

North Bay Watershed Association Board of Directors Meeting - Summary

March 7, 2025| 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	Andy Rodgers – NBWA
Pat Eklund – City of Novato	Sabrina Marson – NBWA
John Shribbs – City of Petaluma	Ryan Dunbar – City of Petaluma
Ron Wellander – City of Sonoma	Stephen Keese – Marin Coalition/Public
Crystal Martinez – County of Marin	Matt Samson – Marin Municipal Water District
Amber Manfree – County of Napa	Tony Williams – North Marin Water District
Megan Clark – Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District	Jack Baker – North Marin Water District
Larry Russel – Marin Municipal Water District	Sandeep Karkal – Novato Sanitary District
Rick Fraites – North Marin Water District	Susan Stompe – Marin Conservation League/Public
Jean Mariani (Chair) – Novato Sanitary District	
Pamela Meigs – Ross Valley Sanitary District	
Elizabeth Patterson – Solano County Water Agency	
Brad Sherwood (Vice Chair) – Sonoma Water	
Jack Gibson – Director Emeritus	

Fourteen NBWA board members attended the meeting comprised of 23-member agency staff, stakeholders, partners, and interested members of the public. Meeting participants attended in-person and remotely via Zoom.

Chair Mariani called the meeting to order at 9:32 am and took roll call.

2. **General Public Comment** – Stephen Keese announced a TV program called "Wildfire Watch" happening on Monday. Experts from Marin County who know a lot about the fires in Los Angeles—it's about lessons learned and will be on Zoom and Facebook.
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. Director Eklund seconded. None opposed—Unanimously approved.

Chair Mariani asked if there were any changes or corrections to the minutes for the December Board meeting. Edits were provided to staff. No additional comments. Director Sherwood moved. Director Patterson seconded. None opposed—Unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report

Director Clark noted the healthy fund balance. Andy mentioned the reserve policy and the upcoming Small Grants and Scholarship Program that will get NBWA funds into the community. No additional comments on the Treasurer's Report. Director Eklund moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Director Sherwood seconded—Unanimously accepted.

4. Executive Director Report

Andy Rodgers, Executive Director

Andy provided updates and solicited board input on activities since the March 7 Board meeting, including association administration updates, and other activities, programs, and communications.

High level updates provided:

- NBWA Board on February 7. Thank you, Novato Sanitary District!
 - Attended CASQA legislation subcommittee meeting on February 26.
- Andy shared a short list of the bills that apply to water utilities, counties and cities. Some notable ones are as follows:
1. [SB 601](#) (Allen) Water: waste discharge. This bill proposes changes to Porter-Cologne to provide a backstop to changes to the Clean Water Act and introduces potentially complex elements such as “nexus waters”. Andy understands this bill already has significant interest from many state-wide organizations. Director Patterson asked if it deals with water rights. Andy was not sure.
 2. [AB 794](#) (Gabriel) California Safe Drinking Water Act: emergency regulations
 3. [AB 638](#) (Rodriguez) Stormwater: reuses: irrigation
- Others of interest:
1. [SB 454](#) (McNerney) PFAS Mitigation Fund. There are also a number of other new PFAS bills.
 2. [AB 823](#) (Boerner) Microbeads
 3. [AB 362](#) (Ramos) Tribal water use

Though NBWA doesn’t typically take positions on legislation, NBWA does make sure that membership is aware of potential changes that could impact member planning and operations, and often hosts presentations to encourage regional dialogue and collaborative actions.

Director Patterson asked if any legislation on the Golden Mussel was introduced—Andy doesn’t know. She noted that there's a new mussel, the Golden Mussel, recently discovered in the last 6 or 7 months. Solano County Water Agency has one of the most robust clean and restrictive operations. They are trying to get the legislature to require licensing for every and all water bodies. There really needs to be comprehensive state legislation.

Director Sherwood notes there is the state's Quagga and Zebra Mussel Infestation Prevention Grant Program managed by the California State Parks' Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW). He mentioned it needs to be amended. He also recently learned that Department of Fish and Wildlife are the only ones that their consultant is hearing from about on Golden Mussel legislation and regulation regulatory needs.

Director Patterson recommends the board have a presentation on Golden Mussel at a future meeting.

Director Russel: SB 72, introduced by Senator Caballero, aims to modernize California's water plan ("California Water for All") by setting long-term water

supply targets to address climate challenges and ensure water for urban, agricultural, and environmental needs.

<https://www.aginfo.net/report/61714/California-Ag-Today/Legislation-Aims-to-Modernize-California-s-Water-Plan#:~:text=The%20legislation%20sets%20an%20interim,water%20providers%20and%20other%20stakeholders.>

- Attend Russian River Regional Monitoring Program Steering Committee meeting on March 5

Administrative Activities

- Develop updated FY 2025/26 workplan
- Coordinate March and April board meetings
- Small Grants and Scholarship materials refinement
- Calendar scheduling
- Coordinate with Board Chair and Treasurer
- AR – Membership dues
- AP – Subconsultants
- Updated website and meeting packet information

Communications

- Manage/progress NBWA social media program
- Presented at SSU CEI Copeland Creek Corridor Workshop on February 28
Andy notes that the SSU idea is to use the creek and its watershed as a “living classroom” context for all their schools to do different projects in. One of the featured components of that is to develop the water workforce of the future. There's a lot of agency interests in all aspects including the trades, law, science, engineering, operations, etc.
- Research, outreach, and communications with members and subject matter experts regarding development for future Board topics

Committees

- Plan for Administrative Steering Committee meeting – Spring 2025
- Research and communicate with potential grant and scholarship partners
- Small Grants and Scholarship Programs
 - April application launch!
 - Newsletter highlight
 - Website update

Sabrina mentioned there was a deeper dive into the program at the February meeting, when the program was approved. Staff is now formalizing the applications and gearing up to fully launch the program April 1. The website was updated with preliminary information and there was a blurb in the recent NBBWA newsletter to get people primed. Staff is inviting the Board to recommend organizations or individuals who might be interested in applying for our small grants and scholarship. When the applications and FAQs are ready, we will contact the referrals.

Application period will be about a month. The subcommittee will meet in May to review. At a minimum a significant update will be provided to the Board at the June meeting. With the awards being given in July.

1 & 2 Quarter 2025 Outlook: Positioning for Next FY

- Prepare to plan 2026 Biennial Conference!

We'll want to make sure that we get as much participation from our target audiences which need to be identified based on the themes. The planning committee will meet earlier in the year than in the past.

- Continue to participate in and influence regional resiliency and collaborations
 - Watershed networks
 - Funding – convene JTC for Prop 4
 - Workforce development
- Launch Small Grants and Scholarship Program!
- Support positioning north bay members to leverage regional collaboration for competitive funding advantage
Andy noted that the NBWA can write support letters, if needed. Reach out to staff.
- Advance plan for convening North Bay Environmental Education Roundtable
- Finalize FY2025-2026 Work Plan
- Develop draft plan to expand NBWA membership in region
Andy would like to work with the board work to figure out how to meet strategically with the City of Napa, the City of Vallejo, and others in the NBWA region. Directors who have contacts can reach out to Andy directly.

Director Patterson and Director Eklund recommend that Andy meet with Andrea Sorce, Mayor of Vallejo. They both would be interested in joining an introduction meeting.

Director Eklund is also meeting with the new Solano County Supervisor. Andy will be in touch with both of them.

Director Meigs: Corte Madera, Sausalito, Point Reyes, tribes. Are they being considered? Andy will talk with Rob Carson for some of those areas. He [Andy] recently was talking with local tribe members on another topic. He will look into it.

Director Emeritus Gibson noted that a good angle for enticing new members would be leveraging regional support through the association when applying for grants and other applicable items.

The full presentation is available in PDF format here
<https://www.nbwatershed.org/event/nbwa-board-meeting-27/>

FY 2024-25 Board Meetings

First Friday of every month - Except of course for holidays!

- April 4 - American Canyon Council Chambers
- May 2 - North Marin Water District
- June 6 - *TBD* Social and 25-year celebration

5. NBWA Proposed FY 2025/26 Work Program

- Restructuring to
 - Better align work plan tasks with current NBWA activities and priorities, the structure of our annual work plan categories will be updated
 1. Existing work plan framework has remained unchanged for many years not reflecting administrative logistics and program priorities
 2. The NBWA MOU will remain unchanged

- Reflect annual activities
- Align task budgets and financial tracking with active tasks
- Simplify task organization for easier member reference
- Improve alignment of tasks with CMSA (treasurer) ledger systems
- Establish a contemporary foundation to support organized growth
- Proposed FY2025/26 Work plan Updates
 - Reinstate Annual Updated Member Operating Budgets
 1. Member dues have been frozen since 2016/2017 Member Operating Budget levels, not tracking with inflation, and not funding reserves and new programs.
 2. In accordance with the MOU, member operating budgets shall be used in preparation of annual work plans.

Andy provided a rough idea of membership due changes, and they are minimal. The biggest decrease is \$8,500, and the largest increase is \$2,400. Raises are anywhere from a couple of 100 dollars to the highest of \$2,400.

Chair Mariani confirmed this is a way to realign membership dues based on what agencies spending now (essentially general fund, not including public safety) as compared to 10 years ago.

Andy has a formula that he is refining with CMSA and will bring this to the April meeting.

- FY2025-2026 OUTLOOK
 - 2026 Biennial Conference!

Andy requested that interested Board members email staff to get involved in the planning.
 - Eight Board meetings - Including 2 field trips
 - Two skip months (Aug and Jan)
 - Four Scholarship & Grant committee meetings
 - One Administrative Steering committee meeting
 - Manage Scholarship and Small Grants Program
 - Seek grant funds to support broadening and deepening NBWA's regional partnerships
 - Support North Bay Water Resiliency Workforce Development Initiatives
 - Facilitate Convening a Regional Environmental Education Roundtable
 - Participate in Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM), San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority, IRWM Roundtable of Regions, Regional Conservation Investment Strategy, & other regional programs
 - Position region for regional, State (Prop 4), and local funding

6. Board Information Exchange and Updates

Director Eklund: The Bay Conservation Development Commission has adopted the regional Shoreline Adaptation plan and that's requiring all cities and counties to develop a plan and submit it for approval. January 1, 2034 is the deadline. If anyone has questions, reach out to her. She isn't seeing at the county level much discussion on this topic.

Director Patterson: [in response to Director Eklund's update] she has presented in the past on what efforts Solano County has done, such as Bayshore program that

has received Grant funds from the State and is seeking Grant funds from the Ocean Protection Commission.

Andy suggests that if there is a topic that is affecting everybody, let's hear it all together, and maybe there's opportunities to collaborate. Andy will connect with Director Eklund to see if there is a presentation opportunity. Director Eklund will send links to Andy to share with the group.

Director Shribbs: SFEI is having a Zoom meeting on April 15th to talk about the sediment study on Adobe Creek in Petaluma. Oriana Hart is the contact for the City of Petaluma. Her updates to the group include: stream gauges are going into several of our creeks to do better water, monitoring for sea level rise and flooding to do better modeling for our land use mapping that we're doing right now within the city. The city is also working with the Petaluma GSA to monitoring the wells for quality and to test putting water into the ground to see if we get increased storage for aquifers. They're trying to help find a few more monitoring sites for that. They are having a demonstration garden and turf reduction at our City Hall soon.

Director Meigs: Ross Valley Sanitary district has been around for 125 years. They have 15,000 households that they serve. CMSA is the treatment center. They recently completed 19-point repairs; the majority of them were grade 5, which means pretty bad. They completed 12 manhole rehabs. They had a 88,000 gallon spill—it was in the Larkspur pump station area and the Greenbrae Pump Station. The pipe, which was 70 linear feet, was corroded from hydrogen and sulfate gas that accumulated for decades. Fairfax is getting a 6–7-million-dollar project that is intended to address wastewater volume issues and prevent potential sewage flooding in downtown Fairfax.

Director Patterson: The most compelling issue with the Solano County Water Agency is the State Water Board's standards for fresh flows. Recent studies have shown it's like 1% of the flows and it doesn't go to Southern California it goes out to the Carquinez Strait. Those releases will wipe out all the restoration on Putah Creek because the flows will be so high it will erode, and we'll lose the fish population.

Gold Mussels are a red flag issue with all hands-on deck working on it. They are trying to get a working relationship with Napa to get some help training some of the recreation operators to do the inspections because it is immediately necessary.

Recent studies show data that fish predation of salmon is probably the biggest reason why the population is going down. That's of interest to the group because the flows are supposedly based on increasing habitat for salmon, but if you keep increasing that, and you don't deal with the predation you probably will have continued decline in the salmon population. She recommends the NBWA have a presentation on this.

Director Fraites: They are looking at redoing the Point Reyes Station water availability, filtration plant, pipeline. Their headquarters is up and running. NBWA will be hosted in May.

Director Meigs: They had a recent presentation by Krista Gabriel about sea level rise, and how NBWA should lead the effort, because the organization is in place. They are working on biosolids and a solar project; the old one burned down in like 2022, so they haven't had solar since then. They are working on a state-of-the-art lab outreach building; they're going to put an educational, ecological outreach in there and a board room.

Director Boorstein: When the CMSA JPA was formed in the eighties, San Rafael, Ross Valley Larkspur, and Corte Madera were members. Larkspur was annexed into the Ross Valley Sanitary District, which had a lot of controversy, but it seems to be working out very well, and the Larkspur system is generally under control—It's a difficult system because much of the pipe is underwater. When it's a king tide, it flows directly into the system, it's all sinking and not great. San Rafael Sanitary District created their collection in San Rafael as part of public works. After all these years San Rafael has decided they don't want it. The plan that CMSA and San Rafael came up with is that San Rafael's employees would be absorbed by CMSA.

Director Sherwood: They are making public presentations regarding their water contractors on rates for next budget year. Santa Rosa is looking at about an 8.6% rate increase; Petaluma aqueduct, 10.7%; and then Sonoma 7.6%. They have our own separate agreement with Marin Water that's being negotiated and worked on right now that's all based on expectations of delivering [inaudible] acre feet of water next year. The Hatchery of Lake Sonoma to date we've counted 67 Chinook compared to 9 on this date, last year. 111 coho compared to 15 last year, 973, Steelhead compared to 453 last year, as of this date. They have educated 11,843 students in their classrooms throughout the field through the water Education Program. They've taken about 300 kids to the Hatchery. They started helping staff at the Visitor Center at Lake Sonoma because the Army Corps needed some help. They have welcomed 1,500 visitors to the Visitor Center compared to 700 last year.

Matt Samson (Marin Municipal Water District): Big news is the vote to approve moving forward on the conveyance out of Sonoma; It's a 2–3-year process. We're also working on the Nicasio reservoir. There will be quite a bit of environmental studies on the Nicasio Creek confluence of Lagunitas Creek to make sure we could potentially replicate some of the work we're doing. Various other entities are hosting the spring Regional meeting for the California Wildfire and Forest Resiliency Task Force this month March 26-28th
<https://wildfiretaskforce.org/spring-regional-meeting>

Stephen Keese (Marin Coalition/Public): Damon Connolly is presenting “From Marin to Sacramento: A talk and discussion about issues, actions, and prospects” Thursday, April 3, 2025. Capacity is limited to 70. Registration will close when capacity is reached.
<https://marincoalition.org/next-event/>

7. Agenda Items for Future Meetings

During the meeting, Director Patterson requested information on Golden Mussels and Sonoma Baylands Restoration technical aspects. Director Meigs mentioned people experiencing homelessness, water quality on the river, building for the future, and Golden Gate Biosphere network. Vice Chair Sherwood will contact Sonoma Water's director of engineering to give a water infrastructure update. He suggested it could be paired with a presentation on Marin Water's Pipeline project.

8. Announcements/Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am
Next Board Meeting: April 4

SUBMITTED BY: Andy Rodgers, Executive Director, NBWA