

## **Santa Rosa Junior College**

### **Water Resources Advisory Committee**

#### **Meeting Minutes**

11:30am-1:00pm

October 24, 2024

SRJC Petaluma, Welcome & Connect Center (PC 103)

**Purpose Statement:** The Water Resources Technical Advisory Committee is a representative group of industry partners whose experience and abilities represent a cross section of water industry professionals. The primary purpose of this advisory committee is to convene a panel of key people from water, education, and workforce development to discuss a collaborative approach to training the next generation of water industry professionals.

#### **Key Objectives:**

- to provide an opportunity for discussion among people in education, business, and industry
- to focus on how to improve Career and Education (CE)
- to strive to improve the relationships among CE, business, and industry
- to provide expertise to the program by reviewing curriculum, facilities, budget, student competencies, and student placement in related occupations

#### **Attendees**

Committee members present: Matt Pierce, Veronica Siwy, Elizabeth Toups, Garrett Walker.

James Austin, City of Santa Rosa served as a proxy for Heather Johnson and Nicholas Talbot served as a proxy for Chris Finton, Central Marin Sanitation Agency for this meeting.

Others in attendance: James Kenney, Catherine Curtis, Chris Murray, Robert Rawson, Mackenzie Galindo, Victor Tam, Rachel Smith, Vanessa Luna.

#### **Meeting Summary**

Introductions by attendees from various organizations in the wastewater industry, and discussed updates, the resumption of CWA meetings, and the upcoming dinner presentation and tour of the Lystek facility. They also highlighted the importance of digital tools in utilities, introduced a self-assessment tool for agencies' readiness for digital tools, and discussed the significant increase in enrollment in the SRJC Wastewater Treatment operations and SCADA instrumentation courses. Lastly, updates from the Town of Windsor, including the progress of various projects at the facility were shared and ongoing projects and the hiring of new staff members were mentioned.

Time	Topic	Person
11:30am	Call to Order	Veronica
11:35pm	Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motion to approve the minutes was made and unanimously approved.</li> </ul>	Quorum
11:40am	<b>Announcements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CWA Updates: Upcoming Events               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veronica reminded group that Claire Ernst is the Students and Young Professionals Chair for CWEA</li> <li>Dinner Meeting &amp; Leadership Training                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date: November 7</li> <li>Time: 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM</li> <li>Location: Mare Island Brewing, Vallejo</li> <li>Other Details: Training for high-performance leaders; open to students.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facility Tour                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date: November 5</li> <li>Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM</li> <li>Location: Lystek Facility, Fairfield</li> <li>Other Details: Tour of the facility; first-time offer for a cool tour.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	All
11:55am	<b>Public Comments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List any public comments</li> </ul>	All
12:00pm	<b>New Business/Discussion/Updates:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department/Program Update</li> </ul> <p>Wastewater Treatment Course Enrollment Increase and Hiring</p> <p>Chris Murray discussed the significant increase in enrollment in their Wastewater Treatment operations and instrumentation courses, attributing dips in enrollment to the pandemic (Attendance increased to over 20 people this semester in Math and Wastewater Treatment Operations; Water Treatment Course: Slightly below 20 people, but still an increase).</p> <p>Chris also discussed the potential acquisition of an IDEXX system, which would help students understand the latest testing procedures in wastewater treatment. It was also mentioned the possibility of dropping</p>	All  Chris Murray

	<p>the multi-tube test due to its obsolescence since it is being replaced by IDEXX methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty Recruitments: Efforts to hire new faculty members; positions listed on HR and BayWork websites. Approximately five applications received so far.</li> <li>• Construction Trades Center Wastewater Lab update</li> </ul> <p>(Provided through the tour at the new Construction Training Center)</p>	
12:15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industry Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New Treatment Plan Manager Introduced</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The new Treatment Plant Manager for the Central Sanitation Agency introduced himself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Baywork</li> </ul> <p>Digital Network Initiative and Internships:</p> <p>Catherine Curtis introduced the digital network initiative, a tool to assess agencies' readiness to adopt digital tools and mentioned the availability of internships for lab workers. The conversation ended with a discussion on the timeline for the internships and the digital network initiative.</p> <p>Digital Tools and Worker Training:</p> <p>Catherine Curits discussed the importance of digital tools in utilities and the need for workers to be trained on these tools. She highlighted the challenges of managing change and the need for agencies to be ready for new tools. Catherine also introduced a self-assessment tool that helps agencies rate their readiness for digital tools and provides guidance on how to improve. Elizabeth mentioned the success of a stackable internship program that allows students to rotate between agencies, providing diverse experiences. The group discussed the challenges of workers' compensation for interns and the potential for a third-party employer of record. They concluded by mentioning the increase in enrollments and the need for department updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Town of Windsor (Veronica): Just put in a Trojan UV System. Finding dead spots so trying to figure out how to eliminate. Installed Dupon screen; working almost too well. New clarifier installed. Windsor and Sonoma Water's Systems are fully connected now. She encouraged students to sign up for individual tours at Windsor.</li> <li>○ Santa Rosa (James Austin): Completed 1 ¾ project, installed a new digester flare. Bay Area Air Quality giving a path forward. Initiating commissioning meeting. The city is in a hiring freeze, but they have a position open.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sonoma Water (Garrett): Been there for about 10 years, getting ready to retire. Had a successful Russian River Watershed Association Operators' Forum; the feedback was good. Have an intern right now (Kyle Weathers).</li> <li>○ Petaluma (Matt Pierce): In spring, tertiary filters will go in. Construction starting this month for floating solar. The City is splitting utilities' resources; excited to see where that leads.</li> <li>○ CMSA (Nick Talbot): Accepted a contract from the City of Sunnyvale to receive food waste. Able to back-start so don't need diesel for emergency power. Generator: biogas is now used instead of diesel. They're fully staffed; three (3) operators from SRJC.</li> </ul>	
12:20pm	<b>Action Items:</b>  None.	All
12:25pm	Next Steps/Comments/Wrap Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spring Advisory meeting: Tentative and TBD</li> <li>• Vanessa to forward faculty hiring listing to Veronica so that it can be distributed to interested parties/potential applicants.</li> <li>• Vanessa to provide more information about Work Experience program at next meeting.</li> <li>• Chris to continue efforts to acquire Idexx Colli-Tray system for lab testing.</li> <li>• All agencies to consider donating expired media or other materials needed for SRJC classes.</li> <li>• All agencies to encourage students to sign up for individual plant tours.</li> </ul>	All
12:30pm	<b>Tour of the Water/Wastewater Lab and Construction Training Center</b>	All
1:00pm	Adjournment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting concluded at 1:00pm.</li> </ul>	All