

Regular Meeting
July 18, 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 Board President, Mike Etchart, called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. The meeting was also available 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 June 20, 2023, Regular Board Meeting minutes.

Director Kentosh made the motion to approve the June 20, 2023, Regular meeting minutes, with one correction to the approval of minutes agenda title date. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Kentosh/Pangea

(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.

- CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—EXISTING LITIGATION
(Paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Gov. Code § 54956.9)
Name of case: *Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. State Water Resources Control Board, et al.*,
Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 19STCP01176

****The Board adjourned closed session at 6:06 pm****

Attorney S. Nielson stated that the Board discussed the closed-session agenda item, and no action was taken.

6. Financial Matters

Approval of Payroll and Payables from June 16, 2023, to July 15, 2023, in the amount of:

Payables:	\$303,795.64
Payroll:	<u>\$ 47,272.42</u>
Total:	\$351,078.06

Director Cooper made the motion to the Payroll and Payables from June 16, 2023, to July 15, 2023. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

7. Board Discussion/Actions

a. Approve Fanning & Karrh, CPAs Engagement Letter for FY22-23 outlining scope, objectives, responsibilities, reports, and expense of up to \$23,000. (Martinez/Ward)

Ms. Ward presented the FY 22-23 Fiscal Audit engagement letter provided by Cindy Fanning. The expense of \$23,000 aligns with the previous year's audit and within the \$25,000 audit budget for FY 23-24. Ms. Fanning notified the Board that this will be her final audit for MOWD, and she will assist in the transition to a new audit firm.

Director Oakland noted that the District will actively work on the recommended actions she highlighted in her FY 21-22 audit report.

Director Cooper made the motion to authorize the Board President and General Manager to sign the Fanning & Karrh, CPA engagement letter. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

b. Update on the response to the Ventura County Grant Jury Report: Water Availability for Wildfires in Ventura County. (Oakland/Martinez)

Director Oakland reviewed the general points of the Ventura County Grand Jury Report: Water Availability for Wildfires in Ventura County, presented at the June regular meeting. He explained that the Safety and Emergency Committee met and discussed each finding and recommendation. The Committee created action plans for addressing each recommendation. Ms. Ward will draft and present each response for board approval at the August meeting.

Director Cooper noted that the Grand Jury report is not a full vulnerability analysis and recommends that the Committee look at and analyze weak points and prioritize high-risk-high probability/impact scenarios.

No Public Comment.

No Motion.

c. Authorize agreement to join the CalWARN Mutual Aid & Assistance Program. (Oakland/Martinez)

Mr. Martinez presented the CalWARN Mutual Aid & Assistance Program Articles of Agreement and the overall purpose of joining the program. Additionally, this was a recommendation in the Ventura County Grand Jury Report; currently, Casitas MWD is the only local water purveyor participating in the program. Ms. Ward noted that Greg Romey, Casitas Safety Manager, offered to assist with training and answer any questions. There is no cost to the District to join the mutual aid program.

Director Oakland made the motion to authorize the signing of the CalWARN Mutual Aid & Assistance Program Articles of Agreement. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

d. Authorize applications for the FCC GETS/WPS priority telephone and cellular network programs for use during emergencies. (Oakland/Martinez)

Mr. Martinez requested authorization to submit applications for the FCC's Government Emergency Telecommunications System (GETS) and Wireless Priority Service (WPS), providing the District with priority landline and cellular service in emergencies. There is no cost to the District to join GETS or WPS.

Director Oakland made the motion to authorize the District to apply for enrollment in the FCC's GETS and WPS programs. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

8. General Manager's Report

Mr. Martinez reported that the Casitas Lake level is 73.7%. Some locations' seasonal rainfall totals were unavailable due to technical issues: Matilija Dam 64.25", M.O. Fire Station 42.34", and Nordhoff Ridge 72.68". The District is currently running on Wells 4a & 7. Well levels are maintained, although some high-demand instances are straining the system. Data entry in the GIS and Lead/Copper continues. The parts to create an highline connection to the Casitas Fairview Booster Station emergency kit are nearly complete. An inventory and step-by-step procedure are being developed. MKN Associates are nearly complete with the Replacement Treatment Plant's final design plans and a cost proposal to assist the District through the grant application process. The Hopkins Groundwater Well Siting Study presentation will be scheduled at a future date when the Well 4a redevelopment plan is also ready so that both projects can be presented at the same time. The District had 50% participation in the tri-annual lead and copper monitoring, partially due to new property owners and some not living full-time in the District. Additionally, outreach to those customers is occurring to ensure 100% participation. The District has hired a part-time temporary Water Utility Helper with a tentative start date of August 8, 2023. Mr. Martinez reviewed recent incidents involving illegal dumping by a neighboring property onto District property and the security breach at Well 4a. The Sheriff's Department was involved, and an intrusion alarm and a new door plate were installed to prevent future break-ins. The District will be evaluating the addition of perimeter security cameras at each facility location. Mr. Martinez spoke with SWRCB regarding bringing Well 8 back online, installing a continuous monitor, and tie-into SCADA with auto shutoff if Nitrate levels approach the MCL threshold. Mr. Martinez met with CalTrans and Union Engineers to address the plans for repairing the section of Hwy 33, affecting Wells 1 & 2. Additional meetings are scheduled to determine a mutually agreeable plan.

No Public Comment.

9. **Board Secretary's Report**

Ms. Ward presented the monthly Board Secretary report highlighting that the District's new SCADA computer and software have been installed and are currently running in parallel with the old ones. The systems will run in parallel for about a month to ensure all configurations and alarms are in sync before the old system is offline. The quarterly SWRCB Drought & Conservation reporting for April, May, and June are in progress and will be submitted on time. Staff attended the SWRCB Drought & Conservation Reporting workshop, and it was interesting to hear most attendees expressing the same concerns over duplicative reporting. Staff performance assessments following the new policy are underway and tracking on time. Ms. Ward researched programs to address the Grand Jury report recommendations, such as CalWARN, GETS, and WPS. Ms. Ward has been scheduling HVAC companies to assess and provide quotes for replacing the District Office HVAC system. The drought surcharge fee is inactive as of the June 30, 2023, bill cycle. The administrative team is working with the billing software vendor to revise the Late Notice template, provide more information, and improve the overall tone of the letter. The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program for FY22-23 was \$4,306, and \$378 for FY 23-24 YTD. There were 75 service orders completed in June, 11 of those were account changes.

No Public Comment.

10. **Board Committee Reports**

- Executive & Personnel Committee: No meeting.
- UVRGA: Director Etchart reported that the GSA met to discuss some procedural matters.
- Budget/Rate Committee: No meeting.
- Emergency Management Committee: Met to review Grand Jury Report and discuss action items. Ms. Ward will be drafting the responses for approval at the August meeting.
- Allocations, New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee: Met, discussed revisions to the New Meter & Will-Serve Letter request and Allocation Waiver forms, updated to reflect stage 1 conditions; further discussions with the Artesian regarding the status of their request for refund of MWAC funds related to their allocation needs; a customer request for leak relief assistance and tabled discussions on two requests for new meter and additional allocation, pending more information from Casitas MWD.
- Grants: Ms. Cooper contacted SWRCB representatives to get assistance with reviewing the District's Income Survey and DAC status determination. The District did receive in writing from the SWRCB our eligibility for grant funding related to the replacement treatment plant.
- Treatment Plant Design Ad Hoc Committee: No meeting.

11. **Old Business**

- State Water: Director Kentosh summarized his comments made at the June 28, 2023, Casitas Board meeting and will follow up with an email to the Casitas MWD GM.
- Matilija Dam Removal Update: No update.

12. **Director Announcements/Reports**

- Director Kentosh: No report.
- Director Oakland: No report.
- Director Pangea: No report.
- Director Cooper: No report.
- Director Etchart: United Water meeting with the Avocado Associations of Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, which have had the highest/hottest changes over the past few years, especially nighttime temperatures.

13. **Meeting Adjournment**

The next meeting will be held on August 15, 2023. There being no further business to conduct at this time, Board President Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 7:06 pm.

Board Secretary

Board President