MEETING MINUTES
Monday, May 20, 2013
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
525 Golden Gate Ave 2nd Floor O’Shaughnessy Conference Room
San Francisco, CA 94102

Members
Richard Hansen (D1) Jennifer Clary (D11) Karen Donovan (Public Member)
David Pilpel, Chair (D4) Art Jensen (M-Reg'l Water Customers)
M = Mayoral appointment, B = Board President appointment

Orders of Business

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. when quorum was achieved.
   Present: D.Pilpel; R.Hansen; J.Clary; K.Donovan
   Absent: A.Jensen
   Staff Present: A.DeGraca; M.Boozarpour; A.Wilzchak; G.Bartow; K.Capone;
   P.Kehoe; G.Wilson; A.Sinclair; T.Young
   Members of the Public Present: Ryan Jackson from the Department of the Environment
   (also referred to as San Francisco Environment or SFE)
   Agenda Changes: none.

2. Presentation and Discussion: Water Quality Update on Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs), Andrew DeGraca, SFPUC Water Quality Division
   Discussion and Questions:
   R.Hansen: You indicated that you examined the documents from 14 or 15 other public water systems. Is there a listing of those?
   A.Wilzchak: I can provide that. It was done several years back when we first tried to develop this program. Other agencies didn’t have a similar approach like this and agencies were doing bits and pieces of monitoring. There was no organized program like this until two or three years ago. It was mostly larger utilities like San Francisco, Massachusetts, Los Angeles, etc. I can send a list of those agencies to you.
   R.Hansen: This is all protected watershed. You don’t mention some of the obvious things like the issue of the horse stables.
   J.Clary: It’s regulated, so it’s not an emerging contaminant.
   R.Hansen: Is the watershed protected against that or fracking in case there are oil claims against the SFPUC? I think it would be good to include one or two pages about watershed protection and what that looks like. Is the watershed protected against rail mines, tankers, cars, or train tracks?
   A.DeGraca: There are no train tracks going through the watershed. I don’t think there has been any major tanker traffic. The only one area would be Highway 92 near Crystal Springs Watershed between the upper and lower watersheds. All of the water is diverted away from that.
R. Hansen: I would appreciate including that information in this report.

J. Clary: Maybe watershed protection would be a topic for a future meeting. It could be about San Francisco’s filtration avoidance and watershed protection.

A. DeGraca: Do you want watershed protection in this report or is that a topic to cover in a different Subcommittee meeting?

R. Hansen: I think this is a superb report. I was thinking about additional information that would be helpful. How does California state standards compare against the other states? I suspect it would be more rigorous.

A. DeGraca: It has to be at least equivalent to the Federal regulation if not higher. California is crafting its own regulation because it is not moving fast enough on the Federal level. Your suggestions were including the 14 utilities, increased discussion about watershed protection, and California vs. Federal regulations.

J. Clary: How is this report going to be used? The State Board has created their report of CECs based on their recycled water program and that’s what other entities are looking at. Were you looking at your recycled water program in terms of this?

A. DeGraca: We looked at their list and that was our starting point on things to look into. One of the problems is that there isn’t a definitive list anywhere where everyone has agreed on. You can look at things from a drinking water perspective or wastewater perspective. I look at this as one step at an evolution toward having a more unified list in the future.

J. Clary: As part of doing this, did you identify research needs or research that has already been done? For example, did you find anything from American Water Works Association (AWWA)?

A. DeGraca: If we did, yes. I know there are research projects out there. We take a look and do some monitoring to see some gaps. If we see things that pop up in our particular word, we start asking questions about treating and next steps, and then go to research foundations whether we can help fund project or get them to look at things globally. At least we can benchmark ourselves against other utilities to see if we have a smaller or larger problem.

J. Clary: One thing you’re doing by creating this list is to develop a trend monitoring program. Is it just detection? Is it getting better? Is it getting worse?

A. DeGraca: I think that could be part of it. Just as we’re starting right now, if we do this for the next three years, take a look and come back, did we learn anything from it? We’re not quite sure where we’re going to end up, but those are the questions we’ll be asking after three or six years of monitoring.

J. Clary: Why aren’t you developing this program for recycled water and wastewater treatment and disposal? What’s your reason for focusing on drinking water?

A. DeGraca: We’ve had some discussions internally with our colleagues at Wastewater. I think they were uncomfortable with diving into this area could be a fair statement. At some point we couldn’t come to consensus, so we pushed through the process for drinking water. I can’t speak for their group. I think our group was a little more comfortable. There’s a slightly different regulatory concept for us as well.

J. Clary: Is this report available electronically?

A. Wilzchak: Not at this time, but we can provide an electronic copy/PDF.

R. Hansen: In San Mateo County and their watersheds, do they have contaminants in their groundwater?

A. DeGraca: They have chromium 6 (Cr6). There’s a joint water quality committee and we meet with them regularly and keep them aware on what’s going on in San Francisco.

R. Hansen: Do you have copies of their information?

A. DeGraca: They’re a little sensitive about their information and will informally
share some of their information, but they’re a little concerned about getting that out. We have a little more resources on putting together a report like this.

D.Pilpel: On screening, do you check a single location or several locations along the way? For example, where something is introduced into the system and other locations?

A.DeGraca: What we try to do is look at different places along the system. We look at the raw water at the treatment facilities, after treatment, going into the distribution system, etc. We try to look at the same group of water, so that we get a sense of what’s going on. We talked about some of the monitoring with Cr6. If we see it at certain places within the entry point of the distribution system or into the far reaches, we may decide that to go to the source and also look at locations in between.

D.Pilpel: As it relates to groundwater to the extent that we get into the groundwater program, does that complicate things? Would you continue to do testing of all samples? Both the production wells and blended product on both sides of town?

A.DeGraca: The problem with wells is that it’s another source of supply. So yes, we will test. We do regulatory requirements and process monitoring. We would do this over an extended period of time to understand things like time of day, movement of water, etc.

D.Pilpel: Just as you suggested that BAWSCA has problems down in the Peninsula, are you aware of those things not just in our watershed but where groundwater wells may be located and historical uses that may impact the aquifer in the area?

A.DeGraca: Yes, we have to do source water assessments in those areas. When you look at wells, you need to know what’s in the general area, such as gas stations.

D.Pilpel: Going back to Cr6, is that currently an issue? Is that something you’re monitoring?

A.DeGraca: Yes, that is something we monitor. We don’t have an issue with it right now because of the current regulations. If the new regulations come out and the numbers are low, then we would need to look into it.

D.Pilpel: In the Bay Area with other water agencies, is there some sort of water quality group throughout the region that meets periodically separate from the BAWSCA group?

A.DeGraca: Yes.

D.Pilpel: If there was something that was in the water supply not at a very high level, but another substance was added to the supply later on that might cause either a public health or emergency problem, are there those types of things that we can anticipate or prepare for?

A.DeGraca: Mixtures are the next evolutions of CECs. You can look at one thing, but figuring out how two things interact or mix together is not definitive. We could be looking at different levels of two or three things and how they act well or badly together.

Public comment:

R.Jackson: Can I also have the PDF version of this?

M.Boozarpour provided the draft report binder to R.Jackson.

J.Clary: When will this be on the Commission agenda?

A.DeGraca: This will be on the Commission agenda in August.

3. Discussion and Possible Action: Resolution about Contaminants of Emerging Concern

J.Clary moved; R.Hansen seconded the discussion regarding the draft CEC resolution.
J.Clary: One thing I'm wondering is whether to add a whereas about the recycled water program. Potentially between wastewater treatment and the resolve, we could add a last whereas “the City is planning to institute a recycled water program for irrigation and industrial purposes in San Francisco.”

D.Pilpel: Did you mean groundwater or recycled water?

J.Clary: No, I meant recycled water. Groundwater is already part of this. They have a robust system for the drinking water program. They don’t have a similar program for wastewater effluent, which would require a whole new set of things. What we want to do is ensure that it also provides for recycled water. Groundwater is not on the same level as recycled water.

D.Pilpel: What I’m suggesting is that both groundwater and recycled water may bring new challenges to monitoring that didn’t previously exist and should be references in terms of resources.

K.Donovan: For drafting sake, it seems to me that the purpose of the resolution is to urge that some program addressing CECs be put in place for wastewater. Is that correct?

J.Clary: Correct.

K.Donovan: And so I think separating recycled water because of its origins and uses is the better of the two. I urge that there be a separate whereas be directed at wastewater.

D.Pilpel: I’m fine with adding that. Can we add a separate resolve about working with other City departments? I’d like to see the City have a more coordinated effort regarding toxic reduction.

J.Clary: Can you give me language?

D.Pilpel: Resolve that the SFPUC CAC urges SFPUC staff to coordinate efforts on CEC removal with other City departments, including Department of the Environment (DoE), Department of Public Health (DPH), and others.

J.Clary: It seems to me what you’re suggesting is a pollution prevention bullet?

D.Pilpel: I’m suggesting that there be a coordinated approach.

J.Clary: The SFPUC doesn’t need to talk to the DoE about water quality monitoring because the DoE doesn’t have that expertise or interest. What would be appropriate to talk to SFE about might be a toxic reduction program. DoE works on it and so does the SFPUC. The language could be “Further resolve that the SFPUC CAC urges SFPUC staff to coordinate with other City agencies on toxics reduction programs that can minimize the occurrence of CECs in our water supply.”

D.Pilpel: We can bring this before the Full CAC in June. Does staff has anything to share?

A.DeGraca: My comment is for the whereas regarding the City’s wastewater not being designed to remove chemical contaminants. You may want to change this to “not specifically designed to remove CECs” because they may say there is biological treatment, sedimentation, for some things that may remove but not how well.

J.Clary: I’m willing to change that. What they’re required to remove is bacteria, correct?

A.DeGraca: There are BODs, suspended solids, and surrogate measures for wastewater.

D.Pilpel: Replace chemical contaminants with CECs?

J.Clary: I think it’s fine to change it to that.

A.DeGraca: It might be helpful to share it with the Wastewater Enterprise. They may have some tweaks and comments.

In favor to move resolution as amended: D.Pilpel; R.Hansen; J.Clary; K.Donovan
Presentation and Discussion: **Groundwater Supply Projects Update**, Greg Bartow, SFPUC Water Resources Planning

Discussion and Questions:

R.Hansen: Do you have generators already installed at these facilities?

G.Bartow: No, we purposefully just made accommodations for generators to be driven up. These aren’t part of our life safety program for the SFPUC, but they are wired to be used.

J.Clary: It looks like you’re assuming three dry years out of ten.

G.Bartow: Yes, roughly.

J.Clary: How much does the aquifer hold? For example, are you assuming maximum levels of the aquifer or leaving some cushion so that you can get more during dry years?

G.Bartow: We are not going to fill it more than 60,500 because that’s what we’ve defined as the project.

J.Clary: What’s the water level?

G.Bartow: The water level would roughly be 80 feet or deeper depth of groundwater.

J.Clary: Do you feel the aquifer could hold more?

G.Bartow: There is potential. We provide a safety. There are in the shallow groundwater, sometimes groundwater pollution sites. We didn’t want to resaturate those and refill the basin too high. That’s one of the reasons for not going too high. In the worst case and we’re a long ways from it, you can have nuisance conditions of water going into people’s basements. The groundwater conditions along the Bay’s shore are nearly surface.

J.Clary: The environmental concern about this program is that in order to fill the aquifer, you’re diverting additional water from the Tuolumne River and this was the 2MGD increase that was in the Water System Improvement Program (WSIP) Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Have you looked at in-direct potable reuse? Like using your recycled water program for some of the recharge?

G.Bartow: We have not.

J.Clary: Is there a reason why?

G.Bartow: One of the things would be that we have a set back from drinking water wells, injection wells, so that would be difficult. It’s so much more cost effective than building injection facilities and treatment facilities to do this.

J.Clary: So for you to do this, you’ll have to select different sites.

K.Capone: With the program EIR, we’ve accounted for the water to move over to the partner agencies. It’s within the 265 limit.

J.Clary: My understanding is that the 267 is for drought recovery.

K.Capone: With the 265 annual average from the watersheds, this delivers within that limit. The program whole including all drought projects and meeting the level of service goals is within 265 annual average from the watersheds.

J.Clary: For recharge areas for aquifers, is it that the whole basin is a recharge area or have you identified areas where the greatest area of recharge is?

G.Bartow: There’s been modeling that’s been done and what it paints is a gradation. Where you have open fields, golf fields, or very limited amount of impermeable areas, there’s higher recharge there. When you get into dense, commercial areas, there is less recharge.

J.Clary: So this isn’t an aquifer that has areas that is doing most of the recharging. It’s really across the aquifer.

G.Bartow: I would say there’s a range of recharge.
J.Clary: Under your agreement, what triggers from accumulating from distributing? Is it like your year three drought? Year two? Four?

G.Bartow: It is the system storage. On April 1, we look at our storage and then we make a determination in July 1. So it is based on our system storage whether we want to be in storage mode or recovery mode, depending on the type of year.

D.Pilpel: What is the difference between existing wells between the three agencies versus the new wells you’re proposing? Why would we go to different locations?

G.Bartow: The existing wells have a certain capacity, but they wouldn’t be able to pull out more than double their pumping capacity. It really requires a new set of wells to go in and extract that stored water. That’s why we needed more and for the distribution we’re trying to spread the pumping out and not have a pumping stress in one area.

D.Pilpel: I can think of this as a water management concept. It currently doesn’t create more water than exists. It’s a banking and management technique that helps hedge against dry years.

R.Hansen: Consider it to be a rainy day fund.

K.Capone: It’s not creating more water, but it is creating more storage for us.

D.Pilpel: And between the local and regional project, and the Vista Grande project, the net for Lake Merced should be about the same or possibly positive, but not negative? Is that the goal?

K.Capone: People view Lake Merced differently. Some people view that if the water goes down there’s an impact. Some people view that if the water goes up there’s an impact. Both impact the GSR project. In general, water levels are increased because of the storage. Groundwater levels have increased. The GSR project would include mitigation measures to both lower the lake level when needed and increase the lake level when needed.

D.Pilpel: Does it operate in a range?

K.Capone: Yes, somewhat. Nine is the lower limit. The GSR project has been seeing it drop below nine. The high end of the range is less defined, because it depends on what the level would be with or without the project. All of the projects together when they’re operating will help bring Lake Merced to an equilibrium and will be eventually managed within the range. I think the Vista Grande project is where we would see a more defined range. We have mitigation measures to mitigate to baseline.

P.Kehoe: The NOP has already been released.

D.Pilpel: Does the Subcommittee want a presentation on that topic at a future meeting?

J.Clary: Sure.

Public comment: none.

5. Staff Report: A.Sinclair

J.Clary: Can I get a copy of your distribution plan?

A.Sinclair: I can check with A.Kastama on that.

D.Pilpel: Do people come into the field office asking about questions not related to 15th and Wawona?

A.Sinclair: No, the questions are mostly related to 15th and Wawona. They’re focused on claims questions.

Public comment: none.

6. Approval of the February 20, 2013 and April 15, 2013 Meeting Minutes

J.Clary moved; K.Donovan seconded. February 20, 2013 meeting minutes approved by acclamation with D.Pilpel’s written amendments. The
Subcommittee will postpone approving the April 15, 2013 meeting minutes to a future meeting.

7. Report from the Chair: postponed until future meeting.

8. Future Agenda Items
   - City Distribution Division (CDD) Overview
   - Update from Customer Service about monthly billing
   - Vista Grande
   - Westside Recycled Water Project

9. Public Comment: none

   Adjournment at 7:10 p.m. D.Pilpel moved; K.Donovan seconded.

   The next regular meeting of the Water Subcommittee is on Monday, June 17, 2013.