



Mariposa County

<http://www.mariposacounty.org/>
PLANNING DEPARTMENT



DRAFT MINUTES OF THE WAWONA TOWN PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 31, 2024

A. 9:04 AM Called to Order and Roll Call

Chair Eugene Spindler established a quorum via roll call. Members present included Tony Christianson, Marty Cerles, Roger Soulanille, Edward Mee and Alton J. Brown.

Members excused: Ken Kehrer, Chuck Jones, Richard Jacobson, Gale Banks, Paul Koubek and Gary Wuchner.

County Staff in attendance: Supervisor Rosemarie Smallcombe, Planning Director, Steve Engfer, Sophea Craighead, Office Technician, Art Baggett, District 1 Planning Commissioner.

The Public and National Park Service Staff introduced themselves.

B. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Persons wishing to speak on any item of interest within the subject matter or jurisdiction of the Wawona Town Planning Advisory Committee that is not on the agenda.

Public Comment received by Pat (resident) regarding the enforcement of code compliance issues within the Wawona Town Planning area. Supervisor Smallcombe advised that a similar topic is on the agenda under discussion and possible action, the committee can address this topic at that time.

C. Introductions

1. Michael W. Vantzelfden, PE, PMP, Facilities Division Chief, Yosemite National Park
2. Greg Farley, PE, Fish Camp resident, formerly with California Department of Water Resources and Fresno and Madera Counties

Chairman Spindler introduced and opened the floor to District 1 Supervisor Smallcombe, who introduced Michael Vantzelfden (present at the meeting) and Greg Farley, (not present at the meeting) to the committee.

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Planning Department .

D. Presentations

1. Receive a Brief Overview of State Water Resources Control Board policies by District 1 Planning Commissioner Art Baggett

Smallcombe provided a brief recap regarding the water board presentation by Sean McGuire at the April 5, 2024 meeting and noted that Planning Commissioner Art Baggett will touch on some of the topics brought up by McGuire, but at a higher level. She then turned the floor over to Commissioner Baggett to present the Overview of State Water Resources Control Board policies. He shared that the State Board's policy is to have a resilience system consisting of groundwater, recycled water and surface water, a combined system that will be more sustainable with multiple water sources for domestic use.

Per Baggett, the current option is to come up with the conjunctive use policy, which is a preferred state used policy that uses ground water diversion during the dry years and uses surface water diversion during the wet years to maximize storage. He noted doing so will eliminate dams and water tanks as the groundwater basin is there to store water.

After Commissioner Baggett's presentation, Supervisor Smallcombe provided the committee with an update regarding the Wawona community's idea of creating their own water district.

Then clarifying questions for Commissioner Baggett were asked regarding water rights from the committee members, NPS and the public in attendance that turned into a discussion.

2. Receive a Presentation by Dr. James Borchers on his study. Ground-Water Resources and Water-Supply Alternatives in the Wawona Area of Yosemite National Park

Smallcombe introduced James (Jim) Borchers, who conducted the hydrogeology study in the Wawona area. He presented an overview of the alternative water supply with a PowerPoint presentation. He spoke about how he came to Yosemite National Park, which began his studies. He then noted the following tools that were used to determine the groundwater resources and water supply alternatives in the Wawona area:

- Fracture trace mapping
- Surface geophysics
- Well inventory (85)
- Water pressure measurement
- Pumping test to determine well yield
- Shallow or deep groundwater

Clarifying questions were asked regarding the water at the Wawona meadow, the ditch at the golf course and the deep well.

3. Receive a Presentation by James Stahl on Wawona Wastewater and Water Infrastructure

James (Jim) Stahl presented the Wawona Water & Wastewater infrastructure analysis and recommendations with a PowerPoint presentation. He noted that there are still 55 to 60 septic tanks still in operation, even though there is a wastewater treatment plant in Wawona. This needs to be explored to protect groundwater; especially, if groundwater will be used as a supplement to our river supply. He further noted that in the NPS proposed MOU condition regarding the wastewater treatment system, the residents do not have an issue connecting to the wastewater treatment system and the NPS hookup system, but residents do have an issue connecting to the NPS water service. He commented that to protect the overall water quality

and the quality of the river and aquatic habitat, more residents should be connected to the wastewater treatment system.

Joe Meyers (National Park Service) agreed with Stahl regarding the residents being connected to the wastewater system. He then commented that the NPS has been accepting and granting requests to connect to the wastewater treatment system. He also stated that the infrastructure is what it is and if they hit a capacity at some point, action will be taken.

4. Discussion of next steps to address Wawona community needs for water service lead by Rosemarie Smallcombe District 1 Supervisor

Clarifying questions were asked and a discussion occurred regarding water storage and the Wawona NPS MOU – language regarding water and sewer. A collective assessment called the planning study will be conducted to gather information on how many residents are on septic, how many have a well, and who are currently connected and who want to be connected, to the NPS sewer system.

Then the committee discussed water quality and increased water usage. Joe Meyers addressed and confirmed that they are not accepting applications for access to water service at this time.

The following items are to be researched and addressed:

- Water usage data
- Development of undeveloped parcel
- NPS Water system
- Riparian rights
- Water rights to Biledo Springs
- How much water do we need?
- How much water do we need including the undeveloped plots?
- Find funding

Baggett provided the website to obtain water rights information: www.waterboards.ca.gov

E. Approval of Minutes

1. Approve Minutes for October 6, 2023 WT PAC Meeting

On motion by Roger Soulanille, seconded by Ed Mee, the draft minutes of October 6, 2023 was approved unanimously.

Result: Approved

F. Discussion and Possible Action

1. Review and Recommend Approval of the Wawona Town Planning Advisory Committee's Annual Report to Mariposa's Board of Supervisors

After discussion the following are suggested amendments to the WTPAC Annual Report:

- Page 4, remove #1 that states "Additional Goals and Objectives Requested by

Wawona Area Private Property Owner Advocates (WAPPOA):” and replace with “To continue to represent the interest of the private property owners, WTPAC reached out to Wawona Area Private Property Owner Advocates (WAPPOA) and were given the following list of objectives.”

- Page 4, remove the last bullet that states, “Assure WTPAC participation in all planning and related discussions/negotiations between Mariposa County and the NPS impacting private property in Wawona” because it’s a duplicate.
- To include in the MOU inclusive in all related sub agreement.
- Page 3, add a second bullet to state;, “To insure that the Wawona community is represented in the approval of the MOU between the National Park Service and the County of Mariposa.”

On motion by Alton Brown, seconded by Marty Cerles, the Wawona Town Planning Advisory Committee’s approved the draft Annual Report unanimously.

Result: Approved

2. Elect New Officers – Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary

The Chair noted that the election for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary is completed in the fall and this item will be brought back at the next meeting.

G. Information Updates

1. Supervisor District 1:

Supervisor Smallcombe asked the committee if they prefer to have the meeting location held at the Redwoods or the Community Center. The committee agreed for the future meetings to be held at the Community Center.

Chair Spindler announced that Commissioner Baggett and the Wawona District Ranger left the meeting.

2. Planning Commissioner District 1

3. Wawona District Ranger

H. Future Agenda Items

1. The MOU Between Yosemite National Park and Mariposa County
2. Update on Contract with Recology
3. Pine Needle Pick Up
4. Elect New Officers

I. Adjournment

After an unanimously approved motion, the committee adjourned at 2:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sophea Craighead
Office Technician

Gene Spindler
Chair, WTPAC

DRAFT