

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2025
1:30 PM

President McDonald called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 1:30 PM 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
Robert Stewart, Vice President
John Longville, Director
Richard Corneille, Director
Mark Falcone, Director

STAFF PRESENT:

Betsy Miller, General Manager
David Cosgrove, General Counsel
Milan Mitrovich, Land Resources Manager
Angie Quiroga, Senior Administrative Analyst
Allison Zecher, Board Secretary
John Lambie, Consulting Chief Engineer and Geohydrologist
Zach Blum, Intern

GUESTS PRESENT:

Paul Kielhold, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
Cindy Saks, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
David Myers, San Bernardino County Museum

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair recognized Director Paul Kielhold of the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. Director Kielhold provided an update on Board appointments, noting that Director Harrison will serve as President and Director Botello as Vice President.

No other public comments were made.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the posted agenda.

3. INTRODUCTIONS AND GUEST RECOGNITION

The Board, staff, and Zoom attendees introduced themselves

4. DISTRICT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

President McDonald appointed Vice President Steward and Director Corneille to serve on the Ad Hoc General Manager Review Committee.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

The Board considered approval of the December 11, 2024, meeting minutes and the December 2024 expenditure reports, with a motion by Director Falcone to approve the consent calendar which was seconded by Vice President Stewart, noting corrections to Director Longville's title on package page 8. Discussion ensued on specific expenditures.

It was moved by Director Falcone and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the Consent Calendar: Item A, Board Minutes, December 11, 2024, with corrections; and Item B: Expenditure Report, December 2024. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

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

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS

There were no committee reports.

Action Items

A. UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR NOVEMBER 2024

Ms. Quiroga reviewed the unaudited financial reports for December 2024, beginning on page 27 of the agenda packet. She provided an overview of key financial details, including an overall interest income of approximately \$1.293 million, with \$250,000 moved from a bond. She noted that statements for review and payment of the Groundwater Charge have been mailed for the July 1 – December 31, 2024 period. Groundwater sustainability/replenishment revenue received from the prior fiscal year has been forwarded to the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. Mining income totaled approximately \$50,000, and \$128,000 in property tax revenue was received in the prior month.

Director Falcone inquired about the year-to-date budget information, noting that certain line items are shown as monthly while others are shown as annual without an index to clarify which approach is used. Staff discussed which lines are recorded in full when payments are expected, rather than proportionally distributed over the year, and offered to review the format of the monthly budget information with the Finance and Administration Committee to increase the clarity of financial reporting.

Ms. Quiroga discussed notable changes in expenses, including an increase in GL 5100, Professional Services, by approximately \$54,000, and GL 6000, General Administration, by approximately \$20,000. She noted that the initial misallocation of the \$5,000 water heater reimbursement from our insurance provider will be corrected.

The Board discussed the format of financial reporting, including adding a monthly profit and loss table to the report. The Finance and Administration Committee will review potential adjustments to the reporting format at an upcoming meeting.

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to approve Unaudited Financial Reports for December 2024. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

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

B. STATEMENT OF INVESTMENT POLICY FOR 2025

Ms. Miller presented the Statement of Investment Policy for 2025, as presented on page 34 of the agenda packet. She explained that this item is presented for Board consider each January in compliance with the required annual Board review and approval in Section 16. She noted that no changes have been made to the policy since its last adoption by the Board on January 10, 2024.

Ms. Miller highlighted key elements of the policy, including its primary objectives of safety, liquidity, and return on investment, which ensures that approximately \$43 million in reserves are invested in compliance with applicable California State Government Code sections.

Director Corneille discussed the delegation of investment management authority to the General Manager for 2025, as specified in Section 4 of the policy. It was clarified that under state law, this delegation is limited to one year and must be renewed annually. The current delegation expires on January 10, 2025. Director Falcone inquired about financial advisory services. Ms. Miller and Ms. Quiroga detailed that the District has previously sought financial advisory services, but had elected for staff to continue managing investments due to cost considerations. Staff confirmed that they regularly attend investment trainings and have hired external consultants to review our portfolio as needed.

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Falcone to approve the Statement of Investment Policy 2025 as presented and renew the delegation of investment management authority to the General Manager for 2025. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

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

Director Longville: Yes
Director Falcone: Yes

C. CONTRACT SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH NAKAE & ASSOCIATES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PERMIT CONDITIONS FOR THE PLUNGE CREEK CONSERVATION PROJECT

Dr. Mitrovich presented the proposed contract to complete the fifth year of work for the Plunge Creek Conservation Project, focusing on invasive plant treatment in compliance with various permits. Previous work under these permits has been completed, with the final task being the treatment of invasive plants in a 57.4-acre new area and revisiting 80 acres previously treated. The contract, with a \$50,000 not-to-exceed limit, will be managed through a time-and-materials structure, and staff will track progress via detailed ticketing systems. Staff noted that work is currently paused due to the dry winter, and could be further delayed if there is limited rainfall this spring.

It was moved by Vice President Stewart and seconded by Director Longville to approve the Contract Services Agreement with Nakae & Associates for implementation of permit conditions associated with the Plunge Creek Conservation Project tied to habitat restoration and enhancement services. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

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

D. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY AND SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Ms. Miller presented the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between San Bernardino County and the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District. The proposed MOU formalizes a partnership between the two entities to design, install and maintain a waterwise garden at the San Bernardino County Museum.

Director Falcone raised questions about the long-term maintenance of the garden, as well as specific language in the MOU that allows the County to remove the garden after five years. Mr. Myers discussed the Museum's landscape maintenance team and the Museum's Strategic Plan, which places significant emphasis on the garden. Following a thorough review and discussion of the MOU, the Board directed staff to move forward with design following County approval of the MOU, noting that additional Board approval is required for contracts to execute the work that exceed \$30,000.

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between

San Bernardino County and the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

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

E. DISTRICT BOARD PRIORITIES FOR 2025

Ms. Miller presented the proposed priorities for 2025, beginning with a review of progress on the 2024 priorities on package pages 91 and 92. An updated version of the report was handed out with recent changes highlighted. She discussed the completed 2024 priorities and provided details on significant progress made on incomplete priorities.

The Board reviewed the proposed priorities for 2025, as outlined in the packet on package page 93. Ms. Miller emphasized the challenge of narrowing the list of priorities and discussed the proposed 2025 focus on completing several long-term initiatives that have been in process for a number of years. Following completion of these long-term priorities, she recommended that the Board approve a reduced number of priorities in future years to more closely align with the District's size and staff capacity.

Director Falcone requested that the website update be a Priority 1 item due to its importance in delivering transparency and improved user experience to the public. Vice President Stewart requested that the office remodel be added to as a priority for 2025. Director Corneille recommended minor revisions to the deadlines for completing the waterwise garden at the San Bernardino County Museum and permitting and opening trail segments.

It was moved by Director Longville and seconded by Director Falcone to approve the District Board Priorities for 2025 with specific changes as discussed. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

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

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Dr. Mitrovich provided an environmental update to the Board, beginning with an update on the BLM fuels management grant, noting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District has toured the site. He then shared an updated on the Wash Plan Preserve Management Committee meeting held on December 5, 2024, in compliance with Wash

Plan requirements, noting that the Committee recommended implementation of a cowbird abatement program on the Wash Plan Preserve, which will be presented to the San Bernardino Valley Conservation Trust for consideration. The Board acknowledged the updates and expressed appreciation for the ongoing efforts and successful collaborations in environmental management.

ENGINEERING UPDATE

Ms. Miller provided an update on construction of the Mentone Shop, detailing work to ensure that the contract includes all outstanding tasks. She noted that the District team is working to be able to present a contract for consideration at the February Board meeting.

Ms. Miller shared that the Enhanced Recharge Phase 1B construction is complete, with on-going habitat restoration work in progress. The Board requested that staff schedule a tour to view the completed facilities.

Mr. Lambie provided updates on the PERC feasibility study tasks, detailing recent modeling results for various sites. He discussed project constraints related to construction timelines such as permitting, noting that it may be possible to complete certain smaller projects within one to two years, if prioritized by the project partners.

TELECONFERENCING OPTIONS UNDER THE BROWN ACT

Mr. Cosgrove provided an overview of the teleconferencing options available under the Brown Act, beginning with a discussion on changes enacted during the COVID-19 pandemic. He provided details on the legal requirements for the three types of teleconferencing currently allowed under the Brown Act, including traditional teleconferencing, emergency teleconferencing, and a hybrid teleconferencing option available until 2026. Mr. Cosgrove also addressed the practice of roll call voting, which is required under traditional teleconferencing procedures. He emphasized that roll call votes are helpful for transparency and record-keeping, ensuring that each member's vote is publicly recorded, and are used as standard practice to maintain consistency through in person and hybrid Board meetings.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT AND MONTHLY RECHARGE REPORT

Ms. Miller provided an update on December's activities, emphasizing that staff members were able to take time off to relax and spend with family and friends over the holidays. She highlighted two grant awards received during December, including a \$400,000 Water Smart Planning and Design Grant for PERC projects and a \$32,000 cybersecurity grant from the California OES to support cybersecurity improvements, and discussed staffing and office space updates. She discussed presentations by President McDonald at the fall ACWA conference and by Dr. Mitrovich at the National Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition conference.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND STAFF TASKS

Director Corneille proposed that the District provide a monetary donation of approximately \$1,000 to support the Day of Climate Action event on April 26, 2025, with the Board agreeing for this to be discussed by the Finance and Administration Committee meeting on January 22, 2025. Vice President Stewart reminded the Board of the request for professional maps for display in the meeting room.

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

Vice President Stewart attended the following meetings:

- SBVWCD Board Meeting on December 11th
- Valley District Policy Meeting on December 16th
- Loma Linda Chamber of Commerce on January 8th
- SBVWCD Board of Directors Meeting on January 8th

Director Corneille attended the following meetings:

- SBVWCD Board Meeting on December 11th

Director Longville attended the following meetings:

- SBVWCD Board Meeting on December 11th
- SBVMWD Policy Administration Workshop on December 16th
- SBVMWD Board of Directors Meeting on December 17th
- SBVMWD Board Meeting on January 7th

Director Falcone attended the following meetings:

- SBVWCD Board Meeting on December 11th
- East Valley Board Meeting on December 11th
- SBVMWD Policy Administration Workshop on December 16th
- SBVMWD Board of Directors Meeting on December 17th
- Redlands City Council Meeting on December 17th
- Ethics Training on December 18th
- Workplace Harassment Training on December 19th
- SBVMWD Board Meeting on January 7th

President McDonald attended the following meetings:

- SBVWCD Board Meeting on December 11th
- SBVMWD Policy Administration Workshop on December 16th
- SBVMWD Board of Directors Meeting on December 17th
- SBVWCD Checks Signed on January 3rd
- SBVMWD Board Meeting on January 7th

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

A travel request for Director Falcone to attend the California Special District's Association Special District Leadership Academy in La Quinta in April was discussed, referring to the details found on Package Page 128.

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the Travel Request for Director Falcone to attend the CSDA's Special District Leaderships Academy in La Quinta. The motion carried 5-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

President McDonald: Yes

Vice President Stewart: Yes
Director Corneille: Yes
Director Longville: Yes
Director Falcone: Yes

9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

The upcoming Spring ACWA Conference was briefly discussed. Staff asked Directors to reach out if they wish to register for this event to allow staff to prepare travel requests for the February Board Meeting. Directors Corneille, Longville, and Falcone expressed interest in attending.

10. CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Miller stated that staff wished to discuss the items listed under Closed Session with the Board.

It was moved by Vice President Stewart and seconded by Director Falcone to adjourn to Closed Session. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

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

At 4:16 p.m., the meeting reconvened to an open session. Under Government Code Section 54957.1, there was no other reportable action during Closed Session.

11. ADJOURN MEETING

It was moved by Director Longville and seconded by Director Corneille to adjourn. The motion carried 5-0-0, with all Directors present voting in the affirmative.

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

At 4:17 p.m. the meeting adjourned to the Board meeting scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on March 12, 2025, in-person, teleconference, and Zoom meeting.



Betsy Miller
General Manager