

SAN LUIS & DELTA-MENDOTA WATER AUTHORITY BOARD OF
DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES FEBRUARY 8, 2024

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

Bobby Pierce, 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 (joined via ZOOM during item 10)

Division 3

Cannon Michael, Chair/Director
Ric Ortega, Director - Ellen Wehr, Alternate

Division 4

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

Division 5

Bill Pucheu, Director
Kirk Teixeira, Alternate for Allison Febbo
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
Jaime McNeill, Engineering Manager (via ZOOM)
Laures Stiles, Director of HR
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)

Kristin Olsen, Foley & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)
 Liz Kiteck, Bureau of Reclamation (via ZOOM)
 Kristin White, Bureau of Reclamation
 Michael Jackson, Bureau of Reclamation
 Derya Sumer, Bureau of Reclamation
 Justin Diener, Westlands Water District (via ZOOM)
 Bea Correia, Panoche Water District (via ZOOM)
 Lea Emmons, City of Tracy (via ZOOM)
 Mike Wade, Farm Water Coalition (via ZOOM)
 Dana Jacobson, Valley Water
 Don Wright, WaterWrights (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 4-7: Board to Consider: a) January 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes and January 17, 2024 Workshop Minutes, b) Acceptance of the Financial & Expenditures Reports, c) Treasurer’s Report for the Quarter Ending December 31, 2023, d) Acceptance of Staff Reports.

On a motion of Alternate Director Aaron Baker, seconded by Director Richard Santos, the Board accepted the January 11, 2024 Meeting Minutes with minor edits, January 17, 2024 Workshop Minutes with minor edits, Financial & Expenditures Reports, Treasurer’s Report, and Staff Reports. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Pierce, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Tonascia, Pucheu, Teixeira, Amorelli
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

ACTION ITEMS

5. Agenda Item 8: Approval of Executive Compensation for Various Positions.

Chair Cannon Michael reviewed the table included in the packet, and orally reported on proposed salaries and total benefit packages for the Executive Director and General Counsel.

Executive Director Federico next reviewed the table and orally reported on additional executive

staff proposed salaries and total benefit packages.

On a motion of Director Richard Santos, seconded by Director Bill Pucheu, the Board approved executive compensation for various positions. The vote on the motion was as follows:

- AYES: Pierce, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Tonascia, Pucheu, Teixeira, Amorelli
- NAYS: None
- ABSTENTIONS: None

6. Agenda Item 9: Finance & Administration Committee Recommendation Regarding Fiscal Year 2025 OM&R Budget, Water Resources Committee Recommendation Regarding Fiscal Year 2025 Activity Budget, and Resolution Adopting the Complete Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

Executive Director Federico Barajas reviewed the memo and resolution included in the packet. Barajas outlined the budget development process. Barajas reported that a Joint Budget Workshop was held in January, and appropriate edits were made to the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. Barajas reported that staff has prepared a draft resolution adopting the complete FY25 Budget, including both OM&R and Activity budget components.

On a motion of Alternate Director Aaron Baker, seconded by Director Richard Santos, the Board adopted the complete Fiscal Year 2025 Budget, and Resolution adopting the complete Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. The vote on the motion was as follows:

- AYES: Pierce, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Tonascia, Pucheu, Teixeira, Amorelli
- NAYS: None
- ABSTENTIONS: None

5. Agenda Item 10: Finance & Administration Committee Recommendation Regarding Water Year 2024 OM&R Water Rates.

Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave introduced the item. Arroyave reported that based on direction provided during the Budget Workshop and the recommendation from the Finance & Administration Committee, staff is recommending proceeding with water rates based on a 20% ag allocation with a shift to water rates based on a 40% ag allocation if Reclamation increases the ag contract allocation to 40% or higher. Arroyave then referred to Director of Finance Raymond Tarka to further review the preliminary illustrative Water Year 2024 OM&R Rates based on 20% and 40% agricultural contractor allocation. Staff answered Board questions throughout the presentation.

On a motion of Director Richard Santos, seconded by Director Bobby Pierce, the Board approved the Water Year 2024 OM&R Water Rates. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Pierce, Hansen, Pattison, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Santos, Wittry, Tonascia, Pucheu, Teixeira, Amorelli

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

REPORT ITEMS

6. **Agenda Item 11: Update on U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Activities.**

Executive Director Federico Barajas introduced Bureau of Reclamation Deputy Regional Director Kristin White. White then introduced Fresno office Area Manager Michael Jackson, and drought management lead Derya Sumer. White made remarks about Reclamation's relationship with the Authority and thanked Authority staff that helped with the DMC break last year at Salado Creek near Patterson. White provided a brief background about herself and Reclamation. White identified key staff, and provided updates on various Reclamation activities. Michael Jackson thanked the Authority for the invitation to attend the Board meeting, and provided additional information.

7. **Agenda Item 12: Report on State and Federal Affairs.**

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen provided updates related to staffing changes, President Biden's 2025 Budget Proposal, the consultation on Long-Term Operations of the CVP and SWP, congressional actions, the Farm bill, funding of federal habitat projects, Governor Newsome's budget proposal, and a California legislative update. Petersen answered Board questions throughout his presentation. Additional information was provided by Kristin Olsen.

8. **Agenda Item 13: Executive Director's Report.**

- a. **California Irrigation Institute (CII)** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that Chase Hurley is a member of the CII planning committee and shared information regarding upcoming conference. Barajas reported that the CII Annual Conference is February 26-27, 2024 in Sacramento.
- b. **Delta Conveyance Project** - Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that Reclamation will not join the Department of Water Resources in filing a change petition with the State Water Resources Control Board regarding Delta Conveyance Project.
- c. **Negotiations with Reclamation** - Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that negotiations with Reclamation are moving forward for the B.F. Sisk Dam Expansion Project, and there was a two-day session last week. Barajas also reported that contract repayment negotiations are ongoing regarding the Jones Pumping Plant Excitation Project.

9. **Agenda Item 14: Chief Operating Officer's Report**

- a. **O'Neill Pumping Plant Outage** - Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that a 45-day outage at OPP was being planned for April 15 through the end of May. Arroyave reported that staff has been coordinating with Reclamation and member agencies regarding the outage. Arroyave reported that there is a coordination meeting scheduled at the end of the month with Reclamation. Arroyave introduced Liz Kiteck from Reclamation, who provided additional information.

10. **Agenda Item 15: 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 16: Committee Reports.**

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

12. **Agenda Item 17: 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 provided a brief Legal Affairs Committee update.
- e. **Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley (Blueprint)** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported the at the next board meeting the Blueprint board will be considering a proposal from Hallmark regarding work associated with strategic plan development on Delta regulations.
- f. **SJV CAP** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that in April there will be a 3-day in-person discussion regarding 2024 Goals at U.C. Merced.
- g. **CVPWA** – Director Anthea Hansen reported that staff are having hiring discussions regarding a new Executive Director. Hansen reported that the next meeting is March 7, 2024.

13. **Agenda Item 18: Board Member Reports.**

No reports.

14. **Agenda Items 19-20: 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 11:32 a.m. Upon return to open session at approximately 12:06 p.m., Chair Cannon Michael stated that no reportable actions were taken.

15. **Agenda Item 21: Reports Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(a)(3)**

No report.

16. **Agenda Item 22: Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:07 p.m.