



## MARIPOSA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Roads – Parks & Recreation – Facilities – Airport  
Engineering – Surveying – Transportation – Utility Operations  
Fleet Maintenance – Solid Waste - Cemeteries

*TEAM, SERVICE, STEWARDSHIP*

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### SPECIAL MTG. WATER AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD ACTION SUMMARY MINUTES August 21, 2025

**A. 3:02 PM Called to Order** (*recording time marker 2:40*)

| Attendee Name   | Title                     | Present |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---------|
| Art Baggett     | District I                | Y       |
| Mike Guenther   | District II               | Y       |
| Sonny Palmer    | District III              | Y       |
| Keasha Blew     | District IV               | Y       |
| John McCamman   | District V                | Y       |
| Dave Conway     | At-Large                  | Y       |
| Michael Martin  | At-Large                  | Y       |
| Susan Wages     | MPUD                      | Y       |
| Walter Wall     | County Counsel            | N       |
| Kevin Briggs    | Assistant County Counsel  | N       |
| Matiel Holloway | County Engineer - Interim | Y       |
| Sam Cerveny     | PW Deputy Director        | Y       |
| Bill Leonard    | Southern Sierra Miwok     | N       |
| Tennille Holt   | PW Exec. Assistant        | Y       |
| Danette Toso    | BOS District 3            | Y       |
| Shannon Poe     | BOS District 2            | N       |
|                 |                           |         |

**B. Pledge** (*recording time marker 2:58*)

**C. Introductions** (*recording time marker 3:23*)

**D. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items** (*recording time marker 4:46*)

None

**E. Discussion Items**

1. Mark Thomas – Presentation By Blackwater (*recording time marker 5:05*)

- Drought Resiliency Plan Preparation
  - Nick Z.
  - SB552 (2021 State Law)
  - Schools, Counties, and Small Water Districts (State Small Water Systems)
  - It will be interesting to see what funding the state provides for some of the requirements

- 125,000 Grant requires 2 tasks *(recording time marker 12:30)*
  - Grant Administration (Reporting, Communication & Compliance)
  - Drought Resiliency Plan Development
    - Core Activities of the Plan include
      - Task Force
      - Stakeholder Outreach
      - Risk Assessment of Drought Vulnerabilities
      - Map & Identify Barriers
      - Develop Short-Term Response and Long-Term Mitigation Measures
      - Stakeholder Feedback to refine strategies
    - Expected Components of the plan are
      - Consolidation Opportunities
      - Drinking Well Mitigation Programs
      - Emergency Drinking Water solutions
      - Analyst of funding sources
    - Deliverables
      - Task Force Charter
      - Outreach Records
      - Risk Assessment Summary w/ Maps & Figures
        - DWR Data
      - Short- & Long-Term Drought Strategies
      - Draft & Final Drought Resilience Plan
- Blackwater Opinion – In concept, it is a simple document, but given the County is mainly on individual private wells, it could be complicated, given everything that needs to be evaluated and assembled.
- John McCamman – Wondering what the status of this contract is? *(recording time marker 18:08)*
- Sam – Contract has been executed and is in effect. Agreement is with Mark Thomas, Subbed to Blackwater
- Nick Z. – to address the two tasks that are specific to the grant requirements. In the regulatory framework, they have been unable to find any reference to well testing, well testing kits, or water quality. Even reached out to the gentleman who teaches the class on preparing these plans, and he couldn't find anything.
  - One requirement is that well-testing kits be provided to incentivize residents to be part of the task force
  - Would consider offering a limited # of test kits
  - Nothing states what the test kit must include
  - Would recommend keeping the sampling very simple (basic) and being very careful about what we sample for because it becomes public information. It could affect what residents are required to

disclose, for example, if they ever sell their property. *(recording time marker 21:13)*

- Also, to avoid major expense, laboratory tests can be time-consuming and expensive
- Mike G – Board to ask some questions *(recording time marker 21:50)*
  - Keasha – Did questions from the last meeting get relayed to the consultant?
  - Art – 2<sup>nd</sup>, that statement we specifically asked about Hornitos, Wawona, YW, and how they were going to be a part of this plan. Did that get to the consultant?
  - Nick Z. – No, he did not get those from Mark Thomas' people. But, yes, these things will be answered in the process of the plan
  - Mike G – what we have seems redundant and I was hoping for more concrete answers to specific questions/areas to address
  - John Mc – we have been a task force for 18 months trying to get something going, and it feels like nothing has happened yet
  - Art – Guessing ½ the county is in 10 planning areas (plus Yosemite & El Portal, which are federal). So, it isn't as massive of a project as just outlined. The rest are wells, and in this county, people are not going to test and give you the data voluntarily. The BOS would have a challenge if that were recommended. So, I don't think we should waste any time on that.
  - Nick Z. – will not be recommending that since it is not a requirement. It might be worth questioning DWR and asking them to remove it since it's not part of the regulation.
  - Art – another way to the same time is that there is already a plan to help people with water through Self-Help Enterprises. The 10 communities are issues for drought resiliency, and there are multiple systems that are not interconnected, but it should be fairly simple to get the information. The committee has most of the information.
  - Nick Z – This is good to know, and I would like to rely on the institutional knowledge & documentation that exists in hopes of shortening the process.
  - Art – hoping to come up with a strategy for each community
  - Nick Z – It may or may not be feasible to interconnect due to the nature of the environment
  - Mike G – It can't just be a blanket plan; every area will have its own needs. Are you looking at that?
  - Nick Z – that's what makes this plan so complex
  - Keasha – Doesn't Mariposa County already have an Emergency plan that we can add to?
  - Mike G – there is a plan from 2014 *(recording time marker 30:00)*  
Have you even looked at what plans are already in place?

- Nick Z – No, not yet.
- Keasha – are you preparing a data request for the county?  
How are we ensuring we are using the most up-to-date data?
- Nick Z. – Yes, once agreement is in place, the plan is to schedule a kick-off meeting to find out where to find the information that is already out there.
- Mike G – Would like to see a chain of command so that the information gets relayed to everyone
- Keasha – still concerned about public outreach
- Nick Z – WAAB job is to communicate with the public the vulnerabilities. First step is to have the kick-off mtg.
- Mike G – Concerned about the timeline. Would like to see a schedule to see when things should happen by what dates.
- Nick Z – Yes that is possible, depending on what the expectations are
- Sam – That can be done at the kickoff mtg. and will report updates to the task force
  - There has been data collected and will be turned over to Mark Thomas/Blackwater
  - Things have been complete within the county including FEMA tanks @ Red Cloud Park, Woodland Park and Hornitos. Intended for Fire/disaster Response and working on a Potable water system.
  - Also, working on testing a second well in Coulterville
- Mike G – concerned we are wasting our time covering ground that we have already covered
- John Mc – I have been on the WAAB for 8 years. The County capacity issue has been the #1 issue that the county has still not addressed, which I continue to bring up in every conversation I have with the BOS, Public Works, and anybody who will listen. Frankly, I'm tired of having that conversation, so I resign! I've had enough.
  - John left the mtg.
- Keasha – I have suggested that we contract out the Engineering
- Mike G – Before we move on, Nick, do you have anything else?
- Nick Z. – Can schedule kick-off mtg once finalized agreement with Mark Thomas is complete we can get that scheduled
- Mike G. - We have a mtg in Sept.
- Sam we will get the Kickoff mtg scheduled and will forward the agenda to Mike G
- Art – Incredible resources still around the table, available to Mark Thomas/Blackwater

*(recording time marker 43:34)*

2. Mike G – Concerned about making sure we don't jeopardize the grant funding

- Sam – April is the deadline. Everything will be done by April.
- Mike G – Keasha can you type up questions.

- Art – We have an outline that took hours, and we did it 2 years ago. I feel like we are going in circles. The consultant is making more money, and we still won't have a plan. Self-help is already taking care of rural wells, Wawona is NPS, and MPUD takes care of their own; YW needs some redundancy, Hornitos, and Coulterville. This should not take months and months and thousands of dollars.
- Keasha – Reviewed the document that was basically a summary of all the water rights. If we get something like that again, that's basically a paperweight. Public outreach and institutional outreach is so important.
- Mike G – Can we just incorporate what we already have and so that we don't end up with something that we already have
- Keasha – we have a board that cares and is willing to help
- Sonny – I feel like we are starting over again.
- Sam – The real clarification needed from the consultant to provide is what exactly we expect to glean from Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) and their outreach; it's a significant expense and not a requirement to develop the plan. We want their input, and I believe that is where those test kits came in. Parameters were not clear. We reached out to SFC to see what they could do, but we didn't receive a callback. I am not clear what they could provide to the board or the plan.
- Mike G – had hoped with their past drought experience that we would get more bang for our buck using them, and they are local. Should be using/integrating our local resources. In my personal opinion, we could use our resources and not spend so much on consultants
- Keasha – Was all the \$125,000 going to the consultant, or was any reserved?
- Sam - \$15,000 was reserved for our staff; everything done up to now has not been charged to the project.
- Sam – will give agenda beforehand and be sure to include special concerns in the kickoff mtg. should have an update and hopefully a draft by the next mtg. Should have draft by January so the board has enough time to review it before we have a final plan. May have to have a couple of special meetings toward the end, to get it approved
- Mike G – anything we would like added to the agenda or questions
- Sam – yes, send them to Tennille and we will incorporate them
- Keasha – Who will be at the kickoff mtg? Will SFC be there or just PW and the Consultant?
- Sam – We don't have a contract with SFC, so I doubt they would want to attend
- Keasha – suggests that we have an outline of what the consultants' data needs are so that we can have that ready, so that we don't have a fruitless kickoff meeting
- Sam – Yes, I can reach out, but I think they have already provided us with that, the Santa Cruz Plan. The Santa Cruz plan is what DWR suggests everyone use
- Tennille – will email the Santa Cruz Plan to Keasha
- Mike M – Delay in getting back the MID Report from County Council

- Sam - Can't discuss since it's a legal matter
- Mike M – Did accept the report and wants to add to next agenda and add MID report if it can be added to the mtg.

**H. Next Meeting**

Regular Meeting - September 18, at 3:00 PM

**I. Adjournment 4:04 PM** (*recording time marker 1:04:38*)

Respectfully submitted,



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