NORTH BAY WATER DISTRICT

22950 Broadway, Sonoma, CA. 95476

**Board of Directors**

Mike Mulas, Chair (Sonoma Valley): Craig Jacobsen, Vice Chair (Sonoma Valley); Matthew Stornetta, Treasurer (Sonoma Valley); Carolyn Wasem, Secretary (Petaluma Valley); Mike Sangiacomo (Sonoma Valley)

SGMA Compliance Advisor: Mike Martini

Compliance/Website Advisor: GinaLisa Tamayo

SVGSA Advisor: Jim Bundschu, PVGSA Advisor: Eugene Camozzi

MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 8, 2025

TIME: 4:00pm

Location: 22950 Broadway, Schell-Vista Station #1 Sonoma CA 95476

and 2531 Grace Drive, Santa Rosa, Ca 95404

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm. Mike Sangiacomo, Carolyn Wasem, and Craig Jacobs were present.

2. CLOSED SESSION

No closed session

1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

(At this time, members of the public may comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. For items appearing on the agenda, the public will be invited to make comments at the time the item comes up for consideration by the Board of Directors) No members of the public were present.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Director Wasem made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes, Director Sangiacomo seconded the motion. The March 2025 Minutes were unanimously approved.

1. FINANCIAL REPORT

Director Matt Stornetta, NBWD Treasurer, was not in attendance. No report was provided. The Financial report was tabled until the May meeting.

1. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

**Item 1. Update from District Lawyer, Richard Idell**

The only point of discussion was the need to review a Conflict-of-Interest form. These forms will compliment /augment the Form 700.

Counselor Idell suggested that the Conflict-of-Interest from be posted on the North Bay Water District website for 45 days.

Director Sangiacomo made a motion that the posting of the Conflict-of-Interest form should be uploaded to the NBWD website. Director Wasem seconded the motion.

**Item 2: Report of Director Mike Sangiacomo on Sonoma Valley GSA**

The Sonoma Valley Water District last met on March 17th. The consent calendar did not have anything significant to report out. The item that is most relevant to the interests of this Board was the discussion around long-term funding. Funding is a challenge as everyone in the private as well as the public sector is trying to reduce expenses.

In terms of projects planned and management of those projects, the Board discussed placement of monitoring wells and why they are closer to surface water – as part of a response the State’s concerns, which include the following:

1. The need for information on the location and amounts of surface water diversions.
2. Data on how groundwater levels, river flows and habitat characteristics interact
3. Monitor surface water and groundwater interactions by gathering stream height data, temperature changes, and plant survey information
4. Analyze the influence of groundwater pumping and groundwater levels

The Sonoma Valley GSA will continue engaging with various working groups to evaluate studies and monitoring being conducted as part of the workplan.

The GSA’s budget was adopted by the Board. The community engagement action plan was also adopted. And public meetings are planned by May 1st. The West Yost contract amendment – created a bit of a friction point in the meeting. However, those issues were resolved.

**Item 3: Report of Director Carolyn Wasem on Petaluma Valley GSA**

The last Petaluma Valley GSA meeting was held Thursday, March 27th. The GSA Board approved a budget for FY 2024-25 includes projected revenues of $4,887,921.00 and expenditures of $4,808,160.00.

The GSA also received an update on funding the GSA. Currently, the GSA is funded through a mix of fees, grants, and contributions from the County of Sonoma. The GSAs have secured grant revenue to fund Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation through 2026 with the County committing funds to equalize fees and help fill the gap between fee income received and the total administrative budget.

The Ad Hoc Committee created to explore long term fee options found that there is no easy path to equalize fees in the three groundwater basins. Because the size, groundwater demand, and condition of aquifers differs in each basin, which is reflected in the operating costs for each GSA. Currently the Santa Rosa Plain GSA receives no County Contribution. The Sonoma Valley GSA receives a county supplement in an amount that is just over twice the fee revenues. The Petaluma Valley GSA receives more than six times the GSA’s fee revenues.

The long-term fee options included:

1. Formalize Long-Term County Contribution

2. Apply approved rates in each basin

3. Secure enhanced State funding

4. Charge developer fees

5. Adopt an alternative Rate/Fee structure (parcel tax or county-wide fee)

6. Lead or support a Funding Measure (county-wide resiliency funding)

7. Obtain Private Funding (private/public partnerships)

8. Secure Regional Resiliency Funding

9. County-wide ‘One Water’ Funding (Establish Countywide JPA/Program/ Foundation focused on Integrated Water Management)

10. Reduce GSA regulations and compliance costs

11. Reduce GSA Programs and costs (Update JPAs to enhance administrative efficiencies)

Staff was directed to explore optional funding sources, to improve efficiencies, and build regional relationships to foster shared projects and resources to achieve sustainable groundwater and integrated water management. Staff will develop possible future scenarios where fees increase in increments and overall GSA’s efforts are reduced to close the funding gap.

Staff then presented an overview of WY 2024 Annual Report for Petaluma Valley Subbasin. The 2024 water year (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024) is classified as a normal water year and represented the second year of above average precipitation following three consecutive years of below average rainfall from WY 2020 –WY 2022. Groundwater conditions in WY 2024 for each sustainability indicator:

1. Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels: No minimum threshold exceedances for the chronic lowering of groundwater levels in Water Year (WY) 2024. Declines groundwater areas of up to 5 feet between WY 2023 and WY 2024 are primarily along the eastern hills near the margins of the Basin, near Stage Gulch Road and Old Adobe Road.
2. Reduction of Groundwater in Storage: The annual change in groundwater in storage within the Basin for WY 2024 is estimated to be a decrease of approximately 3,800 acre-feet. Minimum threshold exceedances and undesirable result conditions for the reduction of groundwater in storage did not occur in WY 2024.
3. Seawater Intrusion: Chloride data was collected in 2024 and 2025 through voluntary monitoring to establish the baseline for seawater intrusion. Based on water quality samples from 19 public water supply wells, there were no exceedances of minimum thresholds for degraded water quality in WY 2024.
4. Land Surface Subsidence: There were no exceedances of minimum thresholds for subsidence in WY 2024.
5. Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water: There were no exceedances of minimum thresholds for the depletion of interconnected surface water in WY 2024.
6. Total Water Use: Total water use within the Basin is estimated to be 12,047 acre-feet in 2024. The total estimated annual groundwater extraction is approximately 2,701 acre-feet for 2024, which represents approximately 22% of the total water use within the Basin.

Supervisor Rabbitt provided a Well Ordinance Update. In 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved amendments to the County's Well Ordinance. The amendments created a new regulatory process for the consideration of adverse impacts on public trust resources when approving well permits. The amended ordinance requires discretionary review of certain well permits located within the “Public Trust Review Area”. A discretionary review is available for water wells that are associated with an increase in groundwater demand and with a use greater than 2 acre-feet per. Well permits for low water use wells (2 acre-feet per year) and wells serving existing uses are exempt from discretionary review. However, the amended ordinance included requirements for water conservation for all new wells and requirements for well meter installation and water use reporting of new non-residential wells.

In May of 2023, California Coastkeeper Alliance and Russian Riverkeeper (Riverkeeper) legally challenged the ordinance alleging that the revised ordinance violated CEQA and the Public Trust Doctrine. In August 2024, Judge Bradford DeMeo sided with Riverkeeper (Petitioner). The Court directed the County to, among other things, suspend all non-emergency water well permitting. On February 4th, 2025, the Court temporarily lifted the order, allowing the County to resume issuing all well permits. The temporary stay has currently been extended through March 27, 2025, at which time permitting of non-emergency wells’ will again be suspended, unless extended.

Small Groundwater Sustainability Agency Coalition Update: A group of GSAs that pump under 10,000 AFY, which includes the Sonoma Valley and Petaluma Valley GSAs, has been meeting to educate legislators and regulators about the challenges of small GSAs. The two goals of this informal coalition:

1. To secure state funding support for small GSAs and to reduce the costs of compliance while still achieving basin sustainability. In this current legislative session, the coalition is focused on ensuring that the guidelines being developed for Prop. 4 are broad enough to allow small GSAs to receive funding for tasks associated with compliance.
2. In January, coalition members met with Department of Water Resource grant staff to provide preliminary thoughts on the new guidelines.

The last item discussed - working group of the coalition has established regular meetings with DWR technical staff to discuss specific ideas for reducing compliance costs, such as simplifying annual reports. The coalition is planning a legislative day in May 2025 to update and educate legislators on issues specific to small GSAs, primarily around funding.

**Item 4: Report of Advisor Jim Bundschu**

Advisor Bundschu had no Report and will report at the next NBWD meeting the outcomes of the May 1st meeting for citizens where GSA Board and staff are going to explain where the Sonoma Valley GSA is in the process.

Mike Martini noted that one priority concern is determining how many acres of vineyard are associated with areas of depression.

Advisor Bundschu responded that there are approximately 10,000 acres in Sonoma Valley.

**Item 5: Report of Eugene Camozzi**

Advisor Camozzi was not present.

**Item 6: Report of Compliance Advisor Mike Martini**

Advisor Martini shared that he did not have much to report. However, LAFCO met in early April. Supervisor Susan Gorin was replaced by Supervisor Rebecca Hermosillo. Supervisor Hermosillo is going to be a good addition specific to agriculture interests that come before LAFCO. The one downside is that Jean Kapolchok has been appointed to the Planning Commission. As of now, Ms. Kapolchok has not been replaced on the LAFCO Ed Hodges is the alternate in the Public Alternate.

In terms of concerns that agriculture is expressing related to the GSAs: most people are anticipating that there is going to be fewer dollars to support the bureaucracy to support the GSA as the rate of use goes down. People will be using less. The GSAs will face the classic utility challenge – the less you use, the more you have to spend.

Sangiacomo, that came up in one of our meetings. The state is still ramping up, perhaps the State will ease up on other items, but the monitoring will be there in perpetuity.

**Item 7: Report of GinaLisa Tamayo, Technical Advisor**

Advisor Tamayo informed the Directors that she had nothing to report.

Director Sangiacomo noted that we need to understand if NBWD had made the compliance changes that needed to be made.

Advisor Tamayo responded that the software we use ensures that we are in compliance.

**Item 7: ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business, Director Jacobsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Wasem seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 13th.

Board meeting documents are available to review prior to the meeting at the Shell-Vista Station, 22950 Broadway, Sonoma California. Please call or contact Carolyn Wasem for an appointment to obtain a copy.