

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES OF JULY 10, 2024
1:30 p.m.

President McDonald called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. with participation in person, via teleconference, and through Zoom. All those in attendance stood for the pledge of allegiance led by President McDonald.

ROLL CALL:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Melody McDonald, President
Richard Corneille, Director
John Longville, Director (Arrival: 1:44 p.m.)
Robert Stewart, Vice President

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Betsy Miller, General Manager
David Cosgrove, District Counsel
Milan Mitrovich, Land Resources Manager
Angie Quiroga, Senior Administrative Analyst
Athena Laroche, Administrative Specialist
Laura Torres, Assistant Engineer
Anna Frey, Assistant Biologist
John Lambie, Consulting Chief Engineer and Geohydrologist
Zach Blum, Intern

GUESTS PRESENT:

Paul Kielhold, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
T. Milford Harrison, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
David E. Smith, East Valley Water District
June Hayes, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
John Harris, City of Redlands
Joseph Aguirre, Tetra Tech
Mark Falcone, Highland Resident

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mark Falcone introduced himself. He is a current resident of Highland and has applied to the Division 2 open seat. He discussed his background in brief.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the posted agenda.

3. GUEST RECOGNITIONS/SELF INTRODUCTIONS

The Board, staff and Zoom attendees made self-introductions.

4. DISTRICT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

President McDonald introduced this item for discussion noting its inclusion on package pages 5 to 6. Vice President Stewart and Director Corneille expressed interest in remaining on the Operations Committee. Director Corneille requested to be appointed to the San Bernardino Valley Conservation Trust (SBVCT) Board as the District's representative. President McDonald appointed Director Corneille to the SBVCT Board as the District's representative. She deferred any further appointments to the Board of Directors meeting scheduled for August 14, after the Division 2 vacancy is filled. She requested that the Board provide her with feedback if they are interested in being appointed to any committees or other meetings listed within Appendix B or C.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the Consent Calendar: Item A: Board Minutes, June 12, 2024; and Item B: Approval of Expenditure Report, June 2024. The motion carried 3-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative. Director Longville was noted absent from the vote.

**President McDonald: Yes
Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Absent**

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS

A. UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR JUNE 2024

Ms. Quiroga reviewed this item, noting its inclusion beginning on package page 28. This item includes information received on revenue and expenses through July 1. Additional invoices were received after July 1 and will be shown in the Fourth Quarter Financials for FY24. She reviewed the approximate increases in revenue and expenses. She said that GL 4010 Interest Income increased by \$195,000, GL 4025 Wash Plan Revenue increased by \$54,000, and GL 4030 Mining Income increased by \$135,000. Ms. Quiroga noted that GL 4040 Miscellaneous Income was reduced by \$33,000 for reimbursed expenses. GL 5100 Professional Services increased by \$200,000, GL 6000 General Administration by \$58,000, and GL 6100 Benefits and GL 6200 Salaries by \$187,000 combined. Total revenue increased by \$376,000 and total expenses by \$461,000. Ms. Quiroga reviewed expenses beginning on package page 32, noting the larger expenses incurred during this period. Director Corneille reviewed package page 30 and noted that

the District is in a positive financial position when comparing revenue versus expenses. He congratulated the staff on their efforts. Director Corneille reviewed GL 4022 Groundwater Charge, noting that the District has received less revenue than usual and asked if the reason was related to it being a wet year. Ms. Quiroga stated that the final number will be adjusted based on accruals and will be reflected in the Fourth Quarter Financials.

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to approve the Unaudited Financial Reports for June 2024 as presented. The motion carried 4-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

**President McDonald: Yes
Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Yes**

B. SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE PROGRAM FOR THE EXPANSION OF RECHARGE CAPACITY AGREEMENT

Ms. Miller reviewed this item, noting its inclusion on package page 35. Due to the cessation of the Groundwater Council (GC), the PERC Policy Committee recommended appointment of a member or representative of the Basin Technical Advisory Committee (BTAC) as its replacement. Mr. Cosgrove drafted a Second Amendment to the Agreement to make the recommended change as shown on package pages 37 to 39. If approved, BTAC will vote and appoint a representative to the PERC Policy Committee on August 5. Mr. Cosgrove noted that the appointee does not have to be a member of the BTAC.

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to approve the Second Amendment to the Partnership Agreement for Joint Active Recharge Project Development under the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan and authorize the Board president to sign on the District's behalf. The motion carried 4-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

**President McDonald: Yes
Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Yes**

C. AMENDMENT TO THE PLUNGE AND OAK CREEK DIVERSIONS AND BASINS FEASIBILITY STUDY PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT WITH CASC ENGINEERING

Ms. Miller indicated that based on Board discussion, staff would like to pull this item and refer it to the PERC Policy Committee for review and consideration. This item is included in the beginning package page 40. Mr. Cosgrove asked for any public comment on this item to be received. There being none, this item was referred to the PERC Policy Committee. Staff will bring this item back if approved by the Committee at the July 24 Special Board of Directors Meeting. Director Corneille noted that the PERC Policy

Committee will need to meet prior to the Special Board of Directors meeting to discuss the financial implications and make a recommendation to the Board.

It was moved by Director Longville and seconded by Vice President Stewart to refer the Amendment to the Plunge and Oak Creek Diversions and Basins Feasibility Study Professional Services Contract with CASC Engineering to the PERC Policy Committee and bring it back for final approval at the Special Board of Directors Meeting on July 24. The motion carried 4-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

**President McDonald: Yes
Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Yes**

D. CSDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS FOR 2025-2027, SEAT A-SOUTHERN NETWORK

President McDonald introduced this item for discussion, noting its inclusion on package page 50. She recommended Jo Mackenzie from Vista Irrigation District for the CSDA Board of Directors Election for 2025-2027, Seat A-Southern Network.

It was moved by President McDonald and seconded by Director Longville to select Jo Mackenzie from Vista Irrigation District, CSDA Board of Directors Elections for 2025-2027, Seat A-Southern Network, and direct staff to submit the District's vote via the California Special District's Association online voting platform. The motion was carried 4-0 with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

**President McDonald: Yes
Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Yes**

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Dr. Mitrovich reviewed the written report included on package pages 58 to 60. He discussed the four years of Wash Plan implementation to date. The Wash Plan Preserve Management Committee met on June 10 to discuss the results of monitoring and management activities and the FY25 budget. He discussed the potential listing of western spadefoot under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Dr. Mitrovich reviewed the Wash Plan Programmatic Permits and the work that is being completed on the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) 404. The permit is expected to be issued by the end of 2024. A tour was held with USACE on June 11. Staff continue to work with Robertson's Ready Mix and CEMEX to facilitate the issuance of a 2081 Incidental Take Permit. He noted that USFWS received a revised final Safe Harbor Agreement for approval and publication in the Federal Register on June 24.

Director Corneille thanked Dr. Mitrovich for including the total cost of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Fuels Management Grant. Dr. Mitrovich stated that the white paper will outline how we build upon treatments and successes that occurred within the 125-acre footprint. He said that additional work is planned in the next federal fiscal year in October. Currently, the principal tool being utilized to address and treat new growth of grasses is herbicide.

Dr. Mitrovich reviewed the Wash Plan Implementation – Management Activities, specifically related to the effects of brown-headed cowbirds on California gnatcatcher and discussed adaptive management.

B. ENGINEERING UPDATE

Ms. Torres provided the Engineering Update, noting its inclusion on package page 61. She reviewed the construction of the Mentone Shop that began on March 26. She stated that the concrete pour began on May 28 after staff obtained the contractor's schedule, and the slab passed the 28-day break test performed by G3 quality. The building was delivered on June 28, and the frame construction of the building began July 9. Vice President Stewart and Director Corneille performed a site visit independently of one another on July 9. Ms. Torres stated that the septic work is ongoing.

Ms. Torres reviewed the construction of the Enhanced Recharge project. She stated that Basins C, D, E, 15, G, and H are currently recharging water. San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD) has been constructing cutthroat flumes through the drivable berms from Basins 10 through 14. This work is planned in a manner to maximize recharge. Ms. Torres noted that Seven Oaks Dam is undergoing maintenance, which limits local recharge. Basins 10 South and 18 have been cleaned by the District's contractor. Director Corneille requested a map showing the locations of the District's existing and new basins. He suggested color coding the basins as they come online. Ms. Torres said staff will share the map they use. President McDonald requested additional information regarding the maintenance being performed. She asked about the elevation of water being held behind the dam. A brief discussion of dam operations and maintenance ensued.

Mr. Lambie reviewed the PERC project status included on package page 61, noting both progress to date and planned work to be able to compare the projects at year-end.

Mr. Lambie reviewed the Waterman, Twin, and Lynwood basin projects. He noted that staff is coordinating with the San Bernardino County Flood Control District (FCD) and SBVMWD. The conceptual alternatives were reviewed with FCD, and they concurred with beginning evaluation of potential alternatives. Mr. Lambie is reviewing the geotechnical work on the infiltration to identify percolation rate estimates, along with other documents prepared by the consultants.

Mr. Lambie discussed the Plunge and Oak Creek PERC projects. He noted that staff may need additional scope items to review live hydrographs of that system, and that the item is on hold pending this authorization.

Mr. Lambie reviewed the Mill Creek PERC project. He is coordinating with SBVMWD staff on potential upsizing decisions.

Mr. Lambie discussed progress on the Upper SAR Integrated Model project, stating that most of the necessary data has been compiled and forwarded to the consultant. The District has been collaborating with SBVMWD and the City of San Bernardino to align future related tasks. Director Corneille is

interested in the District engineers using this or other existing models to predict groundwater mounding near the District's basins and, if possible, to develop alternatives. Mr. Lambie said a specialized, local model would be needed to address that question adequately. Ms. Miller said this item will be brought forward to the Operations Committee for further discussion. Ms. Torres said that field staff conduct weekly readings of water depth via the District's monitoring wells, and the Operations and Engineering teams use these data to closely monitor groundwater mounding. These data have been shared with SBVMWD for incorporation into the Integrated Regional Model. Ms. Miller said that these data will be shared with the Operations Committee.

C. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT AND MONTHLY RECHARGE REPORT

Ms. Miller indicated that the written General Manager's Report is included in the Board package on pages 63 through 66. She said there has been 56,284 AF of water recharged in the current water year, noting that WY24 is the fourth highest in District history back to 1912. Ms. Miller thanked the operations team, which completed significant work to dry out and clean our basins. She thanked Ms. Torres for her project management on the basin cleaning efforts to ensure the work was completed FY24. The work was completed FY24. The CalPERS unfunded accrued liability was paid as of July 1. Ms. Miller said that the initial Ad Hoc Audit Committee will be held on July 23. She noted that Plunge Creek has recharged over 1,300 AF of water this year. President McDonald appreciated Ms. Miller's presentation at the Toward Sustainable Groundwater in Agriculture conference held July 17-20. She noted that the presentation was excellent and that there will be opportunities to share the District's work in upcoming reports. She noted that other entities have expressed interest in collaborating with the District. Director Corneille requested the presentation from the conference. She directed the Board to the District successes listed on package page 65, the AB2257 Support Letter on package page 68, and the Monthly Recharge Report on package page 73. This item was received and filed.

D. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND STAFF TASKS

Vice President Stewart requested criteria for cost benefit analysis related to PERC projects be identified and brought back to the Board. President McDonald asked for interest from Directors regarding appointments covered in Appendix B and C of the Board Policy Manual.

8. MONTHLY BOARD MEMBER MEETING REPORTS, AND/OR BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Corneille attended the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD) Sunrise Ranch Master Plan Community Workshop on June 18. He completed his Sexual Harassment Prevention Training on June 27 and visited the Mentone Shop site on July 9. He also attended Director David E. Raley's Celebration of Life on June 29.

Vice President Stewart attended the Operations Committee on May 21, the Trails Committee on June 1, and the Basin Technical Advisory Committee on June 3. He also attended the PERC Policy Committee on June 4, Sexual Harassment Prevention Training on June 27, and a Mentone Shop site visit on July 9. On July 9, he signed checks.

Director Longville attended the SBVMWD Resources & Engineering Workshop on July 9.

President McDonald attended the SBVMWD Resources & Engineering Workshop on July 9, Director David E. Raley's Celebration of Life on June 29, and the Highland Area Chamber of Commerce on June 25. She attended the ACWA State Legislative Committee meeting on June 21 and the State Legislative Committee Agenda Review on June 20. She attended the Toward Sustainable Groundwater in Agriculture conference, the SBVMWD Resources and Engineering workshop on June 11, and the check signing on June 5. She attended the SBVMWD Board meeting on June 4 and BTAC on June 3.

9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

No upcoming meetings were discussed.

3. CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Director Longville and seconded by Director Corneille to adjourn to Closed Session on Item 3. The motion carried 4-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

**President McDonald: Yes
Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Yes**

General Counsel announced that the meeting would adjourn to a closed session to discuss all items on the posted agenda.

At 4:07 p.m., the meeting reconvened to an open session. Under Government Code Section 54957.1, there was no other reportable action during Closed Session.

4. ADJOURN MEETING

It was moved by Director Longville and seconded by Vice President Stewart to adjourn. The motion carried 4-0, with all Directors present voting in the affirmative.

**President McDonald: Yes
Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Yes**

At 4:07 p.m. the meeting adjourned to the Board meeting scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on August 14, 2024, in-person, teleconference, and Zoom meeting.



Betsy Miller
General Manager