

Regular Meeting  
May 21, 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 6:01 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: None.

**Absent:** Attorneys Stuart Nielson and Jeanne Zolezzi.

### 3. Approval of the Minutes

**Approval of April 16, 2024, Regular Board Meeting and May 3, 2024 Special Board Meeting minutes.**

Director Cooper made the motion to approve the April 16, 2024 and May 3, 2024 meeting minutes. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/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 ended closed session at 6:36 pm.\*\***

Director Etchart reported that the Board discussed the closed-session item, and there are no actions to report.

## 6. Financial Matters

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

Payables:	\$ 66,782.63
Payroll:	<u>\$ 55,080.96</u>
Total:	\$ 121,863.59

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

Director Cooper requested that the financial graphs be converted to bar charts versus the line graphs. Ms. Ward received consensus from the Board to proceed with the change in graph type.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

## 7. Board Discussion/Actions

**a). Approve Resolution 20240521: Employee Handbook 2024 and adjust Assistant GM vacation accrual. (Etchart/Martinez)**

Mr. Martinez presented the updated 2024 Employee Handbook, which was initially reviewed and edited by the District Labor Attorneys Light & Gabler and further worked on by Ms. Ward. The changes include several new sections, which address state and federal regulatory requirements, district personnel policies, including the standalone policies previously approved by the Board. The intention is to create a single location for all personnel-related policies and procedures, including Performance Reviews, Illness and Injury Prevention, and Workplace Violence. Additionally, the attorneys recommended additional signature pages at the back of the handbook, such as Employee Acknowledgments and a Confidentiality Agreement. Mr. Martinez noted that the Executive Committee, specifically Director Oakland, provided an extensive review and recommended revisions, which are reflected in this handbook.

Director Etchart stated that the Executive Committee realized during the handbook review that the Assistant General Manager's vacation accrual had not been adjusted to

the Manager accrual rate. The Executive Committee recommends adjusting the Assistant General Manager's vacation accrual retroactive to August 2021, when the position started.

Director Cooper stated that this Employee Handbook is very well written and organized, and she is very impressed.

Director Cooper made the motion to approve Resolution 20240521: Employee Handbook 2024. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Oakland

(5) Ayes- M/S/C

Director Oakland made the motion to approve the adjustment of the Assistant General Manager to match the General Manager retroactive to August 2021. Director Cooper seconded the motion.

No Public Comment

Oakland/Cooper

(5) Ayes- M/S/C

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

Mr. Martinez reported that the Casitas Lake level is 100%. Seasonal rainfall totals, as of 5/16/2024: M.O. Fire Station 25.9", Casitas Dam 35.2", Matilija Dam 42.22", and Nordhoff Ridge 48.35." Due to abundant rainfall and water flowing near our wells, the District had to stop pumping and turn the Casitas connection; the District returned to pumping wells on 4/17/24. The District received the 55 – 1" AMI meters today. The electrical design plans for the Office Emergency Generator are 100% complete; we are waiting for a quote from Oilfield Electric. Union Engineering has installed all of the pillars; they are currently excavating unstable soil. It will likely be a few months before the District can replace the water line. Mr. Martinez reviewed recent repairs, including a hit hydrant on N. La Luna at Maricopa Hwy. The hydrant was hit by a Granite Construction truck and will be replaced with an upgraded hydrant per county regulations. Expenses incurred will be billed to Granite Construction, estimated at \$42,000. Field staff has performed valve exercising preventative maintenance on approximately 50% of District valves and are working on the remaining portion. Two will-serve letters were issued both within policy guidelines.

No Public Comment.

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

Ms. Ward presented the monthly Board Secretary report. She highlighted that the quarterly SWRCB drought reporting was submitted on 4/28/2024. The staff has sent out the RFP for professional auditing services, with a response deadline of June 10, potential firms will be presented to the Board. Qualified households that received Low Income Household Water Assistance Program funds were awarded a supplemental payment of \$198.23; one customer had disconnected their account, and those funds were returned to the State program. Ms. Ward reported that the total supplemental funding received was \$2,180.53, and the total program funding received \$10,563.53. SWRCB Water Arrearages Assistance Program funding summarized: Initial Program (2020-2021) \$14,351.24; Extended Program (2021-2022) \$15,761.75; total program funding \$30,112.99. Ms. Ward noted an average number of service orders and account change-overs in April 2024.

No Public Comment.

## 10. **Board Committee Reports**

- Executive & Personnel Committee: No report.
- UVRGA: Met, passed annual budget..
- 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: Requested an update on the salary study and to schedule an Executive Committee meeting.
- Director Pangea: Ojai Land Conservancy land for sale; which property is for sale, and will it affect the District's operations or facility access? Mr. Martinez replied that he has been in communication with the OLC, and there is no anticipated adverse impact to the District's access to its facilities.
- Director Cooper: The Cozy Dell Replacement Treatment Plant 100% design plans are completed; however, the County just updated the potential flood plain and silt levels during the Matilija Dam Removal, which may impact the facility. Director Cooper

requested that Ms. Ward contact the County to set up a meeting with the Water Treatment Plant Committee to discuss potential risks and design modifications.

- Director Etchart: No report.

### 13. **Meeting Adjournment**

The next meeting will be held on June 18, 2024, at 6:00 pm. There being no further business to conduct at this time, Board President Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 7:12 pm.

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**Board Secretary**

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**Board President**