



Jennifer Thacher, *Chair*
Steve Glass, *Vice-Chair*
Suzanne Busch
John S. Derr
Kerry J. Howe

Roland Penttila
Russell D. Pederson
Caroline Scruggs

Water Protection Advisory Board
c/o ABCWUA
P.O. Box 568
Albuquerque, NM 87103

Minutes: October 14, 2016

Location: Bernalillo County Public Works Division, 2400 Broadway

Time: 8:44 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.

Board Members Present: Chair Jennifer Thacher, Steve Glass, Suzanne Busch, and Russell Pederson with Caroline Scruggs and John Derr via teleconference.

Board Members Absent: Kerry Howe and Roland Penttila.

PIC Members Present: Jane DeRose-Bamman, Ken Ziegler, Bart Faris, and Kathleen Verhage.

Guests: Glenn DeGuzman (Bernalillo County), Laura McCarthy (The Nature Conservancy), Sara Hurto (The Nature Conservancy), and Michelle Hunter (New Mexico Environment Department Ground Water Quality Bureau).

I. Call to Order

Chair Dr. Jennifer Thacher called the meeting to order at 8:44 a.m. following technical difficulties in calling in members Dr. Caroline Scruggs and Dr. John Derr.

II. Approval of Agenda

Motion was made by Vice Chair Steve Glass seconded by member Ms. Suzanne Busch. Motion to approve the agenda carried unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes

Chair Thacher identified corrections in the September minutes to delete Jane DeRose-Bamman from the PIC members' present list and delete the third paragraph of section VIII since it was redundant from the second paragraph of section VII.

Motion was made by member Mr. Russell Pederson seconded by Vice Chair Glass to approve the agenda with the September minutes corrections. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Presentation: Bernalillo County Septic System Ordinance Implementation Update

Mr. DeGuzman from the Bernalillo County Review and Planning Department provided the board with an overview of the Bernalillo County Septic System Ordinance Implementation Update. Mr. DeGuzman provided a history of the Ordinance, explained that unpermitted systems and systems 30 years or older need a septic evaluation, and provided a summary of an evaluation cost. Mr. DeGuzman told the board that septic evaluation consists of at a minimum the pumping of the septic tank and a physical inspection of the wastewater system components by a licensed professional. Mr. DeGuzman described who can be a licensed professional and spoke of potential consequences if no evaluation is performed.

Vice Chair Glass asked how many septic systems were not permitted in the County and what was the total number of systems. Mr. DeGuzman stated that around 4,000 systems were unpermitted and he did not know the total number of systems in the County. Mr. DeGuzman stated that the goal is to evaluate and permit 200 systems per year.

Mr. DeGuzman, responding to a question from Chair Thacher, said the expected cost to connect to a sewer line is around \$3,000.

Mr. DeGuzman provided an update of the approximate 300 septic systems in the North Edith Enclave located west of Balloon Fiesta Park and North of Edith Blvd. Mr. DeGuzman informed the board that with the high groundwater table it is difficult to run a sewer line to the area. Many homeowners will have to have alternate wastewater treatment systems due to the smaller than one acre lot size and the high water table. Any home sold would have to meet ordinance requirements.

Mr. Pederson referenced a Journal article on this area from Sept. 2010 that stated the area was at the north end of Edith Blvd., adjacent to Sandia Pueblo, contained approximately 60 homes, and that easement and access issues with the Pueblo have hindered installation of a sewer line.

In response to board member questions on the cost of sewer line connections and upgrades to the septic system, Mr. DeGuzman stated that a septic system life is around 10-15 years and replacement cost would be around \$15,000

V. Presentation: Update on the Rio Grande Water Fund

Ms. Laura McCarthy and Ms. Sarah Hurto from The Nature Conservancy provided an update to the board on the Rio Grande Water Fund. Ms. McCarthy

reviewed impacts to water quality and resources following forest fires like those in the Jemez and Sandia Mountains and stressed the need to manage watersheds more effectively. Ms. McCarthy said restorations and financial goals for the fund were 30,000 acres and \$21 million per year, respectively. Fifty-four signatories have joined the Rio Grande Water Fund with \$1.12 million invested. Burn probability models, debris flow predictions, and fire behavior models were presented for the Jemez, Sandia Mountains, and upper Rio Grande Watershed.

Ms. McCarthy provided the board an overview of watershed treatment, focusing on stream restoration, forest thinning and prescribed burns, post-fire flood mitigation, and fire management. Ms. McCarthy said a benefits comparison within the Taos Valley Watershed of current conditions versus treated watersheds indicated a substantial return on investment for treated areas. Ms. McCarthy also presented information on public support for watershed protection indicating that water consumers were willing to pay for such protection. Ms. McCarthy told the board that 2015 funding contributions and needs study showed that contributions from Federal, state and the private sector was around \$13 million while the water fund need remained above \$20 million.

Discussion by board members focused on the value of the Rio Grande Water Fund and past board written support in 2014. Ms. McCarthy stated that a future letter of support from the board would be extremely beneficial as was the letter of 2014. Ms. McCarthy committed to include Mr. Rick Shean of the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (Water Authority) and WPAB staff and Chair Dr. Thacher on the Fund's list serve and remain in contact for a support letter.

The Board discussed how watershed management may impact the Water Authority's recently released 100-year plan and requested that the plan be presented to the board in the near future.

VI. Presentation: Update on Laundry Groundwater Contaminant Site

Ms. Michelle Hunter, Chief of the Ground Water Quality Bureau at the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) provided an update on this site. Ms. Hunter provided historical background for the site, indicated that the site is complex with potentially more than one pollution source, showed that the closest municipal wells are miles away and not threatened by the plume, and reviewed the current plume maps. Ms. Hunter told the board that the public notice for the remediation proposal ends Nov. 15., and will allow for additional assessment of the plume in the distal end; the responsible party to determine if there is another source at the mid to distal end of the plume; a soil vapor extraction system downgradient of the source; and a permeable reactive barrier intercepting the plume near the source. Ms. Hunter also provided a review of past work completed to date. This includes a soil vapor extraction system at the source,

which has eradicated 99% of source vadose zone vapors. Vapor intrusion appears minimal.

Discussion by the board members focused on the proposed Water Quality Control Commission Regulation changes that would decrease concentrations of PCE and TCE to drinking water standards. Ms. Hunter stated that a decrease in regulatory standards of these compounds should not affect the cleanup of this site by the responsible party. She also stated that the regulatory changes to be proposed would include vapor intrusion with the inclusion of the compound 1,4 dioxane that is highly toxic. The board discussed if it should support the proposed regulatory changes and requested that Ms. Hunter return in the spring to update the board on the final proposed regulatory changes.

VII. Board Discussion of Presentations

Vice Chair Glass requested better data on the number of septic systems permitted and unpermitted within the County and suggested that Dan McGregor with Bernalillo County may have this data along with maps of where the County is targeting septic systems and what is the 5 year plan to address this septic system issue.

Chair Thacher requested a future presentation by the Water Authority on the newly released 100-year plan in light of the information provided on the Rio Grande Water Fund. A written letter of support for the Rio Grande Water Fund may be issued based on information provided by Laura McCarthy to Chair Thacher and Mr. Shean through The Nature Conservancy's list serve.

The board may provide a letter of support to NMED for the upcoming WQCC proposed regulatory changes following a subsequent presentation in early spring by Ms. Hunter on the final proposed changes.

VIII. Board Business

A motion was made by Member Steve Glass and seconded by member Russell Pederson for Jennifer Thacher as the new WPAB Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by new Chair Jennifer Thacher and seconded by Russell Pederson for Steve Glass as the new WPAB Vice Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was held on the Oil and Gas Ordinance Recommendation letter to address the letter to the chairperson of the City Council, County Commission, and Water Authority Board and carbon copy all members of each council, commission, and board. A motion was made by Vice Chair Steve Glass and seconded by Chair Thacher to issue the letter to the above mentioned persons. The motion carried unanimously.

The board discussed potential legislative priority issues. Vice Chair Glass suggested having a letter drafted for discussion by the November board meeting that supports funding for projects that support the WPAB action plan such as: the

Rio Grande Water Fund, water and wastewater infrastructure, the Water Trust Fund, and the Water Revolving Loan Fund.

The board discussed that legislative bills concerning water quality may not be known until the 60-day session starts and there may not be sufficient time for the board to respond. The board requested that a boiler plate letter be drafted for the November board meeting containing general language that supports any specific bill that may be introduced and specifics could be added later for board review and approval.

IX. PIC Agency Updates

Mr. Ken Ziegler provided an update to the Fruit Avenue Plume Superfund site. He informed the board that monitored natural attenuation (MNA) is the final proposed remedy by EPA and its contractor, in spite of objections from the City and the Water Authority. Both the Water Authority and the City reported concerns to EPA that the eastern plume may not reach remedial goals in a timely fashion through MNA. Mr. Ziegler further stated that EPA intends to transfer complete management, including operations, maintenance, and financial obligations of this Superfund site to NMED next summer.

X. Public Comment – None

XI. Adjournment

A motion was made by Vice Chair Glass and seconded by Ms. Busch for adjournment. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.