

SAN LUIS & DELTA-MENDOTA WATER AUTHORITY BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES JANUARY 11, 2024

The Board of Directors of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority convened at approximately 9:31 a.m. at 842 6th Street in Los Banos, California, with Chair Cannon Michael presiding.

**Directors and Alternate Directors in Attendance**

**Division 1**

David Weisenberger, Director  
Anthea Hansen, Director  
Ed Pattison, Director

**Division 2**

Ross Franson, Director  
William Bourdeau, Vice-Chair/Director  
Patrick McGowan, Alternate for Beau Correia  
Bill Diedrich, Director (via ZOOM)

**Division 3**

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

**Division 4**

Aaron Baker, Alternate for John Varela  
Richard Santos, Director  
Steve Wittry, Director  
Megan Holland, Alternate for Joe Tonascia

**Division 5**

Bill Pucheu, Director  
Allison Febbo, 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 (via ZOOM)  
Ray Tarka, Director of Finance  
Cindy Meyer, Special Programs Manager (via ZOOM)  
Stewart Davis, IT Officer

**Others in Attendance**

Mitch Partovi, Water Agency  
Katie Schoettler, Foley, Foley & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)  
Dennis Cardoza, Foley & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)  
Kristin Olsen, Foley & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)

Tom Patton, Bureau of Reclamation (via ZOOM)  
Jim Thoming, Banta Carbona Irrigation District (via ZOOM)  
Mike Wade, Farm Water Coalition (via ZOOM)  
Chase Hurley, Pacheco Water District  
Ellen Wehr, Grasslands Water District (ZOOM)  
Dana Jacobson, Valley Water (via ZOOM)  
Don Wright, Water Rights (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**

No Public Comment

**CONSENT ITEMS**

**4. Agenda Items 4-6: Board to Consider: a) December 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes, b) Acceptance of the Financial & Expenditures Reports, d) Acceptance of Staff Reports.**

On a motion of Director William Bourdeau, seconded by Director Richard Santos, the Board accepted the December 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes, Financial & Expenditures Reports, and Staff Reports.

The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Weisenberger, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, White, Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Holland, Pucheu, Febbo
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

**ACTION ITEMS**

**5. Agenda Item 7: Board of Directors to Consider Finance & Administration Committee Recommendation Regarding Execution of Contract with External Auditors.**

Finance Director Ray Tarka reported that Richardson & Company, LLP has audited the Water Authority financial statements since Fiscal Year 2018. Tarka reported that per direction from the Finance & Administration Committee, the Water Authority transmitted a request for proposals (RFP) to obtain the proposals necessary to engage a new firm for auditing services beginning with FY24 on November 8, 2023. Tarka reported that the RFP was sent out to twenty-one regional and national accounting firms, and the RFP was also publicly posted on the website for government procurement. Tarka reported that staff

received one response, which was from Richardson & Company, LLP, who submitted a proposal that included the assignment of a new audit partner on the new engagement as required under California Government Code Section 12410.6(b).

On a motion of Director Richard Santos, seconded by Director William Bourdeau, the Board approved execution of contract with external auditors. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Weisenberger, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, White, Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Holland, Pucheu, Febbo

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

**6. Agenda Item 8: Board of Directors to Consider Water Resources Committee Recommendation Regarding Adoption of 2024 Science Plan.**

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen provided a brief overview of the updated Science Plan included in the packet. Petersen reported that as the Science Program further develops in coordination with the implementation of the updated Water Authority Strategic Plan, staff intends to continue to increase coordination with Water Authority members, establish and implement the Science Plan, and engage in the scientific community and inform policymakers of the results of Water Authority Science Program outcomes.

Special Programs Manager Cindy Meyer reported that this a living document, and she anticipates changes and updates throughout the year. Meyer thanked the Board members for taking time to review the Science Plan.

Petersen and Meyer answered questions throughout the presentation.

On a motion of Director Richard Santos, seconded by Director William Bourdeau, the Board adopted the 2024 Science Plan. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Weisenberger, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, White, Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Holland, Pucheu, Febbo

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

**5. Agenda Item 9: Adoption of Resolution Adopting Amendment to San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Bylaws.**

General Counsel Rebecca Akroyd reported that Article 15 of the Water Authority's Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement authorizes the Board to adopt "such bylaws, rules and regulations for the conduct of its affairs as may be required." Akroyd reported that Article VIII of the Water Authority Bylaws allows

for the Bylaws to be amended by resolution of the Board, which requires a majority Board vote. Akroyd reported that the proposed amendment would authorize disclosure of certain confidential information obtained in the Water Authority’s closed sessions to Board member agency legal counsel or to their member agency legislative bodies in closed session as provided for in Government Code section 54956.96. Akroyd reported that this disclosure would help increase the efficiency of communications between the Board and member agency legislative bodies

On a motion of Director Richard Santos, seconded by Director Ric Ortega, the Board adopted the amendment to San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Bylaws. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Weisenberger, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, White, Martin, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Holland, Pucheu, Febbo
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

## REPORT ITEMS

### 6. **Agenda Item 10: Report on State and Federal Affairs.**

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen provided updates related to staffing changes, the consultation on Long-Term Operations of the CVP and SWP, the Farm bill, Reclamation funding opportunities, Reclamation Manual updates, government funding, legislative hearings, the state budget deficit, the Delta Conveyance Project, the California Water Commission Drought Strategies White Paper, California Air Resources Board Advanced Clean Fleets regulations, and a California legislative update. Petersen answered Board questions throughout his presentation. Petersen introduced Katie Schoettler who will be taking over for Bill Ball at Foley & Lardner LLP. Additional information was provided by Dennis Cardoza and Kristin Olsen.

### 7. **Agenda Item 11: Executive Director’s Report.**

- a. **Jones Pumping Plant Unit Rewind Project** – Executive Director Federico Barajas discussed the paper weight mementos provided to Board members for successful completion of Jones Pumping Plant Unit Rewind Project.
- b. **Budget Workshop** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that the Budget Workshop is scheduled January 17, 2024.
- c. **Reclamation Announces New Regional Director**– Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that Reclamation announced Karl Stock as their new Regional Director for the California-Great Basin Region. Barajas reported that there will be a Meet & Greet at the

upcoming Water Users Conference in Reno.

8. **Agenda Item 12: Chief Operating Officer's Report**

- a. **Jones Pumping Plant**– Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that all 6 units are available at the Intertie, which could help with the O'Neill outage coming up, and freeboard operation on the DMC.
- b. **Building UZ11A**– Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that the Building UZ11A work should be completed by the end of the day tomorrow, and all five units at Jones Pumping Plant should be available by Friday.
- c. **O'Neill Outage for the transformer rehabilitation project** – Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that Authority staff would be coordinating with Reclamation regarding the scheduled O'Neill outage scheduled for April 15<sup>th</sup>-May 30<sup>th</sup>.
- d. **Budget Workshop Materials** – Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that all documents for the upcoming Budget Workshop should be posted by the close of business today.

9. **Agenda Item 13: Update on Water Operations and Forecasts**

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

10. **Agenda Item 14: Committee Reports.**

- a. **Water Resources Committee** – No report.
- b. **Finance & Administration Committee** – No report.
- c. **O&M Committee** – No report.

11. **Agenda Item 15: 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)** – Mike Wade provided a brief overview of the report included in the packet.
- d. **Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA)** – General Counsel Rebecca Akroyd reported that the new Legal Affairs Chair is Jessica Diaz from Central Coast Water Authority, and that she will continue as the Vice-Chair. Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that the new Federal Affairs Committee Chair is Jolene Walsh from Eastern Municipal Water District, and he will serve as Vice-Chair this term.

- e. **Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley (Blueprint)** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that the Blueprint Board changed bookkeeping services and appointed Kassy Chauhan as the Board Treasurer, and a Finance Committee has been appointed to review contributions and provide recommendations for 2024 contributions and categories. Petersen reported that there was a fair amount of engagement by the Blueprint at ACWA including an overview of the Blueprint, recharge, and conveyance opportunities as well as the environmentally friendly diversion pilot project were shared.
- f. **SJV CAP** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that the Plenary Group met on December 5 and 6, at University of California Merced, to finalize some 2023 actions and to set priorities for 2024. Petersen reported that next meeting of the Plenary Group will be held on January 23, 2023.
- g. **CVPWA** – Director Anthea Hansen reported that the CVPWA is continuing its search for an Executive Director. Hansen reported that the annual Water Users Conference is coming up later this month.

12. **Agenda Item 16: Board Member Reports.**

Director Richard Santos announced that Director Anthea Hansen was recently nominated as the Vice-Chair for the Los Vaqueros JPA.

Director Steve Wittry introduced new Alternate Director Megan Holland.

Director Jarrett Martin provided a brief update on the Mendota Pool dewatering.

13. **Agenda Items 17-18: Closed Session Report.**

After allowing an opportunity for public comment, Chair Cannon Michael adjourned the open session to address the items listed on the Closed Session Agenda at approximately 10:53 a.m. Upon return to open session at approximately 12:43 p.m., Chair Cannon Michael stated that no reportable actions were taken.

14. **Agenda Item 19: Reports Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(a)(3)**  
No report.

15. **Agenda Item 20: Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:44 p.m.