

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, BORREGO SPRINGS COMMUNITY SPONSOR GROUP,
WATER AND LAND USE/PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE (Watco)**

*****MEETING AGENDA*****

In person meeting at the Borrego Springs Library, Conference Room

Although a zoom meeting link is also offered

Topic: Watco Meeting

John Peterson is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89081632711?pwd=cfaESoARpoo8aKmRGaxxJmglaHjrmL.1>

Meeting ID: 890 8163 2711

Passcode: 269079

Time and date: November 15, 2023 03:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME TO OUR MEETINGS

The purpose of the Subcommittee is to monitor water issues that may affect land use and planning issues that concern the Sponsor Group and to keep the Borrego Springs Community Sponsor Group (BSCSG) informed about these issues to assist in our mission of being an information linkage between the community and the County on land use and planning issues.

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

B. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MEETING MINUTES FOR September 20, 2023 (Attachment B).

C. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION (may be limited to 3 min): Opportunity for members of the public to speak to the Committee on any subject matter within the Committee's purpose and scope of activities that is not on the posted agenda.

D. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Discussion regarding groundwater quality within the Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin. Should a letter be sent to the Borrego Sponsor Group regarding the monitoring for groundwater quality within the basin? (Note the "hot" link within the email is a link to a new report issued by Trey Driscoll of Intera).

E. NON-ACTION ITEMS:

- 1. Update regarding groundwater monitoring in the basin. Figure to be provided during the meeting.**
- 2. Update from Jim Dax, update from the Water Master Board meeting from November 9, 2023.**
- 3. Update from Diane Johnson on the Watermaster Board Open House November 9, 2023.**

F. GROUP BUSINESS:

- 1. Announcements & Correspondence Received**

G. ADJOURNMENT

If this Agenda is revised, a revised copy will be posted 72 or more hours prior to the meeting. The final Agenda may include additional Administrative or Non-Action items. For further information and to be added to the CPR Subcommittee's email list to receive agendas and agenda packets, contact the Chair John Peterson at petersonenv@hotmail.com. Address U.S. mail to: Community Sponsor Group, P.O. Box 1371, Borrego Springs, CA 92004-1371, or visit: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/gpupdate/comm/borrego.html.Public_Disclosure We strive to protect personally identifiable information by collecting only information necessary to deliver our services. All information that may be collected becomes a public record that may be subject to inspection and copying by the public, unless an exemption in law exists. In the event of a conflict between this Privacy Notice and any County ordinance or other law governing the County's disclosure of records, the County ordinance or other applicable law will control. [Access and Correction of Personal Information](#) You can review any personal information collected about you. You may recommend changes to your personal information you believe is in error by submitting a written request that credibly shows the error. If you believe that your personal information is being used for a purpose other than what was intended when submitted, you may contact us. In all cases, we will take reasonable steps to verify your identity before granting access or making corrections.

Attachment A: The following was received by Watco Member Diane Johnson on November 6, 2023:

Hello Watco. I propose an item for the Agenda, not sure if it's action or discussion.

I have heard some comments, re the TAC, that it looks like the Recreation and Ag members are most focussed on slowing down water usage and the decline of water in storage — and both are already addressed by the Rampdown agreed to in the Judgment. They therefore might have little interest in water quality (WQ) issues here, especially since these consultants are also very involved in serious SGMA issues (like severe subsidence) in other bigger basins (like Kern).

From attending many WMB meetings, I have an impression that some members regard ensuring decent WQ as only a BWD issue. That's not true — SGMA makes it a GSA/WMB issue, by naming it as an Undesirable Result which must be addressed in order to attain a Sustainable Yield for the basin, as SGMA requires by 2040. And then of course there's the equity concern (which has become an underlying principle of California water law and regulations): the excess nitrates that are showing up at some wells come from ag chemicals — and those wells are in the ag area in the north of the Valley. Which is also, of course, the biggest, most productive area in our basin. Digging a new, deeper production well — which is a possible Management Action proposed in the Draft GMP (see attached file with the WQ sections of that document) — last year cost BMA about \$1.5 million, and that was before the recent inflation in materials costs. That's a lot of money for our small utility with not many ratepayers, in our largely economically disadvantaged community.

I think this means that the more community-oriented TAC and WMB members (representing BWD, the community, and yes the County) need to work extra hard to make sure that protecting WQ is not forgotten by the WMB as we implement the Judgment and SGMA.

>>> I wish to propose that Watco needs to support them. Decline of WQ is an Undesirable Result in SGMA — and, even more importantly, Borrego needs to be able to count on an adequate potable water supply for the future.

FYI, BWD's Tech Consultant, Trey Driscoll, just last month drafted a very exhaustive and useful study of WQ here, down to the level of individual wells in some cases. I'm including a link to it. If this doesn't work please let me know and I can get you the draft memo some other way. It's 15 meg, because of the many graphics. The full PDF version with all figures is located as follows:

[Draft TM Groundwater Quality Risk 2023.10.17.pdf](#)

THE UNDERLYING STRATEGY THAT MUST BE KEPT IN MIND IS TO MAKE SURE THAT THERE IS ENOUGH MONEY ALLOCATED IN BOTH THE WMB AND TAC BUDGETS TO KEEP DOING THIS WORK. AND TO ENSURE THAT THE TOPIC GETS ON WMB AGENDAS REGULARLY.

To my thinking, there are at least 4 parts to ensuring good water quality here.

1. monitor WQ. Make sure there's enough money in the budget for West Yost to both do the monitoring and analyze the results on a timely basis.
2. set cautious Minimum Thresholds for contaminants — ones that don't let them get to the regulatory Maximum Containment Level (MCL) — before analyzing and planning what needs to be done to preserve good WQ. Again, make sure there's enough money in the West Yost budgets for both the WMB and the TAC.
3. determine a Project and Management Action. Again, make sure there's enough money in the West Yost budgets for both the WMB and the TAC.
4. begin implementing the PMA. If it has been decided that a new municipal (BWD) well is needed, this will almost certainly involve seeking to obtain grants to assist in paying for it. And, budgets ...

Thanks for taking the time to read this. I know it's long — but the issues we face are both complex and very important!

— Diane

Attachment B: Draft Meeting Minutes for Watco Meeting of September 20, 2023

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Passcode: 741004

Time and date: September 20, 2023 03:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

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the Borrego Springs Community Sponsor Group (BSCSG) informed about these issues to assist in our mission of being an information linkage between the community and the County on land use and planning issues.

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL; Present at meeting: Diane Johnson, John Peterson, and Bill Berkley.
Jim Dax via Zoom: Public attendee: Pam Wiedenkiller.

B. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MEETING MINUTES FOR March 15, 2023 (Attachment B). Approved unanimously.

C. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION (may be limited to 3 min): Opportunity for members of the public to speak to the Committee on any subject matter within the Committee's purpose and scope of activities that is not on the posted agenda. No Comments.

D. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Nomination of Gary Halderman to join the Watco Subcommittee. (Note that the Borrego Springs Sponsor Group has agreed to this addition to the committee dependent of the approval of the Watco) Approved unanimously. **Committee members (see meeting minutes from June 1, 2023 item # D.3.)**

2. Should a letter be sent to the Watermaster Board and West Yost regarding the progress being made for expanding the groundwater monitoring network? (See attachment A below.) Regarding the 12 wells South of Henderson and North of Palm Canyon (Wells 1, 4, 6, 8). No letter will be sent to Water Master Board at this time.

E. NON-ACTION ITEMS:

1. Update from Jim Dax, update from the Water Master Board meeting from September 14, 2023. Including the request for a community representative appointed to the Technical Advisor Committee (TAC). Jim Dax reported good cooperation from WMB. A new judge will be appointed in December. Bauer property purchased by the Borrego Water District. The new fallowing process requires cut trees be piled up perpendicular to the prevailing wind direction. This creates a wind barrier which reduces erosion.

2. Update regarding TAC membership appointment of John Peterson effective August 2023.

F. GROUP BUSINESS:

1. Announcements & Correspondence Received. Diane Johnson (Stewardship Council) reported Proposition 68, a \$450,000 grant.

G. ADJOURNMENT

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