

CALIFORNIA WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL MODELING FORUM

MINUTES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

For June 2, 2023

(This meeting was conducted via Zoom meeting with call in number)

Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Director P. Hutton will draft a letter for the Convener J. Jankowski to sign and send to thank Ms. Fischer for replenishing the Hugo B. Fischer Award endowment.• Treasurer S. Tanaka will form a budget committee to review annual revenues and expenses and develop an annual plan.• Executive Director P. Hutton will inquire whether April 22nd-24th or April 15th-17th are available for 2024 annual meeting at Lake Natoma Inn and make a reservation.• Executive Director P. Hutton to send an announcement to CWEMF Steering Committee members to seek volunteers to participate in a strategic planning update and action planning effort.• Ad-hoc CWEMF History Subcommittee composed of T. Kadir, R. Satkowski, A. Huber and B. Bray is formed to work to chronicle CWEMF’s history (1994 to present) and will meet to choose a chair and provide updates at future meetings.
Motions Passed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motion to accept the March 17, 2023 SC Meeting Minutes by S. Tanaka, seconded by Y. Sun, was unanimously approved (18-0-0).

REFERENCES INCLUDED IN THE MEETING PACKET:

1. Attachment 2-1: Executive Director’s Report for the June 2, 2023 Steering Committee Meeting. 2p.
2. Attachment 2-2: Minutes of the Steering Committee for March 17, 2022. 11p.
3. Attachment 3-1: Treasurer’s Report, FY 2022, SC Meeting: June 2, 2023. 2p.
4. Attachment 3-2: Annual Meeting 2023 LNI Costs. 2p.
5. Attachment 3-3: Annual Meeting 2023 Survey Results. 5p.
6. Attachment 4-1: Executive Director’s Recommendations for 2023-24. 1p.
7. Attachment: Executive Director 2022-23 Executed Contract [copy].
8. Attachment 7-1: 2023 CWEMF Annual Meeting Registration Fees. 1p.
9. Attachment 9-1: CWEMF Steering Committee Meeting June 2, 2023 Subcommittee on Workshops. 2p.

1. INTRODUCTIONS/DESIGNATION OF QUORUM

At 9:34 Past Convener T. Kadir declared a quorum with 17 participants, the executive director, and noting that K. Nam has N. Sandhu’s proxy. T. Kadir welcomed the SC, reminding folks that Convener J. Jankowski was unable to attend this first SC meeting after the annual meeting and he agreed to chair the meeting. The meeting is being held online via Zoom because of unforeseen circumstances, rather than as a hybrid meeting as originally planned. T. Kadir then proceeded with a roll call and declared a quorum.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Executive Director's Report

ED (P. Hutton) refers to the executive director's report (Attachment 2-1) and highlights two new organizational members: SS Papadopoulos & Associates and INTERA, Inc.. They are on the website homepage that lists the organizational members with their logos. ED P. Hutton reminds the SC that individual membership renewal is on a calendar year cycle; however, organization membership renewal dates are set on a case-by-case basis for various reasons often related to the organization's fiscal year, budget processes, or financial constraints. One SC member asked whether all organizational members are paid up. ED P. Hutton responded that they were, although he was still working with the SWRCB to receive their dues payment.

Ms. Francis Fischer noted to CWEMF Officers that, though we always make an acknowledgement at the beginning of the Hugo B. Fischer award regarding the endowment for the award, it had been several years since funding had been received from Ms. Fischer. After the annual meeting, she sent \$4,000 to replenish the endowment fund for the award. ED P. Hutton has coordinated the payment of funds and accounting with Treasurer S. Tanaka. T. Kadir asks whether CWEMF should send an official thank you letter, Vice Convener V. Bedekar agrees with the proposal. ED P. Hutton will draft a letter to thank Ms. Fischer for replenishing the Fischer Award endowment for the Convener to sign and send. (ACTION ITEM) ED P. Hutton adds that annual expenses for the award are well under \$400, so the infusion of funds should keep this award funded for another 10 years or more.

b. Secretary's Report

Secretary B. Bray opens with his consent item, referring to the March 17, 2023 meeting minutes in the SC Packet (Attachment 2-2). A motion to accept the March 17, 2023 SC Meeting Minutes made by S. Tanaka, seconded by Y. Sun, was unanimously approved (18-0-0).

c. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer S. Tanaka refers to Attachment 2-3, highlighting the revenue received from the annual meeting as well as associated costs. This will be the last report for the fiscal year ending on June 30th. A clarifying question was asked regarding the first line item, entitled Investment Income, whether this is in reference to income received from current CDs. Treasurer S. Tanaka responded affirmatively. The two line items on the right of the report are the current balances of the two CDs with Live Oak Bank. The plan is to allow these to continue to accrue interest; however, we are coming up against the FDIC insurance limit which is the reason to look to invest a CD with another bank.

Treasurer S. Tanaka also reports on her research for investment options. S. Tanaka has been looking for another online bank that does business CDs as opposed to personal CDs. She still has not identified a specific vendor but will keep looking. Treasurer S. Tanaka is looking to open the next CD such that the timing of maturity would be in the September time frame, to be staggered with the other CDs.

Treasurer S. Tanaka also reports that CWEMF officers are working on getting the signature cards all updated for the current roster. For now, there is no issue with access to funds for the Treasurer and Executive Director.

ACTION ITEMS

3. 2023 ANNUAL MEETING RECAP (ED P. HUTTON)

- Attendance & Financial Overview (ED P. Hutton & S. Tanaka Attachments 3-1, 3-2):

ED P. Hutton reviewed attachment 3-1 and reports that there was record-breaking attendance, with about 270 people. He reports that everything went well with the annual meeting in terms of execution.

T. Kadir added that there could be different measures for the annual meeting outcome. The gross revenue in a given year, or possibly the net revenue per attendee, are two possible ways to track expenses. S. Tanaka comments that she has not performed a calculation of revenue per attendee, but annual meeting expenses have been steadily increasing, hence she hypothesizes that there would be a reduction in revenue per attendee over time. S. Tanaka will review past financial statements and estimate the revenue per attendee.

After discussion, the SC decided that Treasurer S. Tanaka will try to reactivate the budget committee to review annual revenues and expenses, to formulate a budget, and to provide a complete picture of revenue and expenses at the organizational level that would allow certain budget categories to be more easily tracked over time. (ACTION ITEM) T. Slawewski and Y. Sun volunteer to help with a discussion of budget development.

Treasurer S. Tanaka moves on to the second page of Attachment 3-2, a breakdown of the LNI costs, adding that LNI charges a 22% service fee and then a 7.75% tax before arriving at the total costs in Table 1. 2023 Annual Meeting LNI Cost Summary. The biggest single expense was coffee and tea, substantially more—about 4 times more—than past years at more than \$11,600 before taxes and fees were added. While CWEMF had planned for additional coffee and tea in the budget this year, the charges seem excessive¹. We can ask LNI staff to only refresh or refill at certain times, however, this year we asked them to refill *anytime* the coffee or tea was low. To be clear, the SC and CWEMF Executive Director do not believe there was any ill intent in the invoiced amount, but the refresh and refills for coffee and tea will be more closely monitored and tracked next year and ED P. Hutton will request notification each time LNI staff replenish them as a way to verify the final charges.

- Survey Results (S. Tanaka): Attachment 3-3

S. Tanaka reports that CWEMF sent out a survey for the annual meeting via Google Forms. Unfortunately, we didn't receive a huge response rate and all responses came in during the first 24 hours. S. Tanaka refers to Attachment 3-3 in the agenda packet that contains the Annual Meeting 2023 Survey Results. Generally, most folks were happy and things went OK. One individual was unhappy about the food in their survey response.

One SC member comments that there were issues with legibility, and it seems like the content was very hard to see or be legible in the room. Another member adds their observation that some of the presentations were hard to see and it seemed more to do with the projectors than the software or laptops. There was some speculation with the shift to

¹ Via chat Tad Slawewski: I'm estimating 200 gallons of consumption of tea and coffee... or roughly a gallon per person of liquid ~ 5 cups of liquid per person per day.

online presentations recently with sharing screens, one wonders whether this has resulted in a trend away from legibility and quality for in-person meetings.

There was additional discussion reemphasizing the need to work with moderators in advance to make sure presentation guidelines are made clear and available well ahead of the meeting. A mandatory versus a voluntary meeting for moderators or presenters before the annual meeting was discussed, as well as conducting a workshop that is focused on best practices for presenting technical content. One member proposes the idea of producing a 10-minute video that moderators or presenters can watch on-demand that reviews the guidelines ahead of the meeting. No additional action was taken.

- Presentation Files (N. Sandhu)

With N. Sandhu absent from the meeting, T. Kadir reports that all the presentations were collected by Convener J. Jankowski [*also absent from the meeting*]. K. Nam adds that N. Sandhu has distributed a portion of the videos to volunteers for editing. His understanding is that those files are being edited now to complete the processing and prepare for posting.

- Audio-Video Recordings (N. Sandhu)

K. Nam reports for N. Sandhu that they found the audio was not recorded in several sessions. Perhaps the lanyard was not worn or the mic was unplugged. In these cases, they had to rely on backup audio recording. N. Sandhu and K. Nam had also discussed how to improve the quality of the recordings next year. N. Sandhu tried to meet with LNI staff to test equipment and coordinate on the hardware testing in advance but was unable to do so. The thinking is that a better audio recording will be captured by patching into the LNI PA system such as through a mixer, rather than taking the audio directly off the presenter from a separate wireless mic. Hopefully the point person volunteering to capture the recordings can better coordinate with LNI next year.

- Date(s) for 2024 AM (ED P. Hutton)

ED P. Hutton opens the item stating that if CWEMF would like to hold the annual meeting at about the same time next year, he proposes Monday through Wednesday during the week of April 8th, April 15th, or April 22nd and opens the item to additional discussion.

After some discussion², T. Kadir calls to question the date preferences of the SC: 6 votes to prioritize the 22nd; 5 votes that have no preference for either April 22nd or 15th; and 3 votes to prioritize April 15th. ED (P. Hutton) will reach out to ask if April 22nd-24th or April 15th-17th are available for 2024 annual meeting. (ACTION ITEM)

- Sessions Format for 2024 AM (ED P. Hutton)

ED P. Hutton asks whether he should proceed with assuming a three-track annual meeting again next year with the Pavilion, Sierra and the Folsom/Natomas rooms as part of the reservation or instead make the reservation consistent with a two-track assumption. After

² T. Slawewski comments that he also likes the idea of having the annual meeting at about the same time every year and cites Easter as occurring in April 18 2025, April 14th in 2028, and the 19th in 2030. Given these holidays will likely cause conflicts, he recommends the SC prioritize the week of the 22nd as the first choice.

some discussion it was generally agreed to proceed with plans for another three-track meeting and adjust plans accordingly as annual meeting plans progress.

- SC Comments & Recommendations for 2024 (Open Discussion)

R. Satkowski felt the AM went very well, the talks, and the interaction. One thing to consider is the annual business meeting and the number of people that want to attend. Perhaps the restaurant would allow us to use the bar and the front room for a few hours, or perhaps we would consider a different site to accommodate a larger crowd.

N. Johns comments that he felt the meeting was really great; there were a lot of useful interactions among the people there, and he felt a lot of information was conveyed.

One suggestion was to post a large font sign outside each of the rooms to indicate the session in progress and the presentations scheduled to take place during the time slot. ED P. Hutton responds that he had a related discussion with LNI staff about this subject and confirms that there will be informational stands outside of the rooms next year accordingly.

A. Khan adds that every year we continue to make improvements. This year there was more diversity in the topics that were presented. A. Khan adds that CWEMF is progressing and that is wonderful.

4. Executive Director Recommendations for 2023-24 (Hutton Attachment 4-1)

ED. P. Hutton refers to attachment 4-1 and underscores his recommendation; CWEMF needs to revisit the strategic plan that guides future investments in projects that the organization wants to prioritize. CWEMF should have a strategic plan to guide future investments in projects. The organization would not undertake things based on the loudest voice in the room at the time; rather, the decisions and initiatives should follow a well-thought-out strategy. CWEMF has had a budget surplus for many years now. There are strategic investments that the organization could undertake, and we should take a step in that direction. ED P. Hutton has been considering how to spark that process. If there was a subcommittee formed that could take this on, perhaps that could be a way to move forward. He recommends a focused effort that is somewhere “offsite”, perhaps like a weekend retreat, or perhaps at a place like Asilomar where people do not have distractions from their day-to-day work. The participants should revisit the current strategic plan and develop an action plan and a process for updating the document on an annual basis.

A. Khan and B. Geske express their support for the idea; CWEMF should develop a plan of action along with a budget that helps us figure out where our next steps are as an organization. V. Bedekar also supports the idea, commenting that the effort may take several meetings, but in concept agrees and volunteers to participate. B. Geske adds that his organization hired a facilitation team to develop a similar strategic planning document. There was a planning committee that helped develop the content for the workshop, but hiring a team of designated facilitators and notetakers was a necessity for the successful effort he helped with as part of the Delta Science Program.

V. Bedekar adds that having a strong mission statement is also important, and to ensure the strategic plan is aligned with the mission statement. ED (P. Hutton) proposes he reach out to the SC to solicit for volunteers that are interested in this effort, adding that consideration about the mission statement can fold into that effort. (ACTION ITEM)

ED P. Hutton's second recommendation is a concept that has been proposed before: to put effort into chronicling CWEMF's history. A. Huber agrees that there should be a website page dedicated to documenting the history or motivation for forming CWEMF. ED P. Hutton wonders about the formation of an ad-hoc CWEMF history subcommittee. SC members T. Kadir, R. Satkowski, A. Huber, and B. Bray volunteer. ED P. Hutton also affirms that he will be involved. The ad-hoc CWEMF history subcommittee will choose a chair and provide an update at future meetings. (ACTION ITEM)

T. Kadir stops to recognize that next year's annual meeting will mark the 30th anniversary of the organization. He recommends that past officers and executive directors be invited and incorporated into the program to participate, perhaps as a part of the business meeting, and to possibly honor them in some way. A. Khan agrees and challenges the SC for some other, additional way to celebrate the anniversary. T. Kadir responds that perhaps a social for prior officers and executive directors is a better idea, to be conducted prior to the annual meeting as a separate celebration. A. Khan adds that a panel discussion on the subject with model and model development in applications in California with all the past conveners as a session in the annual meeting could be a nice way to get these individuals together and honor them as part of the annual meeting.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONTRACT RENEWAL FOR 2023-24: ATTACHMENT 5-1.

No substantive changes to the contract are anticipated. Given the discussion under the prior agenda item, it was agreed to use an addendum to the contract if more Executive Director time is needed for the strategic plan effort. The contract will be updated and executed with Convener J. Jankowski for the next fiscal year starting July 1, 2023.

6. LUNCH – [*item was not needed with the online meeting format*]

7. ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION FEES (OPEN DISCUSSION): ATTACHMENT 7-1

ED (P. Hutton) opens this item for discussion, noting there is not a particular motivator for increasing fees although registration fees have been the same for several years (fee schedule is provided as Attachment 7-1). N. Johns suggests that the metric of revenue per attendee over the past few years and some additional analysis at the budget committee could be helpful to inform a decision regarding whether to raise or not raise the annual meeting fees. A. Huber adds that the SC should also consider what other conferences are charging. For example, IEP had a free option to attend online this year. Further, since CWEMF is not struggling from financial hardship, a fee increase may be difficult to justify.

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOLLOW-UP (TREASURER S. TANAKA) (*No Report*)

[*This informational item was covered under the treasurer report agenda item 2c.*]

9. ZOOM ACCOUNT UPDATE

S. Tanaka reports that CWEMF is still using Zoom and needs to maintain our account; however, because our organization has returned to in-person as well as hybrid meetings, the large meeting option (for accommodating up to 500 individuals simultaneously) and upgraded cloud storage, which were added to conduct the annual meeting online during the COVID pandemic, are no longer needed. After consulting with other CWEMF officers, both options for the CWEMF Zoom account were cancelled.

10. LOGO SUBCOMMITTEE (A. KHAN)

T. Kadir stated that the Logo Subcommittee had completed its charge. The Logo Subcommittee is being reformed or reconstituted as the Branding Subcommittee with A. Khan as chair. A. Khan continues reminding the SC that branding is the public perception of CWEMF as an organization. Second, the organizational brand is designed specifically for our target audience. Third, perception that results from branding is formed whether it is intended or not. Hence, A. Khan argues that branding should be an intentional activity. The members of the Logo Subcommittee (T. Kadir, B. Geske, A. Huber, and P. Hutton) all agree to stay with the Branding Committee as volunteers. A. Khan opens participation with the Branding Subcommittee to other members of the CWEMF SC. A. Khan plans to begin with 30-minute bi-weekly meetings and plans to work with the subcommittee members to include Paul Vega to participate and consult on the effort. Based on Mr. Vega's role in the subcommittee, A. Khan and the subcommittee will pursue approval for any additional funding by the SC to cover his participation as needed. The SC agreed that additional funding approved in the March SC meeting³ will roll over to the new Branding Subcommittee to fund implementation of the Logo and to fund further work on the CWEMF brand. Finally, A. Khan notes that the Branding Subcommittee will need to work closely with the strategic planning subcommittee.

11. WEBSITE UPDATE

K. Nam reports that the website subcommittee met at the beginning of May. The subcommittee discussed the status of social media accounts on Twitter and LinkedIn. S. Tanaka added some information to the CWEMF LinkedIn page. The subcommittee discussed plans to start adding or sharing general information sent out by ED P. Hutton. The subcommittee also started to discuss with ED P. Hutton and B. Geske plans to coordinate with the Branding Subcommittee—and potentially Paul Vega—to update the aesthetics with the website by integrating the new logo and color schemes.

12. MODEL USER'S GROUP MEETING

K. Nam reports that the Delta Modeling User Group meeting for summer is canceled. DWR staff Min Yu is planning to schedule the next meeting for the fall in September or October.

13. DSC INTEGRATED MODELING STEERING COMMITTEE (IMSC) UPDATE (B. GESKE)

B. Geske provides an update on March Integrated Modeling Framework Workshop. The workshop was conducted as a hybrid meeting at the end of February to the beginning of March. Following up on the workshop, B. Geske reports that the Delta Science Program has just finished a draft report summary to capture the ideas expressed at the workshop including a transcript that speakers are reviewing. Permission is also being sought to share the presentation recordings publicly via YouTube. The team at the Delta Science Program is working to finalize the summary document and video recording for release at the end of June.

The summary document will be used as a platform or foundation to develop other actions and products. One example is a white paper to tie up a couple of funding streams together to take

³ At the March 17, 2023 CWEMF SC meeting, a motion was unanimously passed for up to \$2,000 in funding for the Logo Subcommittee to continue to work with Mr. Paul Vega to implement the new logo and associated activities with the subcommittee. See Minutes of the Steering Committee for March 17, 2021 Motions Passed, on page 2 of 11.

some actions towards the integrated modeling framework and the collaborative idea. At a future SC meeting B. Geske will share links to the finalized summary document and workshop content.

Over the past few years the IMSC has run its course, as far as the original charter and the folks involved. Hence, the Delta Science Program is in the process of renaming, reforming, recruiting, redeveloping a charter, a new charge, they are reaching out to secure some new funding, and reprioritizing some actions. B. Geske will provide more information at a future SC meeting, including how CWEMF SC members can get involved.

14. WORKSHOPS

T. Kadir refers to Attachment 9-1 that provides a list of the Workshops Completed, Workshops in the Planning Stage, and Workshops in the Conceptual Stage. T. Kadir highlights a new item in the list for Workshops in the Conceptual Stage. T. Kadir is working with Jon Herman at UCD on a one-day (or longer) workshop on SALib. SALib is a toolbox for global optimization techniques, statistical evaluations, and model calibration.

T. Kadir asks whether peer reviews can be taken up under this agenda item. R. Satkowski responds that peer reviews are generally handled by an ad-hoc subcommittee on a case-by-case basis. T. Kadir has been approached by other DWR staff interested in a peer review of a model currently under development. There will be some funding to support the peer review effort. T. Kadir to provide a more detailed report at a future SC meeting.

15. OTHER BUSINESS (ALL)

S. Tanaka reports that she rented a storage unit to store CWEMF equipment. The unit rented in coordination with J. Jankowski is an indoor unit and is not air conditioned. The rental is on a month-to-month basis for now. If J. Jankowski and S. Tanaka find a new location, they can cancel the unit in Davis and move to another unit if necessary. The storage unit is located on Olive Drive in Davis. S. Tanaka reported that she deployed a temperature sensor over the past month and found that the temperatures did reach up into the high 80s in the storage unit during a recent hot spell. Hence the unit does get warm, although it is indoors. The budget the SC allocated to rent the unit was \$90/month and the cost was \$89 because insurance was also necessary. Typically homeowners insurance would cover storage units. However, because CWEMF is a non-profit and does not have homeowners or property insurance, she had to include insurance in the rental premium. The insurance will cover up to \$5,000 in incurred losses, which is more than the value of the property stored in the unit. Currently, S. Tanaka and J. Jankowski have the code to enter the public storage facility and combination for the lock on the unit.

16. NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

July 21. J. Jankowski will convene. T. Kadir thanks all SC members for their participation.

17. ADJOURN – 12:08 pm

Respectfully Submitted
Ben Bray, Secretary, CWEMF

ATTENDANCE

Tariq Kadir	(Acting) Convener/Past Convener	DWR
Vivek Bedekar	Vice Convener	SS Papadopoulos & Assoc.
Paul Hutton	Executive Director	Tetra Tech
Stacy Tanaka	Treasurer	Watercourse Engr.
Ben Bray	Secretary	EBMUD
Ben Geske		DSP
Abdul Khan		DWR
Anne Huber		ICF
John DeGeorge		RMA
Jon Traum		USGS
Katherine Heidel		Tetra Tech
Kijin Nam		DWR
Mike Deas		Watercourse Engr.
Norman Johns		SWRCB
Rich Satkowski		Public Member
Tad Slawecki		LimnoTech
Will Anderson		CCWD
Yung-Hsin Sun		Sunzi Consulting
Zhonglong Zhang		PSU

Proxies: K. Nam is designated as proxy for N. Sandhu due to a conflict for a portion of the meeting.