Plant as a Water Resources Coordinator. He also worked at the Office of the State Engineer as a Water Rights Specialist/Watermaster, and as an Environmental Investigator for Texas Comm. of Environmental Quality.

John Keck is an economist at the Workers' Compensation Administration where he performs economic research on worker compensation topics and prepares quarterly performance metrics and scorecards.

Barbara Gastian is a retired Water Authority employee as the Compliance manager. Her experience, knowledge, skills, education, and passion for public service will bring a unique perspective to the TCAC.

Brittany Gaume was born and raised Albuquerque with a love for water that can only come from being raised in the New Mexican desert. Currently, she lives in the Near North Valley and is a MRGCD irrigator. She is passionate about the work she does as a water rights consultant to ensure that water is used according to the rules and regulations of the state, counties, and cities. She feels that we have a duty protect our most precious resource; the water that sustains us.

Elaine Hebard has worked in water-related activities -- including regional water planning, developing water budgets, and increasing water awareness in areas along the US-Mexico border as well as here. Her desire is for our region to focus on how to ensure a resilient water supply so future generations can enjoy choices we get to today.

CURRENT MEMBERS:

Member	Category	Term Expiration
David Ritchey	Financial Management/Institutional	5/2015
Will Gleason	Planning	5/2015
Wayne Frye	Customer Service	5/2015
Amy Ewing	Water Resource Planning	4/2016
Laurie Firor	Landscape Architecture	9/2016
Moises Gonzales	Planning	9/2016
David Brookshire	Resource Economics	8/2016
Cassandra D'Antonio	Environmental	11/2016
Vacant	Water System Engineering/Construction	

FISCAL IMPACT: None