

Regular Meeting
July 16, 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 6:01 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: James Kentosh, Joe Pangea, and Christy Cooper. Staff Present: General Manager, Justin Martinez, Summer Ward, Board Secretary. Attorney Present: (via teleconference) Stuart Nielson and Jeanne Zolezzi (Closed Session only).

Absent: Christian Oakland, Director.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of June 18, 2024, Regular Board Meeting minutes.

Director Cooper made the motion to approve the June 18, 2024 meeting minutes. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Pangea

(4) Ayes- M/S/C

(1) Absent - Oakland

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

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****The Board ended closed session at 6:36 pm.****

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

6. Financial Matters

Approval of Payroll and Payables from June 16, 2024, to July 15, 2024, in the amount of:

Payables:	\$ 275,448.08
Payroll:	<u>\$ 49,158.78</u>
Total:	\$ 324,606.86

Director Kentosh made the motion to approve the Payroll and Payables from June 16, 2024, to July 15, 2024. Director Cooper seconded the motion.

Ms. Ward noted that the payables were higher than normal due to annual expenses such as insurance, memberships, and dues.

No Public Comment.

Kentosh/Cooper

(4) Ayes – M/S/C

(1) Absent - Oakland

7. Board Discussion/Actions

a). Presentation of FY 24-25 Budget and Adoption of Resolution 20240716: FY 24-25 Budget. (Martinez/Cooper)

Directors Cooper and Oakland reviewed the staff-prepared budget proposals at the Budget/Rate Committee meeting. Director Cooper noted that MOWD typically prepares conservative budgets, often well below the proposed expenditures. She reviewed the budget highlights, including revenues, reserves, expenditures, capital improvements, and grant opportunities. Ms. Ward noted that for budgeting purposes, staff assumed no significant change in water consumption over the previous fiscal year. FY 24/25 is the final year in the 3-year approved water rate schedule. Rates will remain unchanged until a Prop 218 is conducted for future rates.

Director Etchart stated that with grants, it is important to evaluate the time and cost associated with the funding to ensure it is worthwhile. Director Kentosh asked if in-house administrative staff could complete the grant applications. Ms. Ward replied that the administrative team's goal is to do as much in-house as possible, with training and episodic experience, when relevant and appropriate grant opportunities are available.

Director Kentosh requested two grammar changes within the resolution text, “WHEREAS” and replaced “by” with “that.”

Director Cooper made the motion to approve Resolution 20240716: Adoption of FY 24-25 Budget, with the noted grammar changes. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Pangea

(4) Ayes- M/S/C

(1) Absent - Oakland

8. **General Manager's Report**

Mr. Martinez reported that the Casitas Lake level is at 99.7%. The District received the 55 – 1” AMI meters, and installation is in progress. The electrical design plans for the Office Emergency Generator are 100% complete; staff is looking at solar options. Union Engineering is working on installing and testing tie-backs to hold the wall up, and excavation will continue. Mr. Martinez reported that the hydrant the Granite Construction truck hit on N. La Luna at Maricopa Hwy totals \$74,447.21; Granite has been in communication, and payment has been processed. Field staff has been working to clean up all the brush and scrap metal (and brass) from broken-down water meters in the yard. One Will-Serve letter extension was issued for 436 El Conejo. Curtis Hopkins is sending out the scope of work for the Well 4a Rehab project. Coastal Instrumentation and Telemetry (CIT) is putting together an official quote for continuous monitoring of Nitrates and SCADA with alarms and automated shutdown of Well 8. Mr. Martinez will get written authorization from the SWRCB to proceed. There was one service leak on S. La Luna on 6/24/2024, two mainline leaks, one on Meiners Rd due to poor bedding and a falling tree, and a second on S. Rice Rd due to poor bedding.

No Public Comment.

9. **Board Secretary's Report**

Ms. Ward presented the monthly Board Secretary report. The Employee Handbook 2024 has been reviewed with staff, and signed acknowledgments are retained in personnel files. The annual Consumer Confidence Report for 2024 (2023 data) was uploaded to the state and made publicly available in the June 30 billing. The report is available on the District website, in hard copy in the office, and available to mail directly upon request. The quarterly SWRCB Drought reporting for April – June was submitted on July 12. The FY24-25 water rates (per the 2022 Prop 218) will go into effect on the August 31 billing statements. There were more re-reads in June due to increased water consumption detected during meter readings; only a few were the result of leaks. June 2024 was significantly higher than the previous three Junes, a portion of the District is on the new smart meters, but, not a large

enough portion to have that significant of an increase in metered consumption. Directors Oakland and Cooper are up for re-election this year. The nomination period began July 15 and ends August 9, links to the candidate paperwork were emailed to the two Directors earlier in the week. Once the state template is made available, Ms. Ward noted that an updated Backflow Cross-Connection policy will be drafted and presented.

No Public Comment.

10. **Board Committee Reports**

- Executive & Personnel Committee: No report.
- UVRGA: Met, elected officers.
- Budget/Rate Committee: Met, already discussed.
- Emergency Management Committee: No report.
- Allocations, New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee: No report.
- Grants: No report.
- Treatment Plant Design Ad Hoc Committee: Director Cooper stated that she would provide Ms. Ward with the 10-year budget spreadsheet before the next meeting with the state and review the assumptions and formulas.

11. **Old Business**

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

12. **Director Announcements/Reports**

- Director Kentosh: Shared that he was diagnosed with Parkinson's and wanted to let everyone know his symptoms have progressed slowly. He plans to carry out the remainder of his term as a Director.
- Director Oakland: Absent.
- Director Pangea: No report.
- Director Cooper: No report.
- Director Etchart: No report.

13. **Meeting Adjournment**

The next meeting will be held on August 20, 2024, at 6:00 pm. There being no further business to conduct at this time, Board President Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm.

Board Secretary

Board President