

SAN LUIS & DELTA-MENDOTA WATER AUTHORITY BOARD OF
DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES OCTOBER 5, 2023

The Board of Directors of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority convened at approximately 9:30 a.m. at 842 6th Street in Los Banos, California, with Chair Cannon Michael presiding.

Directors and Alternate Directors in Attendance

Division 1

Dave Weisenberger, Director
Vince Lucchesi, Alternate for Bobby Pierce
Anthea Hansen, Director
Ed Pattison, Director - Lea Emmons, Alternate (via ZOOM)

Division 2

Ross Franson, Director
William Bourdeau, Director
Bill Diedrich, Director

Division 3

Chris White, Alternate for Dan McCurdy
Jarrett Martin, Director
Cannon Michael, Director
Ric Ortega, Director

Division 4

Aaron Baker, Alternate for John Varela
Steve Wittry, Director
Joe Tonascia, Director - Joyce Machado, Alternate

Division 5

Manny Amorelli, Director

Authority Representatives Present

Federico Barajas, Executive Director
Pablo Arroyave, Chief Operating Officer
Rebecca Akroyd, General Counsel
Rebecca Harms, Deputy General Counsel
Scott Petersen, Water Policy Director
Ray Tarka, Director of Finance
Bob Martin, Facilities O&M Director
Stewart Davis, IT Officer

Others in Attendance

Dana Jacobson, Valley Water
Martin Rauch, Rauch Communication Consultants Inc.
Chase Hurley, Pacheco Water District
Patrick McGowan, Panoche Water District
Bill Ball, Foley, Foley & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)
Kristin Olsen, Calstrat (via ZOOM)

Dennis Cardoza, Foley & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)
Liz Kiteck, Bureau of Reclamation (via ZOOM)
Steve Stadler, San Luis Water District (via ZOOM)
Chris Park, CDM Smith (via ZOOM)

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cannon Michael and roll was called.

2. Board to Consider Additions or Corrections to the Agenda of Items, as authorized by Government Code Section 54950 et seq.

No additions or corrections.

3. Public Comment – In his capacity as a board member of ACWA Region 4, Director David Weisenberger thanked Water Authority staff for hosting a tour of the Tracy Pumping Plant, and the Tracy Fish Facility.

CONSENT ITEMS

4. Agenda Items 4-6: Board to Consider: a) September 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes, b) Acceptance of the Financial & Expenditures Reports, c) Staff Reports.

On a motion of Director William Bourdeau, seconded by Alternate Director Aaron Baker, the Board accepted the September 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes, Financial Expenditures Reports, and Staff Reports. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Weisenberger, Lucchesi, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, Diedrich, White, J. Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Wittry, Tonascia, Amorelli
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

ACTION ITEMS

5. Agenda Item 7: Board of Directors to Consider Water Resources Committee Recommendation Regarding Authorization to Pursue Solar Over Canals Application for Federal Non-Reimbursable Funding.

Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that the Water Resources Committee is recommending a favorable action by the Board on this item. Barajas reviewed the memo and attachment included in the packet. Barajas reported that given the potential for non-reimbursable federal funding and a public-private-academic partnership, Water Authority staff sees the merit of pursuing this funding application process for a Delta-Mendota Canal pilot project. Barajas reported that the application is due at the end of the month. Barajas reported that Reclamation is seeking a pilot or demonstration project to evaluate technical capability, economic feasibility, and viability for full-scale implementation to test an

unproven material or technology, for future coverage of canals with solar panels.

On a motion of Director Ric Ortega, seconded by Director Joe Tonascia, the Board authorized to pursue Solar Over Canals application for federal non-reimbursable funding. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Weisenberger, Lucchesi, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, Diedrich, White, J. Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Wittry, Tonascia, Amorelli
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

6. Agenda Item 8: Board of Directors to Consider Adoption of 2023 Strategic Plan.

Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that the Board-approved FY2024 budget included funds for an update to the 2019 Strategic Plan. Barajas reported that Water Authority retained Rauch Communications, Inc., and working with Martin Rauch, held a series of Special Board Workshops to discuss updates to the Strategic Plan and to brainstorm, develop, and formulate key goals and objectives. Barajas reported that the final workshop was held August 10, 2023 and during this workshop, Board members had the opportunity to provide feedback, ask questions, have open dialogue about each of the goals and objectives, and discuss future direction for the organization. Barajas reported that each of the goals and objectives was fully deliberated and revised to reflect the direction of the Board. The proposed 2023 Strategic Plan (included in the packet) was distributed to the Board in September for final review prior to inclusion in the October 2023 Board Meeting packet.

Federico then introduced Martin Rauch of Rauch Communications, and he provided a brief overview of the 2023 Strategic Plan.

Chair Cannon Michael suggested distributing a survey evaluating the process in order to provide feedback for future Strategic Plan updates. Executive Director Federico Barajas agreed to work with Martin Rauch on creating one.

On a motion of Director William Bourdeau, seconded by Alternate Director Chris White, the Board adopted the 2023 Strategic Plan. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Weisenberger, Lucchesi, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, Diedrich, White, J. Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Wittry, Tonascia, Amorelli
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

5. Agenda Item 9: Board of Directors to Consider Resolution Certifying the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project Final Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2009091004), Adopting a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and Authorizing Related Actions.

Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave described the proposed B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project, which would include raising the dam crest an additional 10 feet above the 12-foot

embankment raise under development by the B.F. Sisk Dam Safety of Dams Modification Project. Arroyave reported that the 10-foot embankment raise would support an increase in reservoir storage capacity of 130,000 acre-feet.

Arroyave reported that the proposed action is to certify the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project Final Environmental Impact Report. Arroyave reported that through the proposed resolution, the Board would also adopt CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations, adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and authorize filing of a Notice of Determination. Arroyave reported that in addition, the proposed resolution would acknowledge that Activity Agreement Members have agreed with Reclamation to pursue a revised federal investment option of 30% CVP-only and 70% investor-directed storage, and would direct Water Authority staff to pursue the Project as agreed. Arroyave reported that these financing relationships do not affect the physical scope or environmental effects analyzed for the project. Arroyave reported that the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project Final EIR/SEIS is necessary to complete CEQA review of the Project.

Chris Park from CDM Smith provided a brief overview of a PowerPoint presentation titled “B.F. Sisk Dam Raise Project Final EIR/SEIS”.

On a motion of Alternate Director Aaron Baker, seconded by Director Ric Ortega, the Board adopted the resolution certifying the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project final Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2009091004), adopting a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and authorizing related actions. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Weisenberger, Lucchesi, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, Diedrich, White, J. Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Wittry, Tonascia, Amorelli
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

REPORT ITEMS

6. Agenda Item 10: Report on Completion of Jones Pumping Plant Unit Rewind Project.

Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that the Jones Pumping Plant unit rewind project has been completed, and all six units are fully functional. Arroyave introduced Facilities O&M Director Bob Martin, who presented a PowerPoint describing five years of work, and an expenditure summary tied to the rewind project. Martin reported that there were no reportable injuries, the project was completed within budget, and completed within four months of original schedule.

Chair Cannon Michael expressed his gratitude to Authority staff, and suggested some type of recognition for this milestone achievement.

7. Agenda Item 11: Report on State and Federal Affairs.

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that Reclamation has planned an interactive Tribes and stakeholders workshop to be held at the Denver Federal Center in Lakewood, Colorado, October 17-18, 2023. Petersen also provided updates related to Reclamation funding opportunities, Consultation on Long-Term Operations of the CVP and SWP, NEPA, California Water Plan Update 2023, FY24 appropriations, the Farm bill, voluntary agreements, and upcoming hearings. Petersen answered Board questions throughout his presentation. Additional information was provided by Dennis Cardoza, Bill Ball, and Kristin Olsen.

8. **Agenda Item 12: Executive Director’s Report.**

- a. **Inflation Reduction Act Funding** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that the second round of funding applications is open as of October 1, 2023.
- b. **B.F. Sisk Record of Decision (ROD) Signing Event**– Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that the B.F. Sisk ROD signing event is scheduled for October 20, 2023.

9. **Agenda Item 13: Chief Operating Officer’s Report**

Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that the contractor finished up the work on building UZ11A last week. Arroyave reported that during testing, WAPA confirmed installation issues, and Authority staff is in discussions with the contractor to make the necessary repairs.

10. **Agenda Item 14: Update on Water Operations and Forecasts**

Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave introduced Liz Kiteck from the Central Valley Operations Office (CVO) of the Bureau of Reclamation. Kiteck provided updates regarding CVP storage, operations, and the latest forecasts.

11. **Agenda Item 15: Committee Reports.**

- a. **Water Resources Committee** – Chair William Bourdeau reported that the committee met and addressed agenda items.
- b. **Finance & Administration Committee** – Committee did not meet.
- c. **O&M Committee** – No report.

12. **Agenda Item 16: Outside Agency/Organization Reports.**

- a. **State and Federal Contractors Water Agency (SFCWA)** – No report.
- b. **Family Farm Alliance (FFA)** – Report included in the packet.
- c. **Farm Water Coalition (FWC)** – Director Bill Diedrich reported that FWC is working on new fact sheets regarding water usage.
- d. **Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA)** – Director Bill Diedrich reported that

the San Joaquin Valley Water Forum next week, and online registration is open until tomorrow. General Counsel Rebecca Akroyd reported that the Legal Affairs Committee will meet next week. Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that ACWA's Federal Relations Director Dave Reynolds retired, and ACWA is currently looking for a replacement.

- e. **Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley (WBSJV)** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen indicated his availability to answer questions regarding Blueprint items.
- f. **SJV CAP** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen provided a brief report.
- g. **CVPWA** – Director Anthea Hansen provided a brief report.

13. **Agenda Item 17: Board Member Reports.**

Director Ric Ortega reported that he is on the We Grow California Podcast.

14. **Agenda Items 18-19: Closed Session Report.**

Chair Cannon Michael adjourned the open session to address the items listed on the Closed Session Agenda at approximately 11:51 a.m. Upon return to open session at approximately 12:40 p.m., Chair Cannon Michael stated that no reportable actions were taken.

15. **Opportunity for Public Comment**

No public comment.

16. **Agenda Item 20: Reports Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(a)(3)**

General Counsel Rebecca Akroyd briefly answered a question from Director Anthea Hansen regarding the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise Project agenda item regarding beneficial impacts identified in the EIR materials.

17. **Agenda Item 21: Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:45 p.m.