

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES OF JULY 9, 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 Teams. 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  
Richard Corneille, Director  
John Longville, Director  
Mark E. Falcone, Director

STAFF PRESENT:

Betsy Miller, General Manager  
David Cosgrove, General Counsel  
Milan Mitrovich, Land Resources Manager  
Angie Quiroga, Senior Administrative Analyst  
Aaron Rueda, Administrative Analyst  
Allison Zecher, Board Secretary

GUESTS PRESENT:

Leonardo Ferrando, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
Cindy Saks, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
David Smith, East Valley Water District

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public comments were made.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

No additions or deletions were made to the agenda.

3. INTRODUCTIONS AND GUEST RECOGNITION

The Board, staff, in-person, and Teams attendees introduced themselves.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

The Board considered approval of the meeting minutes from June 11, 2025.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Falcone to approve the Consent Calendar. 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**

## **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS**

### Action Items

#### **A. UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JUNE 2025**

Ms. Quiroga presented the Unaudited Financial Report for June 2025, found on page 27 of the agenda packet. Ms. Quiroga reviewed the income statement on page 27, noting total revenue for June of approximately \$464,000, with strong contributions from interest income and mining revenue. Year-to-date revenue have exceeded the annual budget at 114%.

Operating expenses for June were approximately \$370,000, resulting in a net income before capital improvement projects of nearly \$95,000. Major expenses for the month, detailed on page 28, included professional services, salaries and benefits, ongoing basin cleaning work, and habitat surveys. Director fees of about \$8,500 were noted on page 31, including travel to the ACWA conference. Ms. Quiroga noted that additional year-end invoices and adjustments will appear in the fourth quarter financials, which will be presented in September.

Capital improvement expenses for June totaled approximately \$140,000, as shown on page 33, with year-to-date capital spending over \$2.1 million. These included work on the PERC projects, continued progress on the Mentone shop, and improvements to equipment and facilities. The District's cash position as of June 30 was confirmed at \$3.17 million with an updated handout of page 34, and net operating revenue in the enterprise fund, also on page 34, remained strong.

Ms. Quiroga also summarized a busy month of investment activity on page 35, including reinvestment of funds from maturing Treasury notes into CDs and term accounts to secure favorable rates and protect against market volatility.

Director Corneille thanked Ms. Quiroga for the clear and detailed report, and staff confirmed that the unaudited expense details would continue to be provided on a monthly basis. Directors expressed appreciation for staff's careful management of District funds and the transparent presentation of financial information.

**It was moved by Director Falcone and seconded by Director Longville to approve the Unaudited Financial Reports for June 2025 as presented. The motion carried 5-0-0.**

**President McDonald: Yes**

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

**B. THIRD AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR  
MANAGED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES WITH PCTRONICS**

Ms. Miller presented the Third Amendment to the Contract Services Agreement for Managed Information Technology Services with PCtronics, beginning on package page 36. She explained that PCtronics has been providing IT support to the District since 2023, including help desk, network management, backups, security, and disaster recovery services. In November 2024, the Board approved a prior amendment that allowed PCtronics to handle the procurement of IT equipment and services directly, which has resulted in better pricing and reduced workload for District staff.

The proposed Third Amendment would extend the contract, which otherwise expires at the end of July 2025, through July 2026, continuing the monthly managed services. It also retains provisions allowing PCtronics to complete special IT projects, purchase hardware and software, and manage service and repair contracts up to specified limits, all of which are already budgeted for in the FY26 budget.

Board members asked several questions. Director Falcone asked whether this contract comes to the Board every year and whether that practice should continue. Staff and counsel explained that the annual review provides a useful opportunity to assess performance and cost before renewal. He asked whether there was a price increase, and Ms. Miller confirmed there was not. He then inquired about insurance and indemnification language, and staff clarified that the provisions included in the original agreement are not altered by this amendment.

President McDonald also discussed cybersecurity protections and noted that these services align well with the District's participation in JPIA's cybersecurity program. President McDonald and other directors expressed appreciation for the work staff put into aligning the contract's term to avoid year-end bottlenecks in future renewals and acknowledged the ongoing progress on IT modernization and security improvements.

**It was moved by Director Falcone and seconded by Director Corneille to approve the Third Amendment to Contract Services Agreement for Professional Services and Managed Services and Information Technology Modernization with PCtronics in an amount not to exceed \$71,300. 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 FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OUTREACH PROFESSIONAL SERVICES WITH THE THUNDERWHEEL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Miller presented the Contract Services Agreement for Public Information and Outreach Professional Services with Thunderwheel Communications, beginning on package page 41. She explained that Thunderwheel has supported the District since 2017 with communications services, including social media, newsletters, events, video production, press releases, annual reports, award applications, and community outreach.

The Board previously approved a revised contract in 2024, and this proposed agreement would extend the contract through the next fiscal year, with minor changes to the contract language approved by District Counsel. Ms. Miller highlighted Thunderwheel's deep understanding of the District's mission and voice, noting their ability to effectively represent the District in public-facing materials. The monthly retainer rate of \$3,400 remains unchanged, with additional services like video, photography, and award applications billed at \$125 per hour, also unchanged from last year.

President McDonald praised the quality and responsiveness of Thunderwheel's work, noting their consistent support during high-profile events, such as the Secretary of the Interior's visit and the District's 90th anniversary, without charging additional fees. Director Corneille noted the company's tendency to bill infrequently and asked staff to remind them to submit invoices more regularly.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the Contract Services Agreement for Public Information and Outreach Professional services with Thunderwheel Communications in an amount not to exceed \$45,000. 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. CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

Dr. Mitrovich presented the item, beginning on package page 43, and provided an update on the District's grant application to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the Endangered Species Conservation and Recovery Grant Program. He explained that the application builds on a similar but unfortunately unfunded submission in 2023 to support a regional monitoring program for the San Bernardino kangaroo rat (SBKR). If the current proposal is awarded, the grant would fund fieldwork, data analysis, and regional coordination through

2028, with District staff and partners like USGS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and others participating.

Dr. Mitrovich noted that the total project cost is just over \$400,000, with about \$217,000 requested in federal funds. Staff proposes District contributions of \$225,000 in matching funds from currently planned projects, including both cash and in-kind services. He clarified that these matching funds reflect work the District already expects to perform in support of the Wash Plan and regional conservation efforts.

Board members asked questions about the geographic scope of the program, which spans the SBKR's range from the San Bernardino Valley to Western Riverside County. Dr. Mitrovich described the District's role in training, fieldwork, and data collection, and highlighted key participation from multiple agencies and stakeholders.

Directors commended Dr. Mitrovich and staff for developing a program that can be scaled to provide benefits across the region. They agreed that the grant application represents an important extension of the District's efforts to date, and expressed support for the continued commitment to this collaborative conservation initiative.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to authorize use of expenditures for the San Bernardino kangaroo rat monitoring program planned for the Wash Plan Preserve and the Mill Creek Groundwater Recharge Facility Conservation Benefit Agreement from 2026-2028 as matching funds for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Endangered Species Conservation and Recovery Grant Program in an amount not to exceed \$225,000, and authorize the General Manager to prepare and sign a letter of commitment for these matching funds for submittal with the range-wide SBKR monitoring proposal prepared for the Program's Proposal Solicitation. 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. ENDORSEMENT FOR MR. ERNESTO A. AVILA P.E. FOR ACWA PRESIDENT**

President McDonald introduced the item, explaining that the Board was asked to consider endorsing Mr. Ernesto ("Ernie") Avila, P.E., for the position of ACWA President, as outlined in Resolution 635. President McDonald shared her experience serving alongside Mr. Avila during his tenure as ACWA Vice President and JPIA Board member, describing him as an outstanding leader with deep expertise, strong commitment to service, and excellent contributions to the water community.

She noted that although Mr. Avila has no competition for the position, he had requested formal support from the District, and she recommended that the Board adopt the resolution of endorsement. President McDonald, Vice President Stewart, and Director Corneille expressed their support for Mr. Avila's candidacy, highlighting his engineering background, leadership skills, and dedication to the mission of ACWA and JPIA, particularly during challenging times for the organization.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to approve Resolution No. 365 endorsing the nomination of Mr. Ernesto A. Avila, P.E., for President of the Association of California Water Agencies for the 2026-2027 term. 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**

#### **F. CSDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION BALLOT FOR THE 2026-2028 TERM**

Ms. Miller presented the item on package page 82, explaining that every two years, the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) asks member agencies to cast their vote in the CSDA Board of Directors election for the region. The District was asked to select a candidate for the 2026–2028 term, with nominations due in the coming weeks.

Ms. Miller reviewed the three known candidates and noted that the Board could choose to vote for a candidate or take no action, in which case no vote would be submitted. President McDonald indicated she was familiar with candidate Don Bartz, citing his prior service and experience.

Director Longville moved to support Don Bartz as the District's nominee for the CSDA Board of Directors. The motion was seconded, and following brief discussion, the Board agreed to submit the vote in favor of Mr. Bartz.

**It was moved by Director Longville and seconded by Director Falcone to select candidate Don Bartz for the CSDA Board of Directors Elections for 2026-2028, Seat B – Southern Network, and direct staff to nominate the Board's selected candidate, Don Bartz via the California Special District Association online voting platform. 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. INFORMATION ITEMS

### ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Dr. Mitrovich provided an update on the District's environmental and habitat management activities, beginning on page 73 of the Board packet. With the spring field season complete, the team wrapped up its San Bernardino kangaroo rat (SBKR) monitoring, slender-horned spineflower outplanting trials, and seed bulking activities, as well as California gnatcatcher monitoring. Staff transitioned back into the office to focus on planning and reporting, including hosting the Wash Plan Preserve Management Committee meeting on June 4. This spring meeting brought together the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Valley District, Orange County Public Works, and San Bernardino County Flood Control District to review recent fieldwork and ongoing initiatives.

He also highlighted progress toward aligning state and federal permitting through a mitigation credit agreement, and discussed his meeting with CDFW's Habitat Conservation Planning Branch in Sacramento on June 3. Vice President Stewart asked questions about the scale of potential relocations to support Wash Plan Covered Activities and the capacity of preserved areas to accept more individuals. Dr. Mitrovich provided details of the process, noting that habitat improvements in Plunge Creek and elsewhere have created space for relocated animals and that the process includes soft releases, acclimation periods, and post-release monitoring. President McDonald expressed appreciation for the careful, science-driven approach and noted the broader interest from agencies and stakeholders in learning from the District's efforts.

Lastly, Dr. Mitrovich shared updates on regional partnerships. On June 9, staff participated in the first technical meeting of the Seven Oaks Dam settlement agreement working group, which includes local sponsors, the Army Corps, and conservation organizations, focused on enhancing habitat within the Wooley Star Preserve and adjacent areas. On June 10, the Flood Control District toured the District's spineflower bulking site to learn more about restoration techniques that could be applied elsewhere. President McDonald praised the environmental team for its leadership, collaborative approach, and the growing recognition of the District's role in advancing conservation across the region.

### ENGINEERING UPDATE

Ms. Miller provided the engineering update, reporting that construction of the Mentone Shop is approximately 80% complete as of last week.

Ms. Miller also updated the Board on the PERC Feasibility Study. Draft sections have been completed for the Waterman, Twin, and Lynwood Flood Control sites, as well as the Oak and Plunge sites. District staff have completed their review of the Oak and Plunge sections and are currently reviewing the Flood Control facilities section. The Mill Creek section remains slightly behind the others, though the hydraulics technical memo was received last week and forwarded to the technical writer to be incorporated into the overall report without delay.

Director Corneille discussed the anticipated delivery of draft materials to the Operations Committee, noting the value of receiving the package early to allow adequate time for review. Director Corneille and Vice President Stewart requested that the prepared volumes be made available in both hard copy and digital formats, with the understanding that the documents are sizable but concise and consistently formatted for ease of comparison.

Lastly, President McDonald expressed interest in touring the nearly completed Mentone Shop. Ms. Miller noted that a full Board visit and celebratory barbecue will be scheduled once construction is complete, though an earlier, smaller tour could be arranged for the Operations Committee if desired. Directors agreed to defer the tour until the full Board event and thanked staff for the updates.

## GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Miller provided her report, beginning on page 76 of the Board packet, and noted that the District surpassed 35,000 acre-feet of recharge for the water year, about half of which came from State Project Water. She also highlighted that the District reached a historic milestone of 1.5 million acre-feet of cumulative recharge since inception.

She shared that all FY25 employee performance reviews were completed, and finance staff have begun fiscal year-end closeout and audit preparation with the District's new auditor. Ms. Miller mentioned that the Operations Committee meeting was rescheduled to ensure full participation and that construction at the Mentone Shop remains on track.

Ms. Miller also reported that two of the four major tasks under the District's local cybersecurity grant program have been completed, with staff actively participating in training modules. Although the District was not selected for Congressman Aguilar's FY26 Community Project funding, his office encouraged resubmitting the application next year. She expressed pride in the natural resource team's completion of monitoring across all 141 SBKR habitat sites and their strong performance throughout the spring field season.

Additional highlights included field and basin maintenance work, removal of excavated material stockpiles, and continued invasive species management. Staff also attended the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition annual meeting and toured the State Water Project infrastructure with San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. Ms. Miller concluded by sharing her participation in a professional training in Atlanta and acknowledged the team's hard work and enthusiasm, as shown in photos of fieldwork and facilities improvements on page 79.

## BOARD PRIORITIES PROGRESS REPORT: Q2

Ms. Miller presented the second-quarter progress report on the District's 2025 Board Priorities, beginning on page 81 of the Board packet. She reported strong progress on recharge goals, with over 35,000 acre-feet recharged for the year so far, including significant State Project Water deliveries. She confirmed that priorities #1 (Operate and Maintain SAR and Mill Creek Groundwater Recharge Facilities) and #2 (Operate Enhanced Recharge Groundwater Recharge Facility)—recharge and groundwater sustainability—are on track for completion this year.

For Priority #3 (PERC project prioritization), Ms. Miller noted that project prioritization has been completed, with the feasibility study report for Oak, Plunge, and Flood Control sites underway. The Mill Creek section is slightly behind but progressing as technical memos are completed and incorporated into the report. For Priority #4 (Complete Wash Plan BLM Land Exchange), Ms. Miller stated that escrow instructions have been received for the BLM land exchange, and staff are actively working with mining partners to finalize a necessary lease amendment to avoid delays.

On Priority #5 (Construct Mentone Shop), Ms. Miller confirmed that construction of the Mentone Shop is approximately 80% complete, with substantial progress since the last report, and remains on track for Q3 completion pending Southern California Edison service upgrades. Priority #6 (PERC final design) remains dependent on completion of the feasibility study and regional discussions.

Regarding Priority #7 (Update Website), Ms. Miller shared that a kickoff meeting was held earlier in the week with both the content and design consultants for the District's website redesign. Staff expect to bring a status update to the Finance & Administration Committee and an Outreach Committee discussion item in the fall, aiming for a late 2025 launch. For Priority #8 (Obtain Mill Creek Operations Conservation Benefit Agreement), Ms. Miller acknowledged that the District continues to follow up with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on long-pending approvals, noting the agency's heavy workload.

For Priority #9 (Design Water-wise Garden at San Bernardino County Museum), Ms. Miller announced that the kickoff meeting for the County Museum project is scheduled for the following week, with staff already having visited the site to collect as-built information and prepare CAD drawings to save on consultant costs. Board members asked about the role of soil conditions in the Water Wise Garden design. Ms. Miller explained that the design team will consider native plant suitability, local soils, and irrigation to ensure successful plantings.

Ms. Miller acknowledged that Priority #12 (Wash Plan wildland trails) has not yet been addressed this year but confirmed it remains a focus for the remainder of 2025. She also noted ongoing progress on office space planning, invasive species management, and equipment leasing to support fieldwork.

Board members asked clarifying questions about timelines for the trails, and museum garden projects, and emphasized the importance of addressing the BLM land exchange before potential federal resource constraints could cause delays. They also praised the field team's responsiveness and detailed knowledge in tackling invasive species and maintenance challenges. Ms. Miller concluded by noting that with the budget and employee reviews complete, staff are refocusing efforts on remaining priorities, grant applications, and project milestones.

## FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND STAFF TASKS

### 7. MONTHLY BOARD MEMBER MEETING REPORTS, AND/OR BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Falcone attended the following meetings since the last Board meeting:

- June 11 – SBVWCD Board Meeting
- June 11 – East Valley Water District Board Meeting
- June 16 – SBVWCD Enhance Recharge Basin Tour
- June 16 – ASBCSD Dinner
- June 17 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- June 24 – Highland Chamber of Commerce Monthly Luncheon
- July 3 – Decorated City of Highland Float for the Fourth of July Day Parade
- July 4 – Fourth of July Parade in the City of Highland

- July 8 – SBVMWD Engineering & Resource Workshop
- July 8 – City Council Meeting for City of Highland
- July 9 – SBVWCD Board Meeting

Director Longville attended the following meetings since the last Board meeting:

- June 17 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- July 8 – SBVMWD Engineering & Resource Workshop
- July 9 – SBVWCD Board Meeting

Director Corneille had no meetings to report since the last Board meeting.

Vice President Stewart attended the following meetings since the last Board meeting:

- May 28 – SBV Conservation Trust Meeting
- June 2 – BTAC Committee Meeting
- June 16 – SBVWCD Enhance Recharge Basin Tour
- July 9 – SBVWCD Board Meeting

President McDonald attended the following meetings since the last Board meeting:

- June 16 – SBVWCD Enhance Recharge Basin Tour
- June 17 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- June 20 – ACWA State Legislative Committee Meeting
- June 20 – Region 9 ACWA Agenda Review Committee Meeting
- July 1 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- July 9 – SBVWCD Board Meeting

#### Travel Requests

Directors Falcone and Longville requested approval to attend the CSDA's 2025 Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase, scheduled for August 25-28.

Director Corneille requested a summary of the events and report of sessions attended upon the return from the attendance of the CSDA's 2025 Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase.

In response to concerns raised by Director Corneille regarding lodging costs at past conferences, staff will reassess hotel options to ensure reasonable pricing and availability before confirming accommodations.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the travel requests for Directors Longville and Falcone to attend the CSDA's 2025 Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase, scheduled for August 25-28 with a summary report of sessions attended at the following meeting. 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**

8. CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Miller stated that staff wished to discuss the items listed under Closed Session with the Board at 3:20 p.m.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville 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 4:55 p.m., the meeting was reconvened to an open session. Under Government Code Section 54957.1, there was no other reportable action during Closed Session.

9. ADJOURN MEETING

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Falcone 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 4:56 p.m. the meeting adjourned to the Board meeting scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on August 13, 2025, in-person, teleconference, and Teams meeting.



---

Betsy Miller  
General Manager