

SAN LUIS & DELTA-MENDOTA WATER AUTHORITY
WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING AND JOINT
WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING - SPECIAL
BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES

MARCH 6, 2023

The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority Water Resources Committee Regular Meeting and Joint Water Resources Committee Regular Meeting and Special Board Workshop convened at approximately 10:00 a.m. at 842 6th Street in Los Banos, California, with Chair William Bourdeau presiding.

Water Resources Committee Members Present

Ex-Officio

Cannon Michael
William Bourdeau

Division 1

Anthea Hansen, Alternate

Division 2

Absent

Division 3

Chris White, Member

Division 4

Vincent Gin, Member - Steve Wittry, Alternate

Division 5

Absent

Board of Directors Present

Division 1

Anthea Hansen, Director

Division 2

Justin Diener, Alternate
William Bourdeau, Director
Ara Azhderian, Alternate

Division 3

Chris White, Alternate
Jarrett Martin, Director
Cannon Michael, Director

Division 4

Steve Wittry, Director
Joyce Machado, Alternate

Division 5

Absent

Authority Representatives Present

Federico Barajas, Executive Director
Pablo Arroyave, Chief Operating Officer
Rebecca Akroyd, General Counsel
Rebecca Harms, Deputy General Counsel
Ray Tarka, Director of Finance
Scott Petersen, Water Policy Director
Cindy Meyer, Special Programs Manager (via ZOOM)
Stewart Davis, IT Officer

Others Present

Tom Boardman, Westlands Water District (via ZOOM)
Dana Jacobson, Valley Water
Chase Hurley, Pacheco Water District
Manny Amorelli, James Irrigation District (via ZOOM)
Lea Emmons, City of Tracy (via ZOOM)

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair William Bourdeau called the meeting to order and roll was called.

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

No additions or corrections.

3. Opportunity for Public Comment

No public comment.

4. Water Resources Committee to Consider Approval of the February 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

Chair William Bourdeau deemed the February 6, 2023 meeting minutes approved with minor corrections.

5. Water Resources Committee to Consider Recommendation to Board to Adopt Staff Recommendation for Positions on Legislation.

- a. **SB 23 (Caballero), Expedited Permitting for Water Supply and Flood Risk Reduction Projects (support)** –Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that SB 23 is sponsored by the Association of California Water Agencies. Petersen reported that the bill contains numerous provisions seeking to increase the efficiency of the regulatory permitting process for water supply and flood risk reduction projects, without exemption from any environmental protections. Staff recommended a support position on SB 23.

- b. **SB 361 (Dodd), Water Resources: Stream Gages (favor)** – Water Policy Director Scott Petersen reported that this bill would require DWR and the State Water Board, upon appropriation of funds by the Legislature, to reactivate, upgrade, and install new stream gages where lack of data contributes to conflicts in water management or where water can be more effectively managed for multiple benefits. Staff recommended a favor position on SB 361.

Ex Officio Member Cannon Michael made the motion to recommend the Board of Directors adopt staff recommendation for positions on legislation. The motion was seconded by Alternate Member Anthea Hansen. The Committee action is reported as follows:

AYES:	Michael, Bourdeau, Hansen, White, Gin
NOES:	None
ABSTENTIONS:	None

6. Executive Director’s Report.

- a. **OM&R Water Rate Adjustment** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that the Authority Board of Directors adopted the initial WY 2023 OM&R rates on February 9, 2023 at a 10% agricultural water contractor allocation. Barajas reported that on February 22, 2023, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation announced initial 2023 water supply contract allocations based on updated reservoir and hydrologic conditions. Barajas reported that the water year is currently forecasted to be non-critical, and in addition, Reclamation announced initial allocations of 35% to south-of-Delta agricultural water contractors and 75% to south-of-Delta municipal and industrial contractors. Barajas reported the Finance & Administration Committee (FAC) is meeting

this afternoon, and staff is recommending that the FAC recommend that the Board of Directors approve a rate adjustment to Water Year 2023 OM&R Water Rates based on a 35% agricultural contractor allocation.

- b. **Finance & Administration Committee Joint Ratesetting Workshop** – Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that there will be a ratesetting workshop on Monday, March 13, 2023.
- c. **Strategic Plan** - Executive Director Federico Barajas reported that he is the process of securing a contract with Martin Rauch. Barajas reported that Rauch would initiate interviews with Authority Board members to prep for the initial workshop next month.

7. **Update on Water Policy/Resources Activities.**

Water Policy Director Scott Petersen provided a brief summary of the report included in the packet. Petersen reported that the Army Corps of Engineers extended the public comment period for the draft EIS on the Delta Conveyance Project. Petersen reported that the new date for comments to be filed is March 16, and the Authority will be coordinating with member agencies on comments.

Petersen reported that the Authority joined a letter with the State Water Contractors pointing out deficiencies in the science used to support the proposed listing of the longfin smelt distinct population segment as endangered and requested a public hearing on the listing status. Petersen reported that on February 25, the Service reopened the public comment period through March 29, 2023, and will host a virtual public hearing on March 14, 2023, from 5:00 – 7:00 pm on ZOOM.

Petersen reported that the Water Blueprint will hold its next Board meeting and Large Group meeting on March 15. Petersen reported that the Technical Committee is currently working on a project ranking criteria for the Blueprint itself to include and/or support individual GSA projects as part of the Blueprint Advocacy work. Petersen reported that the Blueprint Board met in February, approving the execution of a contract with the Hallmark Group for association management services and authorizing the Communications Committee to work with the Advocacy Committee to develop a Communications Plan to guide communications for the organization.

Petersen reported that the CAP Plenary Group met and approved the formation of work groups to advance the revised Term Sheet. Petersen reported that the Work groups will be meeting to discuss several key topics listed in the Term Sheet and create near term actions and priorities.

Petersen reported that Delta-Mendota Subbasin groundwater sustainability agencies received an inadequate finding regarding the Delta-Mendota Subbasin GSPs, and the next step is a hearing in 90-120 days before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and then 90-days to work with SWRCB staff to correct deficiencies.

8. Update on Water Operations and Forecasts.

Westlands Water District's Tom Boardman reported on Shasta storage, which is trending close to Reclamation's median forecast that shows Shasta refilling to 4.2 MAF later this spring. The expected storage increase is related to above average snowpack and approaching storm system. Folsom storage was briefly reported along with snowpack conditions.

Delta conditions were discussed including current export pumping rates. Boardman explained that Jones pumping is not currently limited, but Banks pumping is constrained by an OMR limit.

Current and near-term San Luis storage were reported followed by refill projections under dry and median conditions. A brief discussion of possible allocations also occurred.

Boardman responded to a question asked by Chairman Bourdeau regarding the magnitude and snow level of the storm expected later this week.

9. Committee Member Reports.

None.

10. Agenda Item 10-12: Closed Session

Committee Chair William Bourdeau adjourned the open session to address the items listed on the Closed Session Agenda at approximately 10:28 a.m. Upon return to open session at approximately 10:57 a.m., General Counsel Rebecca Akroyd reported that no reportable actions were taken in closed session.

11. Agenda Item 13: Reports Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2

None.

12. Agenda Item 14: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:58 a.m.