

Regular Meeting
December 16, 2025
6:00 pm

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

Minutes

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: James Kentosh, Christian Oakland, and Joe Pangea. Staff Present: General Manager, Justin Martinez, and Board Secretary, Summer Ward. Attorney Present: Stuart Nielson.

Absent: Director, Christy Cooper.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the November 18, 2025, Regular Board Meeting minutes.

Director Kentosh made the motion to approve the minutes from the November 18, 2025, meeting. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Kentosh/Pangea

(4) Ayes – M/S/C

(1) Absent - Cooper

4. Public Comments

None.

*****The Board did not go into closed session. *****

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 did not go into closed session.*****

6. **Financial Matters**

a) **Approval of Payroll and Payables from November 16, 2025, to December 15, 2025, in the amount of:**

Payables:	\$ 121,672.33
Payroll:	<u>\$ 57,732.87</u>
Total:	\$ 179,405.20

Director Oakland made the motion to approve the Payroll and Payables for November 16, 2025, to December 15, 2025. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Oakland/Pangea

(4) Ayes – M/S/C
(1) Absent - Cooper

7. **Board Discussion/Actions**

a) **Receive an update on Brown Act SB 707 and SB 827 Training, effective January 1, 2026.**

Ms. Ward presented updates provided by the California Special Districts Association on the Brown Act SB 707, signed into law on October 3, 2025. MOWD is not considered an "Eligible Legislative Body (ELB)." MOWD must meet the general requirements, effective January 1, 2026. General requirements include providing the updated Brown Act to each elected official, elected officials' conduct on social media, reporting on closed sessions, and changes to the remote participation of elected officials during meetings. Additionally, SB827 was expanded to require, in addition to the biennial Ethics training, a biennial Fiscal and Financial Planning training. Executives/Department heads are also now required to complete both biennial trainings. Ms. Ward will inform the Board and staff when the approved training modules are available. Ms. Ward will be consulting with Attorney Nielsen to prepare updated bylaws, policies, and/or resolutions for the January regular meeting.

Director Kentosh requested clarification on the ELB requirement to have a policy to address meeting disruptions. He recommended that MOWD implement a policy, even if it is not required. Ms. Ward stated she will work with Attorney Nielsen to provide a draft policy for board consideration.

No Public Comment.

No Motion.

8. **General Manager's Report**

Mr. Martinez reported that the Casitas Lake level is at 91.5% as of December 11, 2025. Wells 2, 4a & 7 are online. The new down-hole equipment for Well 4a is being modified to meet specifications; no installation date has been scheduled yet. Well 1 equipment was pulled, and Cascade inspected the well. Assessment and pricing for the Well 1 rehab and equipment are pending. MOWD is contracted with Resource Compliance for CalARP enrollment, and progress is good. The AMI meter replacement program continues to make progress. Two Will-Serve letters were issued in the past month. Mr. Martinez reported that Field Supervisor Levi Maxwell returned to work on Monday, December 15, 2025, following his military leave. Rainfall totals remain consistent with the previous report, and there is a high chance of rain events next week. Mr. Martinez reviewed the various field repairs and notable events from the past month. He noted that the District will reduce nitrate sampling frequency at Ranchitos from monthly to quarterly.

No Public Comment.

9. **Board Secretary's Report**

Ms. Ward provided a summary of administrative activities. The updates to the Brown Act and biennial trainings were provided under agenda item 7a. Ms. Ward is registered for the new SWRCB CalWATRS reporting portal. Annual water use reporting is due by January 31, 2026, on the new portal. Staff conducted a payroll process assessment with a Tyler Technologies Payroll Specialist to ensure paycodes, structures, and the mapping of OT/Comp time earnings to the correct W-2 box comply with the new tax law. SDRMA Risk Control Assessment site visit was completed on November 19, 2025. The assessment included a review of policies, plans, and resources, along with site inspections. The SDRMA risk specialist will be providing staff with resources and recommendations. The Water Rate Study work continues. Ms. Ward, Mr. Martinez, and Director Cooper met with the consultants last week to run through an initial presentation for the Board. The plan is for the RDN consultants to attend the January 20, 2026, regular meeting to present the first phase of the study, funding options. Once the Board reaches consensus on the funding option to pursue, phase two will focus on the rate structure and rate planning. Ms. Ward noted that four of the five Directors will be up for re-election in 2026, and that election documents from the County Elections Division will begin going out in early Spring 2026.

No Public Comment.

10. **Board Committee Reports**

- Executive & Personnel Committee: No report.
- UVRGA: No meeting.
- 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.

12. **Director Announcements/Reports**

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

13. **Meeting Adjournment**

The next meeting will be held on January 20, 2026, at 6:00 pm. Since there was no further business to conduct, Board President Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 6:34 pm.

Board Secretary

Board President