

Regular Meeting
February 21, 2023
6:00 pm

Meiners Oaks Water District
202 W. El Roblar Drive
Ojai, CA 93023-2211

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mike Etchart, at 6:00 pm via teleconference.

2. Roll Call

Present: Board President, Mike Etchart, Board Directors: James Kentosh, Christian Oakland, Joe Pangea, and Christy Cooper. Staff Present: General Manager, Justin Martinez, and Board Secretary, Summer Ward. Attorney Present: Stuart Nielson.

Absent: None

3. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of January 17, 2023, Regular Board Meeting minutes.

Director Kentosh made the motion to approve January 17, 2023, Regular meeting minutes, with the correction that there was no closed session. Director Cooper seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Kentosh/Cooper

(5) Ayes- M/S/C

4. Public Comments

- None

****The Board went into closed session at 6:03 pm****

5. Closed Session: The Board of Directors held a closed session to discuss litigation, pursuant to the attorney/client privilege, as authorized by Government Code Sections §54957 & 54956.8, 54956.9, and 54957.

- State case: SBCK vs. SWRCB, San Francisco Supreme Court, Case# CPF-14-513875

****The Board adjourned closed session at 6:17 pm****

Attorney S. Nielson stated that the Board discussed pending litigation in a closed session, and no action was taken.

6. **Financial Matters**

Approval of Payroll and Payables from January 16, 2023, to February 15, 2023, in the amount of:

Payables:	\$ 92,236.78
Payroll:	<u>\$ 51,514.35</u>
Total:	\$143,751.13

Director Oakland made the motion to the Payroll and Payables from January 16, 2023, to February 15, 2023. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

7. **Board Discussion/Actions**

a. Approval of Resolution 20230221: Board Bylaws. (Etchart/Oakland)

Director Oakland presented the revised Board Bylaws. The Executive Committee reviewed the comments and recommended revisions provided by Director Kentosh and Attorney Nielson and supported the revised Bylaws and adoption of Resolution 20230221.

Director Oakland made the motion to approve Resolution 20230221: Board Bylaws. Director Kentosh seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Kentosh

Roll Call Vote:

Etchart – Y Kentosh – Y Oakland – Y Pangea – Y Cooper – Y

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

b. Approval of updated Board Policy F-002: Purchasing Goods & Services. (Etchart/Ward)

Ms. Ward presented the revised Board Policy F-002: Purchasing Goods & Services, updated to reflect the increased thresholds recommended by the Executive Committee. This Board policy is referenced in the Board Bylaws in Section 6.10G.

Director Oakland made the motion to approve Board Policy F-002: Purchasing Goods & Services. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

c. Ventura Watershed Flow Enhancement and Water Resiliency Regional Framework (VRIF) Phase 2, Withdraw Grant Application. (Martinez/Etchart)

Mr. Martinez presented the proposed withdrawal from the Ventura Watershed Flow Enhancement and Water Resiliency Regional Framework Phase 2 Grant. Mr. Martinez explained that when the grant was initially presented to the District last year, the in-kind services were manageable; however, those contractual requirements have increased to an amount that outweighs the benefit to the District. Therefore, staff and the Grants Committee recommend withdrawing from this round of VRIF grant funding.

Director Pangea made the motion to approve the VRIF-2 Grant Application Withdrawal letter, with grammar and spelling corrections, and authorize the General Manager to submit it on behalf of the District. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Pangea/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

d. Approval of Potential Grant Funding and Grant Application for the Replacement Treatment Plant. (Cooper/Etchart)

Director Cooper opened the discussion, and Ms. Ward provided an update on the Income Survey results, with a preliminary Median Household Income (MHI) of \$69,500. Director Cooper will be following up with Kennedy Communications regarding the timeline for the second round of survey submissions and also stated that the CA 2023 MHI has not yet been published.

Director Cooper presented potential construction grant funding, discussed at the Grant Committee, for the replacement treatment plant. Depending on the District's MHI, the District would be eligible for up to \$7.2 million as a small community. Director Cooper and staff have prepared the pre-application document covering basic District demographics and background and a brief project description. This general application can be used for future state grant funding applications. Director Cooper requests approval to submit the pre-application to get into the queue for a project manager. Director Kentosh requested that the Grants Committee review the application before submission.

Director Cooper made the motion to authorize the Grant Committee to review and submit the Grant Application for the construction of the Replacement Treatment Plant, subject to a satisfactory MHI level. Director Kentosh seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Kentosh

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

e. Approval of Will-Serve Letter requests for (1) 1330 S. La Luna; (2) 190 E. El Roblar; (3) 240 & 244 N Arnaz; (4) 234 & 246 S Padre Juan; (5) 138 S Alvarado. (Martinez/Kentosh)

Mr. Martinez reviewed the Will-Serve requests for the five accounts. Mr. Martinez highlighted two accounts that had special considerations. Requests for 240& 244 N. Arnaz and 234 & 246 S. Padre Juan each have two existing primary dwellings on separate lots, served by one meter. The recommendation is to split the allocations accordingly and allow the owners to purchase an additional meter for each primary dwelling. In addition, Mr. Martinez recommends preparing two Will-Serve letters for each account.

Director Kentosh stated that the New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee reviewed the Will-Serve Letter requests and recommended all for approval.

Director Kentosh made the motion to approve each of the Will-Serve Letter requests and allocation adjustments for the listed addresses. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

Public Comment.

Mr. Nelson requested clarification on the allocation calculations for 1330 S. La Luna. Director Kentosh reviewed the account's allocation history and calculation method for each parcel, allotting each a third of the total allocation. Mr. Nelson was satisfied with the explanation and agreed with the final computations.

Kentosh/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

f. Approval of migrating District Phone and Internet from AT&T to Mitec Solutions. (Ward/Martinez)

Ms. Ward presented the staff recommendation for migrating the District phones and internet from AT&T to Mitec Solutions, citing the functional and customer service-related issues as well as the increasing billing rates. The District is paying \$1,075 monthly for four phone lines and internet. Mitec Solutions has been the District's IT Services vendor for over ten years; they are local and understand our infrastructure and needs. The District could eliminate the traditional fax line and include free web fax in the phone

package. Monthly expenses for phone and internet would drop to approximately \$231. Initial equipment costs for the phone and internet migration from analog to VoIP would be \$1,748.90. The Mitec package includes Elevate Pro Telco, which would allow for individual staff extensions and voicemails, as well as messaging capabilities so that the District could receive texts, photos, and videos in addition to phone calls. Additionally, staff would have the ability to forward their assigned phone extension to a mobile device when not physically at the office. Elevate Pro provides a platform for online meetings if the District replaces GoToMeeting (currently \$10/month).

Director Oakland made the motion to approve the migration from AT&T to Mitec Solutions for phone and internet, as provided in quotes 1028,1029, and 1030. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

g. Approval of Temporary Standby Pay for GM during recruitment and training of replacement Utility Worker I/II, not to exceed six months. (Martinez)

Mr. Martinez requested temporary standby pay during the recruitment and training of a new Utility Worker I/II, including language from the District's labor attorney. The empty position primarily offsets the salary adjustment. Mr. Neary's last day was February 17, 2023. The position has been posted, and interviews will be scheduled starting March 3, 2023.

Director Etchart requested this be discussed at Executive Committee.

Director Kentosh made the motion to authorize the Executive Committee to approve the temporary standby pay for the GM, not to exceed six months. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Kentosh/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

h. Approval of budget transfer of \$11,000 from System Maintenance to Meters to purchase an initial 35 smart meters, not to exceed \$33,000. (Martinez)

Mr. Martinez presented the request to transfer \$11,000 from the budget for System Maintenance over to Meters for the purchase of 35 smart meters, not to exceed \$33,000. The meter budget was initially set for the cost share under the VRIF-2 grant, which the District is no longer pursuing. Mr. Martinez reviewed that transitioning the District over to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (smart meters) is to capture a more accurate measurement of water used and provide the District and customers with the

Eye-On-Water app that provides high-flow leak alerts in real-time. The ultrasonic measurement system has no moving parts, offers long-term accuracy, and saves staff time manually reading each meter monthly. The District currently uses the software platform for meter reading, so there will not be a need to purchase additional software for the cellular-based smart meters. The goal is to start with the largest consumers, Agriculture and Commercial meters, then phase in the residential meters, which are less expensive than these initial large meters.

Director Pangea requested warranty information for the smart meters. Mr. Martinez will get that information.

Director Cooper made the motion to approve the budget transfer of \$11,000 and the purchase of 35 smart meters, not exceeding \$33,000. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Kentosh/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

8. **General Manager's Report**

Mr. Martinez reported that the Casitas Lake level is 45%, up 26.8 ft since January 1, 2023, and MOWD has been on its wells since February 3. Seasonal rainfall totals: Casitas Dam 26.9", Matilija Dam 41.87", and Nordhoff Ridge 47.87". The Grant Committee is looking into potential grant funding for the replacement treatment plant through the State Revolving Fund. The GIS mapping of the District has been completed by staff, which are attaching detailed asset information to each mapped item. Additionally, the District has engaged Ziptility with regard to the EPA requires that the District inventory service lines between the water meter and homes. Work continues on the Treatment Plant Design and Well Sighting Study. The District is actively recruiting a Water Utility Worker I/II; the job posting will close on March 2, 2023.

No Public Comment.

9. **Board Secretary's Report**

Ms. Ward presented the monthly Board Secretary report highlighting that the District received a preliminary report from Kennedy Communications that the median household income is \$69,500. Ms. Ward will be sending each Director the link to their bi-annual Ethics and Anti-Harassment training, to be completed by April 1. The County of Ventura has sent out the annual Conflict of Interest Form 700 emails, and they are due by April 1. The online bill pay transaction fee has increased to \$2 per the card processing vendor. There was one account disconnected for non-payment; the house had been vacant, the owner had passed away, and the family was managing the account; attempts to reach the family have been unsuccessful. There was an increase in service

orders for January due to a high number of leak checks and re-reads due to lower-than-normal consumption, likely from the rain events.

No Public Comment.

10. Board Committee Reports

- Executive & Personnel Committee: Met and discussed Bylaws and Policy F-002.
- UVRGA: No meeting.
- Budget/Rate Committee: No report.
- Emergency Management Committee: No report; Ms. Ward is to send MOWD Plan and sample plans from other agencies prior to the meeting.
- Allocations, New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee: Met and discussed Will-Serve Letter requests.
- Grants: Met and discussed income survey status, VRIF-2 withdrawal, and potential construction grant funding.
- Treatment Plant Design Ad Hoc Committee: Initial meeting, reviewed initial priority areas, and discussed the status of design plans.

11. Old Business

- State Water: No update.
- Matilija Dam Removal Update: No update.
- Collaboration on drought response measures: No update.

12. Director Announcements/Reports

- Director Kentosh: No report.
- Director Oakland: No report.
- Director Pangea: No report.
- Director Cooper: No report.
- Director Etchart: No report.

13. Meeting Adjournment

The next meeting will be held on March 21, 2023. There being no further business to conduct at this time, Board President Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 7:27 pm.

Board Secretary

Board President