

State of California  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Colorado River Basin Region

## **MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING**

Friday, June 30, 2017, 9:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Colorado River Basin Region  
73-720 Fred Waring Drive  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Colorado River Basin Region, was called to order by Chair Nancy Wright at 9:00 a.m. on June 30, 2017, in Palm Desert, California.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **ROLL CALL (Board Members only)**

Nancy Wright, Buford Crites, Hidali Garcia, Ed Muzik, Jayne Powell, were present.

The Board Clerk stated that a quorum was present.

**Regional Water Board Counsel:** Adriana Nuñez

**State Water Board Liaison:** Joaquin Esquivel

### **Regional Board Staff Present:**

Jose Angel, Frank Gonzalez, Mary Castaneda, Abdi Haile, Doug Wylie, Jose Cortez, Abid Khalaf, Kai Dunn, Jeong-Hee Lim, NadimShukry-Zeywar, Francisco Costa

### **Others Present:**

Bruce Wilcox, CNRA

Steve Bigley, CVWD

Steve Jones, CSA62

Jack Marrin, Veolia

Bob Stadum, HDWD

Jurq Heuberger, Energy Source

Nicola Lakic

Kristen Ruffle, LA County Sanitation Districts

Todd Shibata, Riverside County Waste Resources Department

### **MINUTES**

1. Minutes of May 19, 2017 Board Meeting

**MOTION:** Ed Muzik moved, Hidali Garcia seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Minutes with corrections.

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

2. Mr. Nicola Lakic, introduced his idea of a methodology for harnessing geothermal energy as part of a possible Salton Sea restoration project. He stated that the current efforts from the State to deal with the Sea's problems would result in a significantly smaller Sea, whereas his proposal would restore a larger Sea by bringing seawater from the Pacific Ocean. He respectfully urged the Board to familiarize themselves with his proposal, which he believes can also generate 700,000 acre feet of water for reuse and up to \$100 billion in revenue for the area within in the next decades. The Board recommended that he meet with Board staff to discuss his proposal in more detail.

## **UNCONTESTED ITEMS**

3. R7-2017-0003 Waste Discharge Requirements for County of Imperial, Department of Public Works, Owner/Operator, Hot Spa Waste Management Facility Class III Municipal Landfill, North of Niland - Imperial County  
*[Jennie Snyder]*

[Chair Wright removed this Item from the Uncontested Calendar.] Ms. Powell asked whether the required pH monitoring had to be also done by a certified lab. Her understanding is that pH needs to be measured at the field because of concerns about the holding time to analyze the sample for pH. Ms. Snyder replied that the lab tests for pH regardless of whether the pH is tested in the field. Jeff Geraci (Senior Environmental Scientist) stated that it should be measured at the field.

Mr. Crites asked whether the tires this Landfill receives are properly stored because tires, if not properly handled, can create or contribute to the formation of vectors. Ms. Snyder replied that Board staff inspects the landfill annually and that Imperial County staff inspects it monthly [to ensure proper handling of the tires]. She added that the Landfill Operator has a covered bin where tires can be stored temporarily. Also, Mr. Crites noted that the landfill is unlined, without a leachate collections removal system, and that it continues to operate unlined. Ms. Snyder stated that he was correct, but that if the Discharger proposed to expand the landfill, [regulations] would require that the expanded section of the landfill be lined.

**MOTION:** Hidali Garcia moved, Ed Muzik seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Board Order R7-2017-0003.

4. R7-2017-0012 Post-Closure Maintenance and Waste Discharge Requirements for Riverside County Department of Waste Resources, Owner/Operator Coachella Sanitary Landfill Class III Municipal Landfill, Coachella - Riverside County  
*[Herb Jackson]*

Ms. Powell asked if any of the groundwater supply wells identified within one mile of the property (Finding 35 of the draft Order) had been adversely impacted [by a release of pollutants from the landfill], and if so, whether Board staff is tracking that. She also asked about the contaminants in the water. Todd Shibata, Riverside County Waste Resources Department, stated that his

agency also has other downgradient wells that do not show contamination and that these other wells are upgradient of the supply wells.

**MOTION:** Hidali Garcia moved, Ed Muzik seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Board Order R7-2017-0012.

5. R7-2017-0020 Waste Discharge Requirements for Riverside County, Owner/Operator Riverside County Service Area 62 Ripley Wastewater Treatment Plant Ripley – Riverside County  
*[Abid Khalaf]*

Ms. Powell questioned the flow limit of 50,000 gpd specified in the errata for this Item. Doug Wylie confirmed the amount was correct. Mr. Crites asked about the authorization of some degradation of groundwater limited to what. Mr. Angel stated it was limited to state water quality objectives.

**MOTION:** Hidali Garcia moved, Ed Muzik seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Board Order R7-2017-0020 with Errata.

6. R7-2017-0021 Waste Discharge Requirements for County Sanitation District No. 2 of Los Angeles County, Owner/Operator Mesquite Regional Landfill Class III Waste Management Facility Glamis Imperial County  
*[Jennie Snyder]*

Mr. Crites questioned whether the Board [in approving the proposed Order] also approves the section of proposed order that notes more train trips to haul hay, and 4000 tons to be delivered to the landfill by truck. Mr. Angel responded by stating that the Board does not have jurisdiction of the product shipping. It simply reflects that the Discharger is looking for revenue to maintain the landfill. Mr. Crites commented on his concerns of the significant issues that the Air District of Southern California has had, and possibly still does. Based on the ongoing discussion, Ms. Nunez recommended that the Item be removed from the Uncontested Calendar.

Mr. Crites then asked if comments were received from Bureau of Land Management on this item. Mr. Angel replied that no comments were received from the Bureau. Ms. Powell questioned what the moisture content difference was between the liquid waste moisture content more than 50% is prohibited and sewage sludge from wastewater treatment plant that does not contain at least 20% solids by waste and primary sludge, etc. as stated in the Standard Prohibitions section. Jennie Snyder replied this essentially means that no liquid waste cannot go into the landfill because it creates too much leachate. Ms. Snyder also explained how moisture content is determined. Ms. Powell also asked about what kind of inspection [Provision 1 of the proposed Order requires] for Cell 1. Ms. Snyder replied that Board staff wants to make sure the Cell's environmental controls are still functional (e.g., leachate collection system, grading, etc.) because the Landfill has not received any waste. Ms. Ruffle (LA County Sanitation Districts) explained that the leachate system is tested continuously because when it rains the Districts collect the rain from the system.

Ms. Wright removed this item from the Uncontested Calendar for a roll call vote to be taken for this specific item.

**MOTION:** Ed Muzik moved, Jayne Powell seconded. A roll call vote of Board members was taken: Ayes: Ms. Wright, Ms. Powell, Mr. Muzik and Ms. Garcia, Noes: Mr. Crites. The motion was carried to adopt Board Order R7-2017-0021 with Errata.

7. R7-2017-0024 Rescission of Waste Discharge Requirements for Imperial Wells Power I LLC, Imperial Wells Geothermal Exploration Project, Wellfield Mud Sumps/Containment Basins  
*[Doug Wylie]*

**MOTION:** Hidali Garcia moved, Ed Muzik seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Board Order R7-2017-024.

### **CONTESTED ITEMS**

8. R7-2017-0013 Waste Discharge Requirements for City of Palm Springs, Owner, Veolia West Water Operating Services, Inc. Operator, Palm Springs Wastewater Treatment Plant, Palm Springs, Riverside County  
*[Jose Cortez, P.E.]*

**MOTION:** Ms. Wright removed this item from the Agenda at this time because staff is still responding to comment letters and preparing a revised draft order.

9. R7-2017-0015 Waste Discharge Requirements for Westwind Enterprises, LTD., Owner/Operator Rio Bend RV and Gold Resort Septic Tank and Evaporation/Percolation Pond Disposal Facilities, South of Seeley - Imperial County  
*[Jose Cortez, P.E.]*

Ms. Wright moved this item to the Uncontested Calendar, there were no objections from the Board members or the public. Item #9 was included in the vote along with Items #3, 4, 5, and 7, Item #5 with Errata.

**MOTION:** Hidali Garcia moved, Ed Muzik seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Board Order R7-2017-0015.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

10. Informational Update: Salton Sea Management Program  
*[Bruce Wilcox, Salton Sea Assistant Secretary, Natural Resources Agency]*

Bruce Wilcox presented an update on the Natural Resources Agency's Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP). He provided background on the Sea's hydrological problems, including its getting saltier and saltier with time. He added that the latest inflow projections are in the order of 750,000-700,000 acre-feet/year (AFY); and noted that the mitigation water [for salinity] currently going into the Sea stops this year. He said that the two main issues for the Sea are: (1) declining Sea elevations, which expose playa, which can emit dust, which can affect public health; and (2) the rate at which salinity would increase once the mitigation water ends, noting that once salinity reaches 60 ppt, the fishery will collapse. He remarked that the Agency will restructure its SSMP committees to eliminate their overlapping responsibilities. He then stated that:

- the SSMP has two parts: (1) a 10-year Plan that calls for the construction of dust suppression projects and shallow habitat for shoring birds; and (2) while construction is taking place, develop a Long-term plan for the Sea;
- the main focus is to put projects on the ground with the \$80M the Agency has, learn from those projects, and ensure the projects are compatible with development of geothermal energy;
- the New River East (part of the Species Conservation Plan), Red Hill Bay, Torrez-Martinez Wetlands, New River West are projects ready for construction; and that some of the projects provide for habitat for shoring birds, while others provide deeper-water habitat for fish;
- the Agency wants to build as much habitat that is also good for dust suppression; it is implementing a design-build approach, where possible, to expedite project development and construction; and that there are challenges in implementing these projects, including securing lease agreements and easements, which have never been done for the scale of these projects;
- IID has an Air Quality Mitigation Program as part of the water transfer agreement [with the San Diego County Water Authority], and IID and the Agency are looking at alternative ways to suppress dust (e.g., surface roughing) from exposed playa as a priority;
- it is expected that implementing the Phase 1 SSMP projects will cost approximately over \$400M, and there is currently over \$100M for it (about \$84M from Prop 1, \$14M from the Wildlife Conservation Board, and \$7.2 from USDA). He added that that there is proposed legislation for another Water Bond that, subject to voter approval, would seek another \$500M for the SSMP.

He then answered Board member questions, including questions about QSA mitigation funds, the potential to have a local sales tax for the management and restoration efforts, changes in the Sea's inflows (e.g., greater or lower inflows than currently projected), health impacts from PM 10 and PM 2.5 (e.g., asthma), compatibility of the proposed infrastructure with the development of additional geothermal energy projects, and type of vegetation that can be used for dust suppression.

11. Informational Update: State Water Resources Control Board Activities  
*[Joaquin Esquivel, Adriana Nuñez]*

Mr. Esquivel reported that at its last meeting the State Water Board approved the Intended Use Plan for the Drinking Water and for the Clean Water Revolving Funds. The plan documents how the funds are used every year, and the importance of those funds becomes greater as the funding needs continue to grow. He added that the State Water Board staff will hold more workshops to get information to prioritize projects for funding and modify the Plan as necessary.

Ms. Nunez reported that the Court of Appeals upheld Region 9's General Fireworks Permit that allowed visual monitoring of the receiving water and authorized an exemption for temporary discharge of fireworks related pollutants into certain areas of special biological significance. She also reported that additional hearings are scheduled before the Commission on State Mandates to follow up on the California Supreme Court ruling against the State regarding the unfunded mandates from its stormwater permits

12. Colorado River Basin Water Board Executive Officer's Report  
*[Jose L. Angel, P.E.]*

Mr. Angel reported on the ongoing concerns about the issues with the New River Pollution from Mexico, including the problems of securing funds to enable Mexico acquire equipment to prevent bypasses of raw sewage into the New River. He also informed the Board about potential water quality concerns caused by the proposed Cadiz Project, which consists of: (1) extract groundwater and sell it to LA area water purveyors, and (2) store surface water into the area's aquifer for later extraction and sale. He added that Board staff are coordinating comments and concerns with the Attorney General and will keep the Board updated on new developments.

Frank Gonzalez, announced the promotion of Jeff Geraci to Sr. Environmental Specialist. Jeff has been with the Water Boards for about 12 years and continues to have a lot of enthusiasm and passion for the work he does. The Salton Sea will be a major part of his duties. The Board welcomed and congratulated Jeff on his new position.

#### 13. Colorado River Basin Water Board Member Comments

Mr. Muzik suggested a quick tour of the Yucca Valley Sewer Project after the September meeting to be held in Yucca Valley. He stated that Hi-Desert Water District expects to have up to 70% of the sewer collection system completed by then.

#### 14. Colorado River Basin Water Board Chair's Report

Ms. Wright mentioned the upcoming Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC) meeting is in October 25-26, 2017 in Sacramento. The Salton Sea is scheduled to be part of that Agenda.

Ms. Wright also expressed her thanks to Robert Perdue on his many years of service and congratulates him on his retirement. The Board members echoed Ms. Wright's thanks and wished Mr. Perdue well.

She also stated that there is a Board Workshop scheduled for July 25, 2017, that includes a Closed Session.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

15. The Board may meet in closed session to:
  - a. Consider the appointment, employment, evaluation of performance or dismissal of a public employee or to hear complaints or charges brought against a public employee by another person unless the employee requests a public hearing [Authority: Government Code Section 11126(a)].
  - b. Deliberate on a Decision to be Reached Based on Evidence Introduced in a Hearing- the Colorado River Basin Water Board may meet in closed session to consider to consider evidence received in an adjudicatory hearing and deliberate on a decision to be reached based on that evidence [Authority: Government Code Section 11126(c)(3)].
  - c. Consider the Initiation of Litigation or Discussion of Significant Exposure to Litigation- the Colorado River Basin Water Board may meet in closed session to discuss significant exposure to litigation; to discuss whether to initiate litigation; or to discuss initiated litigation [Authority: Government Code Section 11126(e)].

There was no closed session.

**ADJOURNMENT OF BOARD MEETING**

**NEXT BOARD MEETING: 9:00 a.m., September 14, 2017, Yucca Valley, CA.**