

Regular Meeting  
March 19, 2024  
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 6:00 pm. The meeting was also available via teleconference.

### 2. Roll Call

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

**Absent:** None.

### 3. Approval of the Minutes

**Approval of February 20, 2024, Regular Board Meeting minutes.**

Director Etchart made the motion to approve the February 20, 2024, Regular Meeting minutes. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Etchart/Pangea

(5) Ayes- M/S/C

### 4. Public Comments

- None

***\*\*The Board went into closed session at 6:02 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 ended closed session at 6:40 pm.\*\****

Attorney S. Nielson reported that the Board discussed pending litigation, and there are no actions to report.

**\*\*Agenda reorder\*\***

**7. a). FY22/23 Financial Audit Statements and Reports. (C. Fanning)**

Ms. Cindy Fanning presented the FY22/23 Financial Audit Statements and Reports, including the Independent Auditor's Report, the Management's Discussion and Analysis, Required Supplementary Information, and the letter to the Senior Management and Board of Directors. Ms. Fanning noted no significant changes from the previous fiscal year. She summarized the audit adjustments, primarily capital assets and GASB reports, including four accruals, unbilled receivables, and one payable. Ms. Fanning stated that two new requirements must be addressed in the next audit. The first concerns any leases and GASB 101 related to compensated absence accrual.

Director Kentosh asked if this was a clean audit. Ms. Fanning replied that although it is not stated in those words, the opinion section of the Independent Auditor's report states that the fiscal year was in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, so essentially, yes, it was a clean audit.

Ms. Fanning and Ms. Ward reviewed the Staff's completion of the recommended actions, including the October 2023 adoption of the Capital Asset policy, corrected the timing of Trust Fund reconciliation to prevent carryover of balances, Accounts Payable historical balance is in the process of being adjusted off, and Unbilled Receivables covering water consumption from June 19 – June 30 that gets billed in July.

Ms. Fanning reminded the Board that this would be her final audit and that she was set to retire. Staff is working on preparing an RFP for a replacement auditing firm. Ms. Fanning will submit the final audit documents, disengagement, and consent request to the District.

The Board had no further questions for Ms. Fanning, thanked her for her service, and wished her a great retirement.

No Public Comment.

No Motion.

**b). Approve Resolution 20240319: FY 22/23 Financial Audit. (Etchart)**

Director Etchart presented Resolution 20240319: FY 22/23 Financial Audit.

Director Cooper made the motion to approve Resolution 20240319: FY 22/23 Financial Audit. Director Kentosh seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Kentosh

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

**\*\*Resume Agenda Order\*\***

6. **Financial Matters**

**Approval of Payroll and Payables from February 16, 2024, to March 15, 2024, in the amount of:**

Payables:                   \$ 87,146.87

Payroll:                    \$ 51,684.13

Total:                      \$ 138,831.00

Director Pangea made the motion to approve the Payroll and Payables from February 16, 2024, to March 15, 2024. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Pangea/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

7. **Board Discussion/Actions**

c). **Approve Hwy 33 12” AC Mainline Pipe Removal Contractor and expense of**

**\$9,829.90, and approve replacement materials cost of \$13,011.00, for a total not to exceed of \$30,000. (Martinez)**

Mr. Martinez provided an update on the Hwy 33 road slide, which exposed the District’s main line. The initial slide occurred March 16, 2023; the repairs have been pending coordination with CalTrans and all affected utilities. The slide began to grow again in the past two weeks. District staff did contact FEMA in March 2023 and were referred to disaster loans if needed. The District’s liability insurance does not cover underground pipes. CalTrans has contracted Union Engineering to complete the road and hillside repair. MOWD needs to temporarily remove that mainline section while repairs are being made to the hillside and road. Then, MOWD will replace the pipe section, and Union Engineering will backfill and compact it per CalTrans standards. The District needs to hire a contractor to remove and dispose of the mainline pipe section and purchase the materials to replace the pipe section.

Mr. Martinez prepared an RFP and received three proposals: VenTerra Environmental, Toro Enterprises, and Sam Hills & Sons. Mr. Martinez recommends that the Board approve Toro Enterprises' removal and disposal of the line with a lump sum of \$9,829. Additionally, Mr. Martinez recommends that the Board approve purchasing the materials

needed to replace the line, which the District staff will install. Mr. Martinez recommends approving a total not exceeding \$30,000 to be taken from the Valve Replacement budget.

Director Kentosh made the motion to approve Toro Enterprises to remove and dispose of the main line for \$9,829 and Famcon replacement materials for \$13,011, a total not exceeding \$30,000, from the Valve Replacement budget. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Kentosh/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

**d). Authorize Staff to approve and issue Will-Serve Letters based on the approved District process and policies. (Martinez/Ward)**

Mr. Martinez reviewed the District policies and process for reviewing and approving Will-Serve Letters, which were implemented over the past 24 months. When the Board implemented the new policies and application process, a Committee was tasked with reviewing and approving to ensure the policy and process worked appropriately. Now, with almost two years of experience and fine-tuning, it is time to reassess whether the Board Committee is needed to review and approve requests that fall within the approved policies. Mr. Martinez added that each Committee meeting costs approximately \$700, and Staff wants to be mindful of these expenses. Staff recommends that the Board authorize the General Manager to approve and issue Will-Serve Letters that fall within the approved policies and process and to bring any outliers or complicated cases to the Committee.

Director Pangea made the motion to authorize Staff to approve and issue Will-Serve letters based on the approved District process and policies. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Pangea/Oakland

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

## 8. **General Manager's Report**

Mr. Martinez reported that the Casitas Lake level is 91.4%. Seasonal rainfall totals, as of 3/13/2024: M.O. Fire Station 22.59", Casitas Dam 29.46", Matilija Dam 35.03", and Nordhoff Ridge 40.04." Due to abundant rainfall and water flowing near our wells, the District had to stop pumping, turn on the Casitas connection on 2/8/2024, and returned to our wells on March 9. The District is waiting for the delivery of 55 – 1" AMI meters. The electrical design plans for the Office Emergency Generator are still pending. Union Engineering has removed the asphalt for the entire stretch of the Hwy 33 work site and grubbed the surrounding hillside. Staff met with the Bureau of Reclamation to discuss a Small Scale Water Efficiency AMI project, Staff will be researching further in hopes of applying before the July deadline. Mr. Martinez reported that Jeffrey Groves passed his T-1 exam. The Fire Hydrant upgrade project on El Camino Drive was completed by Gruber Grading & Ag. Nitrate levels at Well 8 and Ranchitos appear to be decreasing.

No Public Comment.

## 9. **Board Secretary's Report**

Ms. Ward presented the monthly Board Secretary report. She highlighted that CA Water & Wastewater Arrearage Program extension award of \$17,804 was received, funds were applied to 41 customers' accounts, and \$2,042 was returned back to SWRCB, as required. The annual SWRCB eAR report is in progress and due by April 15. The Ventura County Form 700 Conflict of Interest Forms are due by April 1, and the Ventura County Elected Officials Salary report was submitted on March 12. A new state mandate for the Advanced Clean Fleet Regulation, enforced by the CA Air Resources Board, requires fleets to transition to zero emissions; annual reports will be due by April 1, and MOWD's initial report will be submitted before March 29. Ms. Fanning presented the FY 22/23 financial audit. Staff are working on the RFP to select a new auditing firm. The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program announced that they plan to issue a fixed supplemental award to each household that qualified during the program period; those funds are expected to be around \$200/household, likely in May 2024. Ms. Ward has been working on the final drafts of the updated Employee Handbook and Emergency and Operations Plans.

No Public Comment.

## 10. **Board Committee Reports**

- Executive & Personnel Committee: No report.
- UVRGA: Met, routine meeting, no report.
- Budget/Rate Committee: No report.
- Emergency Management Committee: No report.
- Allocations, New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee: No report.
- Grants: No report.
- Treatment Plant Design Ad Hoc Committee: No report.

11. **Old Business**

- State Water: No report.
- Matilija Dam Removal Update: No report.
- Casitas Rates – No report.

12. **Director Announcements/Reports**

- Director Kentosh: No report.
- Director Oakland: No report.
- Director Pangea: No report.
- Director Cooper: Meeting with the State tomorrow to discuss progress on the Replacement Treatment Plant grand application.
- Director Etchart: No report.

13. **Meeting Adjournment**

The next meeting will be held on April 16, 2024, at 6:00 pm. There being no further business to conduct at this time, Board President Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 7:56 pm.

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**Board Secretary**

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**Board President**