

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 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  
Aliza Olmos, Assistant Engineer  
Christian Collier, Field Operations Specialist I  
Allison Zecher, Board Secretary

GUESTS PRESENT:

Cindy Saks, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
Paul Kielhold, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
Zachary Blum, Riverside County Flood Control  
David Smith, East Valley Water District  
Bill Taylor, Robertson's Ready Mix

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 and the Board welcomed Christian Collier, newly appointed Field Operations Specialist I.

#### 4. CONSENT CALENDAR

The Board considered the Consent Calendar, which included Board Minutes from August 13, 2025, and the August Expenditure Report

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion carried 4-0-1, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.**

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

#### 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS/ACTION ITEMS

##### Committee Reports

Chair Corneille provided a verbal report on the Ad Hoc Audit Committee meeting held on August 19, 2025. The Committee met with Brandon Farrell of Eadie Payne, LLP, the partner in charge of the audit. Mr. Ferrell presented the audit timeline: Field work is scheduled for early October, the draft report is planned for November, and the final audit will be presented to the Board at their December meeting. Mr. Ferrell also reviewed new GASB requirements, including guidance on the treatment of sick leave and risk disclosures, and discussed any questions or concerns held by the Committee.

Chair Stewart provided a verbal report on the Finance & Administration Committee meeting held on August 20. The Committee reviewed progress on the agency's website update, noting improvements to the framework to enhance user-friendliness and accessibility, as well as potential adjustments to the agency logo and tagline. These items will be discussed in detail by the Outreach & Communications Committee.. Finally, the Committee presented the annual Board calendar for coordination of meetings and activities in the year ahead.

##### Action Items

##### A. UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JULY 2025

Ms. Quiroga presented the Unaudited Financial Report for August 2025, beginning on page 30 of the agenda packet. She noted that a correction was made to remove recorded groundwater revenue, based on invoices, which have not yet been received. A revised income statement was provided and displayed during the meeting.

Interest income, GL 4010, totaled through August, was slightly above budget. Groundwater revenue was minimal, reflecting payments from seven smaller producers for the January to June 2025 assessment period, with larger municipal payments pending. Ms. Quiroga reviewed additional income related to the Wash Plan, from mining revenue, and grant funds from ACWA

JPIA's Wellness Grant Program. She then reviewed operating expenses and capital improvement project expenditures for August, directing the Board's attention to pages 31–35, and the District's cash position as of August 31, 2025, on page 37.

No investment redemptions or maturities occurred in August; however, dividend reinvestments continued automatically, with a total of approximately \$30,000 earned in the General Fund and PERC accounts.

During discussion, Director Falcone inquired about a \$60,000 basin cleaning expense from GL 5050 on page 31 noted in disbursements. Ms. Quiroga clarified that the invoice from Larry Jacinto Construction was for work performed through June 30, 2025, and will be rebooked to the prior fiscal year. A separate \$13,100 invoice reflected July work. The equipment rental approved by the Board in July was not part of these charges.

The Board received the report, and Directors commended staff for their diligence in tracking adjustments and clarifying reimbursements.

**It was moved by Director Falcone and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the Unaudited Financial Reports for August 2025 as presented. The motion carried 4-0-1.**

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

#### **B. FOURTH QUARTER UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

Ms. Quiroga presented the Unaudited Financial Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, beginning on page 41 of the agenda packet. She noted that the report incorporated year-end accruals and adjustments following the June 2025 financials previously reviewed at the July Board meeting.

Total income for the year was \$5,070,570, consisting of interest income of \$2,326,991, groundwater revenue of \$1,582,431, mining revenue of \$653,160, Wash Plan reimbursements of \$205,310, miscellaneous and grant income, salary reimbursements, and property tax revenue.

Operating expenses for FY25 totaled \$3,829,454, resulting in net income before capital improvement projects of approximately \$2.7 million. Capital improvement project expenditures totaled \$2,137,207, including major work on the PERC projects and the Mentone property shop on page 46. Net income after capital expenditures was \$595,928.

The District's cash position as of June 30, 2025, was \$3,186,685 after obligations, as shown on page 48.

An unaudited balance sheet was also provided beginning on page 49. Ms. Quiroga explained that some adjustments, including GASB entries, will be completed with the auditors as part of the annual audit process. The Board discussed the preferred level of detail for quarterly balance sheet reporting and agreed staff would continue providing the full detail unless otherwise directed.

The report was received by the Board, with Directors commending staff for providing clear and timely year-end financial information.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Falcone to approve the Fourth Quarter Unaudited Financials for FY25 as recommended by the Finance & Administration Committee as revised. The motion carried 4-0-1, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.**

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

#### **C. AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT OF IN-HOUSE COUNSEL AND DISTRICT COUNSEL BONUS**

Ms. Miller presented an amendment to the agreement for employment of in-house District counsel, beginning on page 52 of the agenda packet, with the draft amendment provided on pages 54–55. Ms. Miller reported that the amendment was prepared in response to the Board’s request to award a \$15,000 merit bonus to Mr. Cosgrove following his recent annual review. The amendment adds a provision authorizing merit bonuses at the Board’s discretion and updates counsel’s salary to reflect cost-of-living adjustments since the contract was originally executed in 2021.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved the amendment to the agreement and authorized issuance of a \$15,000 merit bonus to District Counsel Mr. Cosgrove. President McDonald and Director Corneille expressed their appreciation for the exceptional service provided by counsel.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Falcone to approve the Amendment to Agreement for Employment of In-house Counsel and direct the General Manager to provide a merit bonus to District Counsel in the amount of \$15,000 in recognition of the value of this work in FY25. The motion carried 4-0-1, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.**

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

#### D. CAPITAL VEHICLE PURCHASE OF A FORD F-150

Ms. Miller presented the capital vehicle purchase of a Ford F-150, beginning on page 57 of the agenda packet. She explained that the approved FY26 budget included a new truck for the Field Operations Specialist I position, recently filled by Christian Collier on August 25, 2025. With this position now staffed, the District is prepared to proceed with a vehicle purchase.

Ms. Miller and staff reviewed quotes obtained from three regional Ford dealerships and recommended purchase from the local Redlands dealership, citing both competitive cost and proximity for ongoing service compared to more distant dealerships. The proposed purchase is consistent with the specifications of existing District vehicles. She also sought Board direction on whether to include an extended warranty, which would add approximately \$4,900 to the purchase price.

Director Falcone inquired about the configuration of the truck, and staff provided details on the vehicle specifications.

Director Corneille raised the need to evaluate purchasing an electric Ford Lightning in lieu of a gas-powered vehicle. He emphasized that the City of Redlands has adopted a Climate Action Plan that prioritizes a transition to electric vehicles and stated that the District should lead by example and strongly consider purchasing its first electric truck. He further noted that operating and maintenance costs are generally lower for electric vehicles, resulting in lower costs for District rate-payers.

Director Falcone asked if the Mentone Shop has charging infrastructure. Ms. Miller Confirmed that while charging infrastructure is not currently in place at the Mentone Shop, but the facility is being expanded with upgraded electrical panels that will support EV charging.

Directors discussed both the advantages and limitations of an immediate transition. President McDonald and Director Falcone expressed concern about the reliability and availability of electric trucks for fieldwork. Director Corneille noted the value of transitioning to electric trucks incrementally and saw merit in obtaining quotes for electric options before proceeding.

Director Falcone made a motion to approve purchase of the gas-powered Ford F-150 without the extended warranty, noting that the manufacturer's warranty already provides substantial coverage. This motion failed for lack of a second.

Director Corneille made a substitute motion to defer the purchase until the next Board meeting on October 8, 2025, directing staff to obtain comparative quotes for both the gas-powered Ford F-150 and the electric Ford F-150 Lightning, including cost, availability, delivery timeline, and any additional infrastructure requirements. President McDonald also requested that staff broaden the search to consider other electric vehicle options beyond Ford, provided they meet District field needs. She commented on long-term planning for electric vehicle integration, noting the importance of reviewing battery life, replacement costs, towing capacity, and maintenance data from other public agencies or fleet operators. Director Falcone voiced concerns about cost and operational flexibility of current electric vehicles and Director Corneille voiced his opinion that the

District should align its capital purchases with environmental stewardship and regional climate goals.

Following discussion, the Board approved the substitute motion. Staff will return at the next meeting with updated quotes and analysis for both gas and electric vehicle options, along with information on charging requirements and potential impacts to field operations.

**It was moved by Director Longville and seconded by Director Corneille to move to request this item be tabled and referred to the Board of Directors meeting on October 8, 2025, for reconsideration of specific issues discussed. The motion carried 4-1-0, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.**

**President McDonald: Yes  
Vice President Stewart: Yes  
Director Corneille: Yes  
Director Longville: Yes  
Director Falcone: No**

#### **E. COMMUNITY MITIGATION PROGRAM DOCUMENTS FOR SBCTA'S STATE ROUTE 210 MIXED FLOW LANE ADDITION PROJECT**

Ms. Miller presented the Community Mitigation Program documents for SBCTA's State Route 210 Mixed Flow Lane Addition Project beginning on page 59 of the agenda packet. She explained that the District Board previously reviewed and approved these documents in April 2020. While the Endowment Agreement was executed in 2021, the remaining documents had been delayed pending approvals from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Those approvals were received last month, and staff elected to return this item to the Board to share an update and provide the opportunity for questions given the passage of time.

Mr. Cosgrove described the agreements in detail. The core transaction involves transfer of a 4.2-acre conservation easement on District land to the Trust, funded by SBCTA through money deposited with CDFW. No changes have been made to the conservation easement purchase price of \$567,000 or to the startup costs of \$58,250, since 2020. However, interim costs for three years of habitat management have increased from \$87,060 to \$108,930 and the non-wasting endowment, which funds long-term management of the property, has increased from \$97,591 to \$121,451, to address inflation. Staff requested Board authorization for the General Manager and General Counsel to make clerical or non-substantive revisions if required by CDFW or SBCTA counsel, such as updating the preliminary title report to allow issuance of a title insurance policy.

Ms. Miller directed the Board to page 60 of the packet regarding fiscal impact. Upon completion, the District will receive \$567,000 for the conservation easement, deposited into the Land Enterprise Fund in accordance with the Board's previously adopted Community Mitigation Program policy. The San Bernardino Valley Conservation Trust has already received \$58,250 in startup funds, and an additional \$288,631 will be deposited with the San Bernardino Valley Conservation Trust for interim management and the endowment.

During discussion, Director Corneille asked where the parcels were located, and Dr. Mitrovich showed the location of the 4.2 acres on a map handout. Vice President Stewart sought clarification on whether future payments would go to the District or to CDFW. Ms. Miller explained that all funds had already been deposited with CDFW by SBCTA, allowing the agency to secure its permit; funds are released from CDFW to the District and San Bernardino Valley Conservation Trust as agreements are finalized. Vice President Stewart also inquired about the approximate per-acre mitigation value, noting it was close to \$130,000 per acre. Ms. Miller responded that this figure is based on property values in 2020 and would not apply to any future transactions. Additional questions were raised regarding potential changes to the title report and whether CDFW had approved the exceptions. Mr. Cosgrove explained that CDFW has reviewed similar exceptions multiple times under prior agreements and is now familiar with the recurring issues, so staff does not anticipate obstacles.

President McDonald acknowledged the long timeline since the Board's original approval in 2020 and expressed support for moving the agreements forward.

**It was moved by Vice President Stewart and seconded by Director Corneille to approve the Agreement for Acquisition of Conservation Easement, updated to reflect tasks that have been accomplished since 2021 and costs adjusted by CDFW, and the Conservation Easement Deed the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority's State Route 210 Mixed Flow Lane Addition Project, subject to clerical or non-substantive revisions requested by CDFW and/or SBCTA as recommended by the General Manager and General Counsel. 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. CALIFORNIA SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION 2026 COMMITTEE AND EXPERT FEEDBACK TEAM NOMINATIONS**

Ms. Miller presented California Special Districts Association 2026 Committee and Expert Feedback Team Nominations on page 141 of the agenda packet. She explained that as a member of the California Special Districts Association (CSDA), the District annually receives a solicitation to nominate directors or staff to serve on CSDA committees or expert feedback teams. Committees generally meet at least twice per year, with a minimum mandatory attendance requirement, and at least one meeting typically held in Sacramento. Expert feedback teams require less involvement and primarily operate through email responses or occasional virtual meetings. A list of committees was included on page 141, with expert feedback teams on page 142 and a breakdown of estimated costs provided under fiscal impact. Detailed descriptions of the committees were included on page 143. Ms. Miller noted that Director Longville currently serves on the CSDA Elections and Bylaws Committee.

During discussion, Director Falcone asked whether multiple committee applications may be submitted. Ms. Miller confirmed this is possible. Director Falcone expressed interest in applying for the Legislative Committee and the Professional Development Committee. President McDonald noted the benefits for the District to have representation on legislative matters in addition to existing service on the Elections and Bylaws Committee.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart to direct staff to submit interest forms for 2026 CSDA committee and/or expert feedback team service, nominating Director Falcone for the Legislative and Professional Development Committees and Director Longville for the Elections and Bylaws Committee. 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**

### 3. ASSOCIATION OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY SPECIAL DISTRICT'S 2026 HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

Ms. Miller presented the Association of San Bernardino County Special District's 2026 hosting opportunities, noting that the District previously hosted in July 2025. For 2026, limited dates remain available, and staff requested Board direction on whether the District should host again.

President McDonald expressed positive feedback on the District's experience hosting in 2025 and supported participation in 2026. Following discussion, it was moved and seconded to direct staff to confirm the District's participation as host for the Association of San Bernardino County Special Districts meeting on February 23, 2026.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to select the primary date to host the Association of San Bernardino County Special District's dinner on February 23, 2026. 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**

### 4. INFORMATION ITEMS

## ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Dr. Mitrovich presented the monthly environmental update, beginning on page 145 of the agenda packet. He reported on staff meetings with the Wildlife Conservation Board on August 6 and 8 to discuss grant opportunities for expansion of the Plunge Creek Conservation Project and the BLM Fuels Management Grant Project.

He also noted that on August 8 and 26, the District received approvals from CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the San Bernardino kangaroo rat (SBKR) translocation plan required under the Wash Plan and Robertson's Ready Mix incidental take permit. In response to a question from President McDonald, Dr. Mitrovich discussed recent data on the optimal seasons to translocate SBKR.

On August 12, staff met with Redlands Fire Marshal Vince Anderson to discuss coordination with the City's Community Wildfire Protection Plan in the Santa Ana River Wash and along Highway 38. The Fire Marshal expressed support for the District's ongoing fuel modification efforts and discussed opportunities for additional activities. Dr. Mitrovich emphasized that the District continues to take a modest, selective approach to vegetation management to balance fire safety needs with habitat protections for threatened and endangered species.

Director Stewart raised questions about newly adopted fire hazard maps in Redlands, which expand designated hazard areas. Dr. Mitrovich noted that his discussion with the Fire Department focused on protection of homes and infrastructure. The Board thanked staff for the update and commended their continued work on grants, permitting, and interagency partnerships.

## ENGINEERING UPDATE

Ms. Miller presented the Engineering Update. She reported that the District has received approval for the potable water hookup at the Mentone Shop. She noted that she visited the shop construction site to verify progress and found several outstanding tasks, which will be addressed by Mr. Crowley in the coming week.

Progress continues on the PERC feasibility studies, with draft volumes one and four completed and awaiting review by Mr. Crowley upon his return. In addition, the District has entered into an agreement with an architect for the office expansion project. Ms. Miller explained that the agreement did not require Board approval as it fell within her signature authority, and she will provide updates as preliminary plans are developed.

Ms. Miller also noted that, with the loaders rented under the Board's prior approval, several basins at Santa Ana have already been cleaned.

## GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Miller presented the General Manager's Report, beginning on page 147 of the agenda packet. She noted that the District's newsletter subscriber base has grown to over 1,000, a significant increase since the spring. She also reported that the final two volumes of the PERC feasibility studies have been drafted and will be reviewed by Mr. Crowley upon his return. Additional

highlights included execution of an architect agreement for the District office expansion within the General Manager's signature authority, the onboarding of the new Field Operations Specialist I on August 25, and interviews for senior and principal engineering positions held in late August.

Ms. Miller reported that the Finance and Administration Committee received its first review of the District's redesigned website, with subsequent revisions showing further improvement. She added that staff continue to seek Board input on logo discussions via the up-coming Outreach and Communications Committee. Under facilities, she noted that the Redlands Plaza building failed a routine city inspection of its backflow prevention system, with required upgrades estimated at approximately \$70,000. Additional quotes are being sought, and the City of Redlands has granted an extension while the District selects a contractor to complete the work. Vice President Stewart discussed whether the replacement requirement was triggered by recent right-of-way dedications and emphasized coordination with city staff to clarify code requirements.

Ms. Miller also highlighted planning progress for the District's Waterwise Garden project. She reported that staff met with the landscape designer and San Bernardino County Museum staff who discussed creative, cost-conscious approaches that utilize existing native plants at the site.

Ms. Miller reported that updated GIS surveys show the District has removed 8.22 acres of stockpiled material from basin cleanings at Mill Creek since 2018, reducing the total from 21.27 acres to 13.05 acres. She also highlighted recent wildlife observations on District lands and training participation by staff. In response to Vice President Stewart's question regarding the Wash Plan trails, Ms. Miller stated that the next steps include working through permitting requirements with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and pursuing funding opportunities included in recent pre-grant applications which are currently limited by staffing resources.

## FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND STAFF TASKS

President McDonald noted the date of the ACWA JPIA committee nominations and Ms. Miller confirmed that the deadline for committee nominations has been extended to October 3, 2025, and noted that some committees require balanced representation of staff and directors. Vice President Stewart also discussed the need to schedule a meeting of the Trails Committee, recalling that its work was paused during Phase 2B construction.

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

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

- August 13 – East Valley Water District Board Meeting
- August 19 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- August 20 – SBVWCD Finance & Administration Committee Meeting
- August 25-28 – CSDA Annual Conference
- August 28 – City of Highland Meeting
- September 2 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- September 4 – SBVMWD Policy & Administration Workshop
- September 9 – SBVMWD Engineering & Resources Workshop
- September 9 – Highland City Council Meeting

- September 10 – SBWWCD Board Meeting

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

- August 19 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- August 20 – SBWWCD Finance & Administration Committee Meeting
- August 25-28 – CSDA Annual Conference
- September 2 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- September 9 – SBVMWD Engineering & Resources Workshop
- September 10 – SBWWCD Board Meeting

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

- August 19 – SBWWCD Ad Hoc Audit Committee Meeting
- September 5 – Redlands Chamber of Commerce Rise & Shine
- September 8 – Santa Ana Mill Creek Exchange Plan Committee Meeting
- September 10 – SBWWCD Board Meeting

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

- August 19 – SBWWCD Ad Hoc Audit Committee Meeting
- August 19 – Bear Valley Mutual Water Company Board Meeting
- August 20 – SBWWCD Finance & Administration Committee Meeting
- September 4 – SBVMWD Policy & Administration Workshop
- September 8 – Santa Ana Mill Creek Exchange Plan Committee Meeting
- September 10 – SBWWCD Board Meeting

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

- August 19 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- August 26 – Highland Chamber of Commerce Monthly Luncheon
- September 2 – SBVMWD Board Meeting
- September 4 – ACWA Region 9 State Legislative Committee Agenda Review
- September 5 – ACWA State Legislative Committee Meeting
- September 8 – ASBCSD Board Meeting
- September 9 – SBVMWD Engineering & Resources Workshop
- September 10 – SBWWCD Board Meeting

## 6. CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Miller stated that staff wished to discuss the items listed under Closed Session with the Board at 3:42 p.m.

**It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart 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**

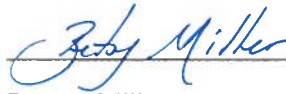
At 4:39 p.m., the meeting was reconvened to an open session. Under Government Code Section 54957.1, there was no other reportable action during Closed Session.

7. 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 4:40 p.m. the meeting adjourned to the Board meeting scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on September 10, 2025, in-person, teleconference, and Teams meeting.



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Betsy Miller  
General Manager