

SAN LUIS & DELTA-MENDOTA WATER AUTHORITY BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES NOVEMBER 7, 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**

Vince Lucchesi, Alternate for Bobby Pierce  
Lea Emmons, Alternate for Ed Pattison

**Division 2**

Ross Franson, Director  
William Bourdeau, Director  
Patrick McGowan, Alternate for Beau Correia  
Bill Diedrich, Director

**Division 3**

Cannon Michael, Chair/Director - Michael Gardner, Alternate  
Ric Ortega, Director (via ZOOM)

**Division 4**

Aaron Baker, Alternate for John Varela  
Dana Jacobson, Director  
Joe Tonascia, Director - Brett Miller, Alternate

**Division 5**

Allison Febbo, Director (via ZOOM)  
Manny Amorelli, Director

**Friant Representatives**

Jason Phillips, FWA Representative - Wilson Orvis, Alternate

**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  
Eddie Reyes, Information Systems Technician

**Others in Attendance**

Anthea Hansen, Del Puerto Water District (via ZOOM)  
John Varela, Valley Water (via ZOOM)  
Jim Beall, Valley Water (via ZOOM)  
Mitch Partovi, Water Agency  
Dennis Cardoza, Folely & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)  
Kristin Olsen, Foley & Lardner, LLP (via ZOOM)  
Liz Kiteck, Bureau of Reclamation (via ZOOM)

Mike Wade, Farm Water Coalition (via ZOOM)  
Cindy Kao, Valley Water  
John Wiersma, Henry Miller Reclamation District  
Steve Stadler, San Luis Water District

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cannon Michael and roll was called. Two Board members were identified as participating remotely for just cause: Director Ric Ortega and Director Allison Febbo.

**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) October 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes, and October 10, 2024 Workshop Minutes, b) Acceptance of the Financial & Expenditures Reports, d) Treasurer’s Report, and e) Acceptance of Staff Reports.**

On a motion of Director William Bourdeau, seconded by Alternate Aaron Baker, the Board accepted the October 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes and October 10, 2024 Workshop Minutes, Financial & Expenditures Reports, Treasurer’s Report, and Staff Reports. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Lucchesi, Emmons, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Jacobson, Tonascia, Febbo, Amorelli

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

**ACTION ITEMS**

**5. Agenda Item 8: Adoption of Resolution Adopting the 2025 Regular Meeting Calendar for the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Board of Directors, Water Resources Committee, Finance & Administration Committee, and Planning Committee.**

Executive Director Federico Barajas reviewed the memo included in the packet regarding regular meetings of the Board of Directors, Water Resources Committee, Finance & Administration Committee, and Planning Committee for calendar year 2025, and the proposed resolution for Board approval. Barajas noted the two meeting dates outside of the normal calendar dates due to a holiday and the ACWA conference.

On a motion of Director Bill Diedrich, seconded by Alternate Lea Emmons, the Board adopted resolution authorizing termination of Water Reallocation Activity Agreement. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Lucchesi, Emmons, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Jacobson, Tonascia, Febbo, Amorelli
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

**6. Agenda Item 9: Water Resources Committee Recommendation Regarding Adoption of Staff Recommendation for Positions on Legislation.**

- a. S. 4359 (Padilla), To amend the National Dam Safety Program Act to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reviewed the staff recommendation for positions on legislation and answered questions from Board members.

On a motion of Director William Bourdeau, seconded by Alternate Aaron Baker, the Board adopted the staff recommendation for a support position on S. 4359 (Padilla). The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES:	Lucchesi, Emmons, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Jacobson, Tonascia, Febbo, Amorelli
NAYS:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

**7. Agenda Item 10: Finance & Administration Committee Recommendation Regarding Adoption Planning Committee Confirmation of Cost Allocation Methodology for Jones Pumping Plant Excitation and Control Modernization Project and O’Neill Pumping-Generating Plant (OPP) Upgrades Projects and Recommendation to Approve Cost Allocation Methodology for O’Neill Transformer Replacement Project.**

Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reviewed the memo included in the packet. Arroyave reported staff is seeking Board approval to move forward with approved cost allocation methodology for three projects: 1) Jones Pumping Plant Excitation & Control Modernization Project, 2) O’Neill Pumping-Generation Plant Upgrades Project, and 3) O’Neill Transformer Replacement Project.

On a motion of Alternate Aaron Baker, seconded by FWA Representative Jason Phillips, the Board adopted the Finance & Administration recommendation regarding adoption of Planning Committee confirmation of Cost Allocation Methodology for Jones Pumping Plant Excitation and Control Modernization Project and O’Neill Pumping-Generating Plant (OPP) Upgrades Projects and recommendation to approve Cost Allocation Methodology for O’Neill Transformer Replacement Project. The vote on the motion was as follows:

AYES: Lucchesi, Emmons, Franson, Bourdeau, McGowan, Diedrich, Michael, Ortega, Baker, Jacobson, Tonascia, Febbo, Amorelli, Phillips

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

**REPORT ITEMS**

**8. Agenda Item 12: Update on Strategic Plan Implementation Progress**

Executive Director Federico Barajas reviewed the memo and attachments included in the packet, and identified the high priority implementation plan action items for 2024, as well as progress toward accomplishing those action items. Chair Cannon Michael spoke about the importance of participating in the strategic plan development process. Director Bill Diedrich complemented the implementation plan document.

**9. Agenda Item 13: Report on State and Federal Affairs.**

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen introduced Dennis Cardoza, who reviewed congressional races that have been called or are still pending. Cardoza reported that updates are expected Friday afternoon. Cardoza provided additional information.

Petersen then reviewed documents included in the packet, and provided updates related to the Reinitiation of Consultation on Long-Term Operations of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and SWP, Water Quality Control Plan, Trinity consultation, SJRRP, Delta Conveyance, Reclamation Manual. Petersen additionally provided a California legislative update. Petersen answered Board questions throughout his presentation. Additional information was provided by consultant Kristin Olsen.

**10. Agenda Item 11: Report on Delta Smelt Strategic Decision-Making Study and CSAMP Report**

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen briefly reviewed the item, and then introduced Sally Rudd from Compass. Rudd reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the results of the Delta Smelt Strategic Decision-Making Study. Petersen and Rudd answered questions from Board members throughout the presentation.

**11. Agenda Item 14: Executive Director’s Report.**

a. **South of Delta Drought Plan** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported on ongoing conversations with Reclamation, Friant Water Authority, and DWR regarding the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) Delta Recapture Plan. Barajas reported that Authority staff provided comments to Reclamation. Barajas also reported on the transition from the 2024 Pilot Project to a 2025 Pilot Project. Barajas answered questions from Board members.

b. **Re-Branding Process** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that there will be an

update at the next Board meeting.

- c. **FY26 Budget Process** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that the O&M Technical Committee met and approved the OM&R Budget, and it was also discussed and approved by the Finance & Administration Committee earlier this week. Barajas reported that the proposed FY26 Activity Agreements Budget will be presented to the Water Resources Committee next month. Barajas reported that a Budget Workshop is scheduled December 18.
- d. **ACWA Conference** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported on planned meetings and events at the upcoming ACWA conference.

**12. Agenda Item 15: Chief Operating Officer’s Report**

- a. **O’Neill Outages** - Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that there were five scheduled outages the month of October, and the Building UZ8A-related outage was completed this week. Arroyave reported that four units at Jones Pumping Plant are currently available.
- b. **Transformer Rehabilitation Project** – Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that first outage is planned for April 2025.
- c. **North-to-South Transfers**- Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that the first anticipated invoice in the amount of \$125,000.
- d. **2026 OM&R Budget**- Chief Operating Officer Pablo Arroyave reported that the OM&R budget is out for a 30-day contractor review.

**13. Agenda Item 16: 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. Kiteck answered questions throughout her presentation.

**14. Agenda Item 17: Committee Reports.**

- a. **Water Resources Committee** – Committee Chair William Bourdeau reported that the committee met and addressed agenda items.
- b. **Finance & Administration Committee** – Chair Cannon Michael reported that the committee met and addressed agenda items.
- c. **O&M Technical Committee** – No report.
- d. **Planning Committee** – Chair Cannon Michael reported that the committee met and addressed agenda items.

15. **Agenda Item 18: Outside Agency/Organization Reports.**

- a. **State and Federal Contractors Water Agency (SFCWA)** – No report.
- b. **Family Farm Alliance (FFA)** – Report included in the packet. Chair Cannon Michael reported that the FFA is currently seeking an Executive Director. Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that the next conference will be October 2025.
- 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)** – No report.
- e. **Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley (Blueprint)** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that the packet includes the Water Policy Memo from the Water Resources Committee meeting with detailed information on Blueprint activities. Friant Water Authority Representative Jason Phillips provided additional comments.
- f. **SJV CAP** - Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that the Water Policy Memo from the Water Resources Committee meeting includes detailed information on SJV CAP.
- g. **CVPWA** – No report.

16. **Agenda Item 19: Board Member Reports.**

Director Joe Tonascia introduced Dana Jacobson as the new General Manager of San Benito County Water District.

Chair Cannon Michael reminded the Board members that the evaluations for Executive Director and General Counsel are due by December 4.

17. **Agenda Items 20-21: 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 12:04 p.m., General Counsel Rebecca Akroyd reported that direction to initiate an action has been given, and that the direction to initiate an action was given, and the action, the defendants, and the other particulars shall, once formally commenced, be disclosed to any person upon inquiry. Akroyd reported on the vote on that action of every member.

18. **Agenda Item 22: Reports Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(a)(3)**  
No report.

19. **Agenda Item 23: Adjournment.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:05 p.m.