

North Bay Watershed Association Board of Directors Meeting - Summary

December 1, 2023 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Novato Sanitary District
500 Davidson Street, Novato, Ca. 94945

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	Rick Fraites – North Marin Water District
Jason Dow – Central Marin Sanitation Agency	Jean Mariani (Chair) – Novato Sanitary District
John Shribbs – City of Petaluma	Pamela Meigs – Ross Valley Sanitary District
Oriana Hart – City of Petaluma	Elizabeth Patterson – Solano County Water Agency
Chelsea Thompson – City of Petaluma	Andy Rodgers – NBWA
Kate Hagemann – City of San Rafael	Sabrina Marson – NBWA
Megan Clark – Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Warner Chabot – SFEI (Guest Speaker)
Mary Sackett – Marin County	Susan Stompe – Public
Chris Choo – Marin County	Jim O’Toole – ESA
Ranjiv Khush – Marin Municipal Water District	Erica Warren – City of Sonoma
Larry Russell – Marin Municipal Water District	Chuck Weir – NBWRA Program Manager
Leon Garcia – Napa County Flood Control	Kate Powers – Public
Ryan Gregory – Napa Sanitation District	Jack Gibson - Emeritus

Twelve NBWA board members attended the meeting comprised of 26-member agency staff, stakeholders, partners, and interested members of the public. Meeting participants attended in-person and remote via Zoom.

1. **Welcome and Call to Order – Roll Call and Introductions** – Chair Mariani called the meeting to order at 9:32 am and took roll call.
2. **General Public Comment** – None
3. **Agenda and Past Meeting Minutes Review**– Chair Mariani asked for any Board members to speak up if there were requested changes to the agenda. No comments. Director Patterson moved to approve the agenda; None opposed—Unanimously approved.

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

Treasurer’s Report

No comments on the November Treasurer’s Report. Director Boorstein moved to approve the November Treasurer’s Report; Director Patterson seconded—Unanimously accepted.

4. **Guest Presentation: Why We Need Bold Regional Governance and Finance Innovations to Underpin Advancements in Climate Science and Engineering**

Warner Chabot, Executive Director, San Francisco Estuary Institute, Aquatic Science Center

Warner described the Bay Area's \$110 billion dollar reconciliation with climate change by 2050, case studies of advances in scaled adaptation, and the crucial roles our public agency leaders and decision makers have in meeting these epic challenges.

Warner started off by acknowledging his support of NBWA members as being “on the front lines” dealing with science, engineering, infrastructure, budgets, policy, local politics, and delivering the essential water, as well as safely disposing of the waste to keep people's homes, communities from flooding. NBWA members tackle water issues across 4 counties, and some do so with a very challenging tax base to fund the essential improvements that are often necessary. He also noted the work that NBWA members have done with and for disadvantaged communities is impressive.

For the big picture for the Bay Area, shoreline adaptation for the North counties is getting inadequate attention and in the next 2 decades will struggle with sea level rise, rising groundwater, and flooding. Highway 37 is a great example of the NBWA region doing a good job with the regulators, the engineers, the transportation agencies, integrating transportation and wetlands restoration goals. This region has, he thinks, the greatest potential for major wetlands restoration anywhere in Western US, if not North America.

He suggested NBWA member engagement with elected officials will be absolutely critical in the one-to-10-billion-dollar range going forward in terms of what is going to be needed to deal with climate change in the Bay Area.

Sacramento will release an update of their 2018 sea level rise guidance so that we have set up charged with set of assumptions. He encourages members to look at the right-hand columns because that is the future that inevitably we are going to be facing.

Warner provided insight into two of SFEIs Reports: [Sediment for Survival - A Strategy for the Resilience of Bay Wetlands in the Lower San Francisco Estuary](#) and [San Francisco Bay Shoreline Adaptation Atlas](#).

Warner suggests that members also review the [Sea Level Rise Adaptation Funding & Investment Framework Final Report](#). The Metropolitan Transportation Commission partnered with the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission on the report.

Additional funding resources provided:

- ARCCA - Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation
CA Climate Resilience Grant Program Tracker: <https://arccacalifornia.org/grant-tracker>
- San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Funding Guide: <https://sfbayjv.org/funding>

- Governor's Office of Planning and Research
ICARP – Integrated CA Adaptation and Resiliency Program Grants
<https://opr.ca.gov/climate/icarp/grants>

The full presentation is in PDF format and can be found at
<https://www.nbwatershed.org/event/nbwa-board-meeting-15/>

Questions/Comments:

Director Sackett: Regulations are getting in the way of getting some projects completed. Some of these projects don't need millions, but rather hundreds of thousands. How do we get there?

Warner: The environmental community has done a wonderful job of passing a variety of laws that have increased the level of complexity dealing with things. There needs to be a shift— A larger scale and quicker permitting process.

Director Clark: She suggests more education be done for the public.

Warner: He also agrees, noting that we have nine counties with 45 supervisors around the Bay Area. There are a hundred jurisdictions and each of them have 5 to 7 city council people. That is 400+ city council people. That is the core group that he thinks needs to be agreeing on some sort of a strategy.

Director Shribbs: Why don't we allow sea level rise to happen, the marshes do what they need to do and not spend the money to protect it, but rather spend the money moving people, moving housing, moving transportation instead? This is the argument they are up against.

Warner: That is a long conversation, but in short: if we don't deal with the climate stuff, the money that we're putting into housing and transportation is going to be underwater so we should be prioritizing the climate issue so we're protecting. There is also an equity issue here, a moral equity question, which is our low-income communities are going to be the most vulnerable both for sea level rise and rising groundwater. These communities tend to be built on past industrial or military basis that have contaminated soil.

Director Hagemann: One of the other pieces that is sometimes overlooked in that discussion, is the difficulty of relocating certain things like wastewater treatment plants or the wastewater, collection systems that leads to that wastewater treatment plant. This group has an opportunity to help raise the visibility of the critical infrastructure.

Director Patterson: [Her 3 topics were inaudible. She mentioned carbon transport for sequestering and the temporary moratorium on pipelines.]

Warner: He is not a fan of a lot of the policies that the state is currently doing around water. The Department of Water Resources has tried very hard to be responsive to the needs of lower income underserved communities but it's one of those things

that it doesn't get a lot of attention except for the very people that are involved in serving that. He thinks IRWMP is a program that should continue.

He think we need to find a vehicle—maybe it's a county-by-county basis maybe is it's the North County the East Bay region, the peninsula on the south, or a forum or vehicle for the elected officials to tackle these problems and to bring in the smartest people that are working on those same issues around the country.

Director Garcia: [Inaudible]

Public Comment: You mentioned finance governance, permitting, and monitoring is a really important part as we embark on massive adaptation planning and implementation across the bay. I hope that we can take an agile strategy approach with all the expertise that is going to be included in this kind of an adaptive management approach and that the investment will include some kind of quick build approach that the bicycle infrastructure approaches, that there will be some room for experimentation, and the expectation with investment that that should be part of it and that there will be monitoring and adaptive management included. I was just wondering what you think about that.

Warner: I think one of the best products that we produce and if you do not have a copy, I would encourage you to buy a hard copy is the San Francisco Bay Shoreline Adaptation Atlas. [Warner went on to reference the report and data tool to answer her question].

Public Comment: When we talk about all of this collective infrastructure and about financing those things together, and that is where we really need to go.

Andy (ED): Is there a grant fund application in our future to help give the capacity to the agency so they can participate in some sort of developing of a program?

Warner: The EPA is flush with cash to create a San Francisco Bay program. They are a great place to start, but they are project oriented. Sometimes community foundations might be a more appropriate way to think creatively about what is appropriate that's built on the local knowledge and create something brand new but leverage the existing resources and the existing efforts that may already be underway in this region.

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 on activities since the November 3 Board meeting, and summarized other active and developing projects, meetings, regional programs and initiatives, communications, and committees.

Summary highlights include:

Updates since last meeting

- Thank you, City of Petaluma for hosting NBWA's November 3rd Board meeting!
- Attended DWR big check ceremony for Sonoma County GSAs receiving total of \$15.1M for groundwater sustainability October 30

- Attended SFB IRWM Coordinating Committee meeting on Nov 27
- NBWA will explore value of participating in IRWM Quarterly Roundtable of Regions meetings – first Dec 6

Administrative Activities

- Coordinated future Board events and speakers
- Updated NBWA website
- Coordinated with MMWD Finance Manager and NBWA staff on reporting
- AR – Membership dues
- AP – Subconsultants

Communications

- Meeting w American Canyon Community & Parks Foundation on November 6.
- Coordinated with members to host meetings and highlight programs
- Regional partners
- Subject matter experts and speakers
- Chair, Deputy Director, and staff to progress NBWA initiatives

Committees

- Conference Committee meetings on November 14 and 30
 - Imagine Tomorrow's North Bay
 - April 19, 2024, 9:00 am - 3:00 PM (Doors open at 8:30 AM)
 - Hybrid event at Sonoma State University Event/Student Center
 - SSU Office of Academic Affairs, Center for Environmental Inquiry is conference academic partner
 - Subscribe to the conference distribution list and add event to your calendar by visiting <https://www.nbwatershed.org/event/conf2024/>
- BAYWORK follow up calls

Other items of interest:

- State of the Estuary Conference Sponsorship Request
 - Scheduled to take place in Oakland
 - Conference website www.sfestuary.org/state-of-the-estuary-conference
 - Will feature posters, an art exhibit, sponsor tables, and community tables.
 - Andy discussed the sponsorship opportunities available to NBWA. He asked members to reach out to Andy for collaboration and questions.
- NBWA: 1 & 2 Quarter 2024 Outlook
 - April 19 Biennial Conference!
 - ICARP Grant Funded SLR Groundwater Hazards Mapping – Potential launch
 - Scholarship and Small Grants Programs - Develop program framework and solicitation
 - North Bay Water Resiliency Workforce Development – Subcommittee
 - Progress Alignments with Regional Programs – Administrative Steering Committee
 - Support member agency funding applications and position for regional funding – Joint Technical Committee

- Update Fiscal Policies and Administrative Agency Plan - Administrative Steering Committee
- Convene North Bay Environmental Education Roundtable – Identify NGO champion(s)

FY 2023-24 Board Meetings

- January 5 – SKIP MONTH or WATERSHED SOCIAL GATHERING
 - Andy polled the members, and all were in favor of a January 5th mixer.
- February 2 – In person/hybrid
- March 1 – In person/hybrid
- April 5 – In person/hybrid (possible skip)
- April 19 – Biennial Conference @ SSU
- May 3 – In person/hybrid
- June 7 – Field Trip

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!

Director Patterson: She is interested in Land use planning speakers.

Andy referenced a past workshop that NBWA put on and will reach out to Elizabeth for future speaker ideas.

Chuck Weir provided a brief overview of some projects that the North Bay Water Reuse Program (NBWRA) is working on. Brown and Caldwell work on their engineering tasks; Jim O'Toole from ESA work on all environmental tasks, and their outreach is done by Data Instincts.

Jim O'Toole provided an overview of NBWRA projects in the resilience arena. They have been working on water and recycled water issues in the North Bay for going on 20 years and have been successful in implementing, what they call Phase One. The recycled water program has included one hundred million dollars funded in large part through Title 16 with the Bureau of Reclamation. The NBWRA provides a sub-regional, organizational structure to acquire funding for project implementation. It is a MOU based structure and it has political representation. In looking into Phase 2, they realize they are lacking a sub-regional framework for addressing other challenges like drought and sea level rise. They would like to focus around four resiliency areas: recycled water, portable reuse, coordinated drought response planning, and sea level rise adaptation.

ESA is looking forward to more engagement with NBWA and will be at the April conference.

6. Board Information Exchange

Director Fraites: We are going to get Redwood Highway open though in about next month.

Director Shribbs: They are currently in both general plan and in city council planning- land resiliency and land use is the hot topic and needed right now.

Director Meigs: December 4th they will be moving to a bigger building on Anderson Avenue. They are thinking of creating a n education space. They are also continuing to look at sewer pipes in creeks because they impact trout. They are currently working on Tamalpais Creek.

Director Gregory: They are in contract to install a linear generator at our plant. It will convert biogas to electricity in a very efficient manner. They will be the first-ever wastewater treatment facility to run a linear generator using methane produced in an anaerobic digester.

7. Announcements/Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:28 am

Next Meeting: February 2, 2024

SUBMITTED BY: Andy Rodgers, Executive Director, NBWA