

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

MINUTES
April 19-20, 2017

Regular Meeting

Holiday Inn Express, Sidewinder Room
2700 Lenwood Road
Barstow, CA 92311

Board Members Participating

Peter C. Pumphrey, Chair, Bishop
Kimberly Cox, Helendale
Keith Dyas, Rosamond
Eric Sandel, Truckee
Amy Horne, Ph.D., Truckee

Board Members Absent

Don Jardine, Vice Chair, Markleeville

Legal Counsel

Elizabeth Beryt, Office of Chief Counsel, State Water Resources Control Board

Regional Board Staff Participating

Patty Z. Kouyoumdjian, Executive Officer
Lauri Kemper, Assistant Executive Officer
Mike Coony, WRCE
Jehiel Cass, Sr. WRCE
Anne Holden, Engineering Geologist
Alonzo Poach, Engineering Geologist
Todd Battey, Engineering Geologist
Robert Tucker, WRCE
Shelby Barker, Engineering Geologist
Kathy Otermat, Executive Assistant

Scott Ferguson, Sup. WRCE
Patrice Copeland, Sup. Engineering Geologist
Jan Zimmerman, Engineering Geologist
Lisa Dernbach, Sr. Engineering Geologist
Cephas Hurr, WRCE
Ghasem Pour-Ghasemi, WRCE
John Morales, WRCE
Christina Guerra, Engineering Geologist
Caren Paterson, Scientific Aid

REGULAR MEETING: April 19, 2017 - 3:00 p.m.

To view the full Agenda and listen to the audio of this meeting [CLICK HERE](#)

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Pumphrey called the meeting to order at 2:57 p.m. on April 19, 2017 and introduced Board Members. Vice-Chair Don Jardine was absent. Patty Z. Kouyoumdjian, Executive Officer, introduced Legal Counsel and Water Board Staff.

PETER C. PUMPHREY, CHAIR | PATTY Z. KOUYOUMDJIAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

10. Closed Session *

The Board, without the public present, discussed a closed session Item 6 (e) at 3:05 p.m. The meeting resumed with the public at 3:16 p.m.

1. Public Forum

None.

2. Minutes

Motion: Moved by Member Dr. Horne, seconded by Member Sandel, to approve the March 2017 Minutes with the following corrections:

- Replace “Reed Street” in second paragraph with “West Reed Street”.
- The minutes should reflect that the ownership of the street is in disagreement.

The motion *carried* with a unanimous verbal vote. Member Jardine was absent.

Click here to view adopted [March 2017 Meeting Minutes](#).

3. Adoption of the Uncontested Calendar

Motion: Moved by Member Dyas, seconded by Member Cox, to approve the Uncontested Calendar as presented containing only Item 4. The motion *carried* per the following votes:

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Member Cox | aye |
| Member Dyas | aye |
| Member Dr. Horne | aye |
| Member Sandel | aye |
| Chair Pumphrey | aye |
| Vice-Chair Jardine | absent |

Items 5 and 6 were moved to be presented after Item 9.

7. Workshop – Domestic Wastewater Sewage Treatment Plant Status in Lahontan Region.

Cephas Hurr, WRCE, presented this item to the Board. In his presentation, Mr. Hurr reported on the status of wastewater treatment facilities in the region and options for improving water quality and regulatory tools. The Water Board was not asked to take any formal action.

Board Comments:

- Member Sandel asked how it is that the region has several regulated treatment facilities that the region that there are no reported nitrogen levels. Mr. Jehiel Cass, Sr. WRCE, stated historically the region did not have nitrogen limits in permits. This is one of the specific areas coming out of this exercise that the region will be focusing on in terms of amending old permits and including requirements in new permits. Member Sandel asked how the region can monitor groundwater below treatment plants for nitrogen as well. Mr. Cass explained that one of the tables in the staff reports shows facilities with monitoring wells. The region is looking at requiring new monitoring wells but is cognizant of the cost to the customer so they are looking at areas of concern first and looking for potential receptors nearby. Member Sandel acknowledged that the region has several disadvantaged communities with tight resources in which requiring monitoring wells would be too costly. He suggested possibly looking at a region-wide program to find some outside funding to put in monitoring wells.

- Member Dr. Horne asked why the new general order establishes nitrogen effluent limitations on a case by case vs. having limits as part of the order. Mr. Hurr answered that part of the equation is the size of the population the plant is serving. Mr. Cass added that the region is seeing diverse cases such as small package plants for commercial facilities in the middle of nowhere with low population but high use as well as existing treatment plants for which an arbitrarily imposed limit would require building a new plant. Circumstances like these would require a case-by-case analysis on the need, demand and cost, and researching other ways they could improve treatment. Member Dr. Horne suggested that when there are multiple small plants in close proximity that might be an area that the Water Board would take a closer look and using this general order might be the way to do that. Mr. Cass agreed that would be taken into consideration in crafting the order.
- Member Cox asked how the Basin Plan can support the conversation regarding limits. Mr. Cass stated that Chapter 4 of the Basin Plan is where the approach to the region's wastewater regulation is discussed. There is general direction without specifics and there are several areas the Water Board could improve on the plan. Member Cox suggested that the map on page 8-80 and the source of the "no known groundwater issues" have more clarification using for example the Hinkley area which shows "no known groundwater issues". Member Cox stated in the South Lahontan Region there is conversation on water quality trading credits which may achieve better water quality benefits on a basin-wide approach. She asked the staff to look into that option.
- Chair Pumphrey wanted to underscore Member Dr. Horne's comment in respect to clustered facilities and suggested that staff incorporate cumulative impacts into the permitting process. He also asked for a schedule or process by staff to clear up the inconsistencies in the requirements from older permits and the more recent permits so there is a more level playing field. Chair Pumphrey stated there's an indication there are sites where little is known about the groundwater quality or condition. For new applicants he suggested the order require them to give information about the groundwater situation prior to discharge to such as quality and location. On a broader scale is there a way the region can benefit from information derived by the data collection under Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). He hoped that the region develops maps showing where there are ground water impairments or where there would be additional facilities.

Public Comments:

- Nick Holt, an engineer with the Mammoth Public Utility District, commented that broad-based widely-applied limits are not the solution and this process should not be a one size fits all solution. A 10mg/L limit would impose potential costly expenses without necessarily gaining much benefit.

Additional Staff Comments:

- Patrice Copeland, Supervising Engineering Geologist, stated that there is data of known problems buried in information from two salt and nutrient management plans that could be imported through GIS tools in the future.

8. Status Report – Local Agency Management Plan (LAMP) Supplemental Information

Mike Coony, WRCE, presented supplemental information regarding the process and criteria to consider approval of LAMPs in accordance with State Board's Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Policy. Mr. Coony's presentation included responses to the Water Board's questions from the September 15, 2016 workshop, discussion of the long-term approach of the Water Quality Assessment Program, and future management considerations. Lauri Kemper, Assistant Executive Officer, gave an overview of the process the Region has been involved with agencies whose LAMP applications will appear before the Board in July and what was learned from Riverside and Kern County plans. The Water Board was not asked to take any formal action.

Public Comment

- Tina Souza, representing the City of Hesperia, asked the Board to take into consideration the impact of limiting parcel sizes. Many local communities are disadvantaged and the cost of a sewer system can be great. For example the cost for a single-family homeowner can be \$13,000. Member Cox asked about the City of Hesperia's requirement for new subdivisions. Ms. Souza stated that 99% of developments connect to the sewer system.

Board Comments:

- Member Sandel asked for an explanation of what the various Tier definitions meant. He asked for confirmation that Tier 2 local agencies must develop funding if they don't have it. Mr. Coony confirmed that it is a Tier 2 requirement.
- Member Dr. Horne stated she was interested in staff's opinion of the approaches taken by Kern and Riverside counties.
- Chair Pumphrey recommended that staff return for further conversation at the May Board meeting that would include analysis of the alternatives and whether or not there is a philosophy Lahontan is employing as the region works with these agencies. Ms. Kemper added that staff would provide the Board with a copy of the draft San Bernardino plan since that will appear before their Board of Supervisors and is a public document.
- Member Dr. Horne asked that staff send all the comment letters posted on the Lahontan website to the Board and would like time in May for the staff to provide their opinions on the pros and cons of the Riverside and Kern Counties' 5 plans.

The Board recessed for dinner from 5:17-6:58 p.m.

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Pumphrey called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m. on April 19, 2017 and introduced Board Members. Vice-Chair Don Jardine was absent. Patty Z. Kouyoumdjian, Executive Officer, introduced Legal Counsel and Regional Water Board Staff.

9. Status Report on Activities Concerning Chromium Contamination from Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) Hinkley Compressor Station

The Water Board heard reports from Water Board staff, PG&E representatives, and the Independent Review Panel (IRP) Manager on actions taken during the past year and planned for this year such as cleanup and remediation efforts, the chromium background study, and community outreach efforts. The Water Board was not asked to take any formal action.

- Kevin Sullivan, representing PG&E, introduced his team and presented highlights of 2016 and a look forward at 2017.
- Dr. Raudel Sanchez, from the IRP Manager Technical staff, introduced his team and presented an overview of tasks and services they provide to the community of Hinkley.
- Lisa Dernbach, Sr. Engineering Geologist, and Anne Holden, Engineering Geologist, presented the key Water Board staff actions since the Cleanup and Abatement Order was approved in September 2015 including the annual review of the groundwater monitoring well frequencies and the USGS Background Study update.

Public Comments:

- Mr. Daron Banks, a Hinkley resident, spoke to the Board regarding the importance of Dr. Izbicki's study.
- Dr. John Izbicki, Research Hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, told the Board that the background study remains on scope, on target and he fully expects after reviewing the data that they will be able to meet all the objectives as defined in the proposal.

Board Comments:

- Member Dr. Horne and Member Cox commended all those involved in the process and the importance of their work and were pleased with the excellent presentations.

12. Reports by Water Board Chair and Board Members

- Member Dr. Horne attended a week-long Mass Timber Conference in Portland, Oregon pertaining to all the extra biomass wood in the forests.
- Chair Pumphrey attended the Department of Water Resources Water Summit regarding sustainability of regional water management and the Regional Board Chairs meeting. He saw an opportunity for the region to work closely with the State Water Board on Climate Change. He reminded the Board July 24-25 is scheduled for the Sierra Water Summit in Kings Beach.

13. Executive Officer's Report

Ms. Kouyoumdjian, Executive Officer, gave updates on:

- Mary Fiore-Wagner was promoted to Senior Environmental Scientist.
- Now year three of 100% compliance on timber waiver by US Forest Service and others.
- Los Angeles Water and Power (LAWP) turned in information requested by the Water Board on grazing activities. LAWP is preparing for Owens Lake flooding and is concerned about their infrastructure being damaged.
- The snowpack and flooding to come from that will have a significant impact on the region including collapsing sewer lines that have older infrastructure.

Mr. Scott Ferguson, Supervising WRCE, gave an update on significant developments at Leviathan Mine.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:34 p.m. on April 19, 2017.

Fort Irwin Tour: April 20, 2017.

Members Sandel, Dyas and Dr. Horne, as well as many Lahontan staff, attended a tour of the Fort Irwin water treatment plant.

Prepared by: Kathy Otermat
Kathy Otermat, Executive Assistant

Adopted: 5/10/17