

North Bay Watershed Association
Board of Directors Meeting -
DRAFT Summary
August 4, 2023 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Napa Sanitation District
1515 Soscal Ferry Road, Napa, CA

Zoom was available for those to attend virtually
www.nbwatershed.org

1. Welcome and Call to Order—Directors, Member Representatives Present Included:

Michael Boorstein – Central Marin Sanitation Agency	Pamela Meigs – Ross Valley Sanitary District
John Shribbs – City of Petaluma	Elizabeth Patterson – Solano County Water Agency
Cory Bytof – City of San Rafael	Susan Gorin – Sonoma County
Megan Clark – Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Andy Rodgers – NBWA
Mary Sackett – Marin County	Sabrina Marson – NBWA
Chris Choo – Marin County	Jordan Damerel – (Guest Speaker)
Larry Russell – Marin Municipal Water District	Sally Bolger – (Guest Speaker)
Ranjiv Khush – Marin Municipal Water District	Felicia Su – Public
Leon Garcia – Napa County FCWCD	Tom West – Public (West Yost)
Ryan Gregory (Vice Chair) – Napa Sanitation District	Ann Thomas – Public
Tim Healy – Napa Sanitation District	Susan Stompe – Public
Rick Fraites – North Marin Water District	Patti D’Anjelo Juachon
Karen Clyde – North Marin Water District	Kate – Public
Jean Mariani (Chair) – Novato Sanitary District	

Thirteen NBWA board members attended the meeting comprised of 27-member agency staff, stakeholders, partners, and interested members of the public. Meeting participants attended in-person and remote via Zoom.

Call to Order – Chair Mariani called the meeting to order at 9:34 am and took roll call.

1. General Public Comment – None

2. Agenda Review and Approve Past Meeting Minutes – Chair Mariani asked for any Board members to speak up if there were requested changes to the agenda. No comments.

Chair Mariani asked if there were any changes or correction to the minutes. No comments. Chair accepted the minutes by consensus.

Treasurer’s Report

No comments on the June or July Treasurer’s Reports. Chair accepted the report by consensus.

3. Guest Presentation: Regional Workforce Development for the Water Industry: Attracting and Retaining the Workforce of the Future

Jordan Damerel, Assistant General Manager/District Engineer, Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District; Director, BAYWORK; Chair, Bay Area Consortium for Water/Wastewater Education

Jordan presented an overview of several workforce development activities and organizations currently active in the Bay Area. These include BAYWORK, a collaboration of 45 water/wastewater utilities ensuring a qualified job candidates pool and continuing education for employees; and the Bay Area Consortium for Water/Wastewater Education, a set of water/wastewater agencies that are

collectively funding technical education for operators, mechanics, electricians, and instrument technicians.

Jordan noted that the rate of incoming workers is not keeping pace with the number of workers retiring. He discussed potential options for agencies to help attract new workforce:

BAYWORK

Collaboration of water and wastewater agencies throughout the Bay Area. Established in 2009 and is now a 501(c)(3) non-profit. 45 signatory water/wastewater agencies. Dues are based on the size of the agency (\$765-\$20,500 per year based on FTEs). Charter:

- Create a unified voice for water/wastewater work force development programs.
- Develop cost effective programs for prepare staff.
- Build relationships with partners and stakeholders; and
- Provide forum and framework to discuss workforce development issues.

Major initiatives for FY 23/24

- Candidate Development: Stackable internships, instrumentation apprenticeship, Outreach.
- Prepared Staff: Cross-Agency Mentoring Program, Workshops on Wheels, Training Buffet, Webinars.
- Strengthening BAYWORK: Engage membership, spread the word about BAYWORK, new digital and physical collateral.

One of the challenges is paying for interns and how to stack internships when different agencies look for different things. Unpaid internships limit the types of candidates available. However, compensation is limited by the agency. Internships must also follow CalPERS guidelines.

BAYWORK is working on a cross-agency mentoring program (CAMP) and are seeking mentors and mentees for a Spring 2024 program. This program is being investigated using commercially available Chronus software, designed for professional mentoring.

More information on BAYWORK and helpful resources can be found at <https://baywork.org>

BACWWE

Mission is to increase the number of qualified workers for water/wastewater. Operating for 15+ years as a BACWA Program of Special Benefit. 22 supporting agencies (drinking water and wastewater) pay annually into a fund that supports education of water/wastewater workers. Dues vary depending on treatment plan capacity (\$3k-\$12K per year). Original focus on:

- Water/wastewater treatment plant operators
- Distribution system operators
- Collection system personnel

The contract education model they were using wasn't really working as it was competing with the schools. They have been finding a different way to execute this program. Rather than contract with community colleges to hold off-campus versions of these water/wastewater courses, the program has been converted it into more of a scholarship program. They finance students who are interested in getting into the field. They partner with a variety of colleges across the Bay Area in a variety of disciplines. This model is not working as well as they thought it would. The hurdles are outreach

capacity and that there are other funding stream options for students. However, the courses are well attended. Students are expressing that they are taking the training and completing the requirements but are not getting hired. They are looking for feedback on how to address the gaps. They are exploring the education outreach and supporting jobs through internship development. Jordan is looking into using the untapped school scholarship funds to provide a stipend for unfunded internships, which may be easier to get set up for agencies than a paid internship. He also wants to shift the messaging to lure new generation of workers.

The full presentation is in PDF format and can be found at <https://www.nbwatershed.org/event/nbwa-board-meeting-12-2023-08-04>

Questions/Comments:

Director Sackett: Have you approach corporations that might, help subsidize or grant funds for internships?

Jordan: That's a great idea that has not been explored yet. BAYWORK has close partners that have been successful as obtaining grants from the State and various Counties.

[Inaudible questions]

Director Russell: We run a contract operations company as well as engineering company. Get rid of the wastewater requirement for a grade one to be only able to certify at one of 140 treatment plants. I don't think you can get a wastewater license without working at one of those 140 plants. I think that is a kind of a union type apprentice exclusion.

Director Clark: She didn't realize LGVSD was not a member and would like to be one. Suggests outreach to women. What are the main differences between the two groups presented on?

Jordan: They started separately in different places and are coming around to basically the same central mission. Consolidating and focusing is really important. BAYWORK has a woman in the water workforce subcommittee that is looking at how to better outreach to women.

Director Sackett: There's a lot of money right now in the high school career technical education. I can connect you with the Marine County Office of Education who is starting outreach at high schools. Is there an opportunity for these internships to go to junior and senior year summers?

Jordan: It's really up to all of us at our agencies to create those permissions and those opportunities.

Director Meigs: Are you reaching out to disadvantaged communities?

Jordan: We've been working on how to best engage in those areas. We are also leaning on our agencies connections with their local community to reach out to underserved populations.

Director Patterson: [She would like to make sure Benicia is involved.]

Director Boorstein: Over the last 10 years, Ross Valley Sanitary has been working on an amazing program with standard operating procedures and competency-based training so that we don't have institutional memory loss as people leave. We recently won an award for small collection systems of the year and our work in compositely based training and the standard operating procedures. Training is available to anyone in the agency to move up in position.

Andy: Is there a regional associate memberships available?

[Tim Healy provided a brief overview and introduction to Napa Sanitation District (NSD). Summary highlights include: NSD collects and disposes or recycles wastewater generated within our service territory, about 90% of the service territory or customers are within the city of Napa, but NSD serves an area larger than the City of Napa. They are currently working with the City on a study on turning winter discharge into drinking water now that standards are changing with the state. 60% of their energy is self-generated.]

4. **Guest Presentation: Ecological Workforce Development Overview**

Sally Bolger, Director, Ecological Workforce Initiative

Sally described how standardized environmental compliance training for laborers, equipment operators, and other crew members who implement environmental restoration projects creates pathways to living wage jobs and a skilled workforce.

Ecological workforce are laborers and equipment operators who implement restoration and mitigation projects for the health of our environment. They work in proximity to sensitive habitats and cultural resources.

Billions of dollars in federal, State, and local resources are being invested in environmental protection projects, yet there is currently no standardized training for ecological restoration workers.

Ecological Workforce Initiative has a basic 10-hr training, and their goal is to standardized training and certification for the folks on the ground that can be used as a qualification, and for it to become mandatory, similar to human safety training. The training is available in both Spanish and English, consists of classroom instruction supplemented by work site-specific tailgate trainings and mentoring.

This initiative is led by members of the Ecological Restoration and Mitigation Industry.

The full presentation is in PDF format and can be found at
<https://www.nbwatershed.org/event/nbwa-board-meeting-12-2023-08-04>

Questions/Comments:

Director Russell: Jordan's projects and Sally's projects are complimentary: She has the expertise to implement exactly what the BAYWORK people can't get done.

[Sally and Jordan agree and will be meeting a separate time]

Chris Choo: How specialized is the training, specific project or broad?

Sally: There should be a basic 10 hr. training that everybody has and then a specialty in multiple different things can be added or stacked. The education and certification belong to the employee, not the project.

Chair Mariani ended the question portion early due to time. She noted that she hopes to put a subcommittee together that could be looking at these workplace and scholarship issues. Members can reach out to Andy or her if they are interest in workplace issues or ecological issues moving forward.

5. Executive Director Report

Andy Rodgers, Executive Director

Andy facilitated a brief Board discussion to identify any next steps supporting workforce development initiatives in the region.

Andy provided updates and solicited board input on activities since the June 2 Board meeting, including reviewing a timely opportunity to submit a grant application for regional project funding, and summarizing other active and developing projects, meetings, regional programs and initiatives, communications, and committees.

Details on the updates since last meeting, Administrative Activities and Communications and NBWA Committees can be viewed on the presentation slides posted at <https://www.nbwatershed.org/event/nbwa-board-meeting-12-2023-08-04>

Summary highlights include:

Administrative Steering Committee meeting on August 1st

- Reviewed Work Plan scope and fund balance.
- New opportunities/initiatives
 - NBWA/NBWRA alignment and collaboration
 - Revive Small Grants and Scholarship Programs
 - Lead Applicant for Regional Groundwater Rise Hazard Map ICARP Grant Funding
- Action Items
 - Draft Reserve Policy for consideration
 - Draft Small Grants/Scholarship program framework and budget for consideration.
 - Inform Board of Regional Grant Opportunity

NBWA/NBWRA Alignment meeting on July 25

- NBWA Board and General Managers identified initiative to align organizations.
 - NBWA and NBWRA staff have since been sharing information and strategizing.
- Strong agreement on need to align and streamline.
 - Leverage strengths/experiences of both organizations
 - Strengthen north bay position for funding and advocacy.
 - Minimize or eliminate program administration and governance overlaps.
 - Synchronize messaging and public outreach.
 - Refine/clarify roles to be mutually supportive to maximize benefits to member agencies.
 - Identify project collaborations to establish roles and inform a larger vision of structural alignment.

- Agreed Upon Alignment Committee recommendations.
 - Report out to respective boards and provide recommendations (today)
 - Convene a workshop to identify specific streamlining and collaboration opportunities.
 - Confirm NBWA Board participants: Jean Mariani, Ryan Gregory, Jack Gibson
 - Report results back to board.
 - Invite NBWRA become an associate member of NBWA (no cost, no vote)
 - NBWA become an associate member of NBWRA (no cost, no vote)
 - NBWA associate member representative to be considered in future.

Small Grants and Scholarship Programs

- Sponsor and support local organizations and individuals in our regional community through providing selective local small grants. The NBWA is interested to consider projects and initiatives that inform, engage, and enhance our north bay watershed communities.
- Importantly, our projects are encouraged to be developed, piloted, or implemented by a local proponent with a design plan to distribute derivative benefits to the entire region.
- ED to develop program framework and budget for board consideration.

Chair Mariani noted the need of a subcommittee structure to look at some of these specific areas. If a member is interested in grants or scholarships framework development, or if you want to do the workforce development piece where we coordinate with all these other partners, reach out to her or Andy.

Andy discussed a Groundwater Rise Hazard Mapping Grant opportunity in partnership with San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI), Pathways Climate Institute for counties of Sonoma, Napa, Solano, and Santa Clara. Counties of Marin, San Francisco, Alameda, and San Mateo are complete; and Contra Costa is in process.

SFEI and Pathways Climate Institute approached NBWA to be the lead submitter on behalf of the 3 counties that are in our region and also Santa Clara.

Informative slides and a handout related to this opportunity can be found at <https://www.nbwatershed.org/event/nbwa-board-meeting-12-2023-08-04>.

Additional highlights:

- Approximately \$600,000 grant
- MMWD fiduciary responsibility and contracting authority.
- NBWA administrative project manager
- SFEI/Pathways program manager and technical teams lead.
- Grant Application due August 29

<https://www.sfei.org/projects/shallow-groundwater-response-sea-level-rise>

<https://explorer.adaptingtorisingtides.org/>

Chair Mariani is in support and opened the floor for a motion to approve the action.

Director Sackett motioned to approve NBWA to be the lead submitter on this grant application, but had one question: What is NBWA percentage cut?

Andy: It's negotiable, but right now it's at seven percent for a very small amount of work.

Director Meigs: Is there a cost to NBWA and will the information be shared and is it a onetime cost or annual?

Andy: There is a flyer that's in today's meeting packet that includes links with more information on the first phase that was completed. The other link is the tool that's available to the public. The counties that we're talking about will be added to that tool so that it's a bay wide explorer tool. The reason for including Santa Clara is to make sure that this is actually a regional project that goes beyond just our normal operating area. One of the requirements is to work in a region that's outside our region. There is a cost that is associated with doing this. Right now, we have about \$44,000 that should easily cover what's been described. He is seeking board support before diving deeper into the numbers.

The term of the grant is three years, but they think they can complete is quicker than that. It would be a cost spread over the grant term.

With no additional questions, Chair Mariani asked if there were any objections. None received. Motion passed by consensus.

FY 2022-23 Board Meetings

- September 1 – In person/hybrid
- October 6 – Field trip? Montezuma Wetlands? Mare Island Docks?
- November 3 – In person/hybrid
- December 1 – In person/hybrid
- January 2 – SKIP MONTH or WATERSHED SOCIAL GATHERING

Topics in development:

OneWater-OneBay Strategic Funding Initiatives, Regional Resiliency, SFBay Basin Plan Amendment, American Canyon Field Trip, Berryessa Field Trip, Delta Field Trip, SR37 Field Trip, Environmental Education & Grant Funding, Small Grants Program, Urban Scale Carbon Sequestration Initiatives, Regulatory Compliance Partnerships, Baylands Strategies, DroughtSMART/FireSMART, Water Management & Conveyance Innovations, Capital and Natural Assets Management, Small Grants and Scholarship Program, New Members!

6. Board Information Exchange

Due to time limitations, members were requested to send any email updates to include with this meeting summary. None were received by NBWA.

7. Announcements/Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 am
Next Meeting: July 7, 2023