

State of California
Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board

Minutes of the February 5, 2021 Board Meeting
Video and Teleconference Meeting
No Physical Meeting Location
(Authorized by and in furtherance of
Executive Orders [N-29-20](#) and [N-33-20](#))

Chair Ruh called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

1. **Introductions**

Board Members Present at Virtual Board Meeting:

William Ruh, Chair
Tom Rivera
Daniel P. Selmi
Lana Peterson
Kris A. Murray
Joseph Kerr
Letitia Clark

Staff Present at Virtual Board Meeting:

Hope A. Smythe, Executive Officer
Jayne Joy, Assistant Executive Officer
Teresita Sablan, Regional Board Counsel
Ann E. Sturdivant, Division Chief
Mark E. Smythe, Division Chief
Lauma Willis, Division Chief
Cindy Li, Chief of Land Disposal
David G. Woelfel, Chief of Regional Programs
Afshin (Nick) Amini, Chief of Site Cleanup Program
Barbara Barry, Chief of Basin Planning - Inland Waters
William Rice, Engineering Geologist
Jason Bill, Senior Environmental Scientist
Mehrnoosh Behrooz, Water Resources Control Engineer
Kevin Heinemann, Information Technology Manager
Don Nguyen, Information Technology Associate
Daniel Mefford, Information Technology Specialist I
Susan Beeson, Sanitary Engineer Associate, Acting as Board Clerk
Sean Maguire, State Board Liaison
Sean McCarthy, State Water Board, Division of Drinking Water

Present:

William von Blasingame, past Vice Chair.

Virtual Public Attendance by Virtual Speaker Cards Received

Andrea L. Macias, Riverside County Flood Control & Water Conservation District; Amy McNeill, Riverside County Flood Control & Water Conservation District; Kathleen Aisling, Environmental Protection Agency; Bethany Dreyfus, Environmental Protection Agency; Larry Sievers, Environmental Protection Agency; Edwin Poalinelli, Environmental Protection Agency; Carlin Hafiz, Environmental Protection Agency; Derek Barbour, Richland Communities; Mark Norton, Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority.

Item 2. William von Blasingame Resolution of Appreciation

Resolution R8-2021-0004 - Chair Ruh and Board members recognized William von Blasingame for his service.

Item 3. Election of Santa Ana Regional Water Board Officers for 2021

Nominated committee Board Member Joe Kerr informed the Board that nominated committee Board Member Kris Murray voluntarily removed herself from the committee on Wednesday, February 3, 2021. Board Member Joe Kerr made a motion for the election of Ms. Lana Peterson to serve as Chair. Chair William Ruh asked Board Clerk Ms. Beeson for a roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Kerr, seconded by Board Member Selmi and was unanimously approved by roll call vote to approve the election of Regional Board Officer for 2021, Ms. Lana Peterson as Chair.

Roll call vote: Board Member Letitia Clark - Aye, Board Member Joe Kerr - Aye, Board Member Kris Murray - Aye, Board Member Daniel Selmi - Aye, Board Member Dr. Tom Rivera - Aye, Chair William Ruh - Aye.

Board Member Joe Kerr made a motion for the election of Board Member Kris Murray to serve as Vice Chair. Chair William Ruh asked Board Clerk Ms. Beeson for a roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Kerr, seconded by Board Member Dr. Rivera, and was unanimously approved by roll call vote to approve the election of Regional Board Officer for 2021, Ms. Kris Murray as Vice Chair.

Roll call vote: Board Member Letitia Clark - Aye, Board Member Joe Kerr - Aye, Board Member Chair Elect Lana Peterson - Aye, Board Member Daniel Selmi - Aye, Board Member Dr. Tom Rivera - Aye, Chair William Ruh - Aye.

Item 4. Public Forum:

None

Item 5. State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Liaison Report

This item was presented by Board Member Sean Maguire, State Water Board.

Mr. Maguire said the past year has been challenging with budget concerns, furloughs and state budget deficit. Mr. Maguire indicated the Governor's budget from last month was promising.

Mr. Maguire discussed the impacts of COVID-19. The impacts of continuing to work virtually, virtual Board meetings, the ability to continue policy work and permits. He also discussed community impacts related to the financial impacts to individuals and households effecting payment of utility bills. Mr. Maguire mentioned the Governor has taken action to prohibit water shutoffs and recognizes water is a human right.

Mr. Maguire said there is wastewater surveillance testing for COVID-19 in wastewater treatment plants. State Board entered into an agreement and understanding with a number of dischargers in cooperation with the California Department of Public Health to have a number of agencies monitor COVID-19 three times a week in their wastewater. This data may help inform us with COVID-19 issues, such as, outbreak locations.

Mr. Maguire discussed moving our regulatory process forward and issuing notification and response levels for different PFAS constituents and recognizing there may be other PFAS compounds in the environment. We do not have laboratory capabilities to detect all the PFAS compounds at this time. Mr. Maguire said Division of Drinking Water is working with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and has proposed a notification level and response level for perfluorobutane sulfonic acid (PFBS).

Mr. Maguire said the water supply in 2020 was a dry year and we could be finding ourselves in a drought situation later this year.

Board members asked questions to Mr. Maguire.

Item 6. Regional Board Meeting Minutes of October 16, 2020

Chair Ruh asked the Board Members for a motion of the Minutes and asked Board Clerk Ms. Beeson for a roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Vice Chair Elect Murray, seconded by Board Member Kerr, and the Minutes of the October 16, 2020, Board Meeting was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Board Member Letitia Clark - Aye, Board Member Joe Kerr - Aye, Board Member Vice Chair Elect Kris Murray - Aye, Board Member Chair Elect Lana Peterson - Aye, Board Member Daniel Selmi - Aye, Board Member Dr. Tom Rivera - Aye, Chair William Ruh - Aye.

Item 7. Regional Board Meeting Minutes of December 4, 2020

Chair Ruh asked the Board Members for a motion of the Minutes and asked Board Clerk Ms. Beeson for a roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Vice Chair Elect Murray, seconded by Board Member Chair Elect Peterson, and the Minutes of the December 4, 2020, Board Meeting was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Board Member Letitia Clark - Aye, Board Member Joe Kerr - Aye, Board Member Vice Chair Elect Kris Murray - Aye, Board Member Chair Elect Lana Peterson - Aye, Board Member Daniel Selmi - Aye, Board Member Dr. Tom Rivera - Aye, Chair William Ruh - Aye.

Item 8. Consideration of the Consent Calendar items are listed with an asterisk

Chair Ruh asked for a motion and asked Board Clerk Ms. Beeson for a roll call vote.

Item *9. Revised Waste Discharge Requirements for Corona Sanitary Landfill - Order Number R8-2021-0007

Item *10. Waste Discharge Requirements for Richland Developers, Inc., Monarch Hills Residential Development Project, City of Fontana, San Bernardino County – R8-2021-0005

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Vice Chair Elect Murray, seconded by Board Member Clark and unanimously carried to adopt Orders R8-2021-0007 and R8-2021-0005, as presented by roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Board Member Letitia Clark – Aye, Board Member Joe Kerr - Aye, Board Member Vice Chair Elect Kris Murray - Aye, Board Member Chair Elect Lana Peterson - Aye, Board Member Daniel Selmi - Aye, Board Member Dr. Tom Rivera - Aye, Chair William Ruh - Aye.

Item 11 Flood Control Post-Wildfire Response for Public Safety and Watershed Protection -

This item was presented by Amy McNeill, Senior Civil Engineer, Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and Andrea Macias, Associate Civil Engineer, Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District).

Ms. McNeill's presentation consisted of risks existing after a wildfire and highlights of the District's preparation and post storm maintenance activities. Ms. McNeill's presentation focused on the wildfires that affected Santa Ana Watershed and the communities of Lake Elsinore, Cherry Valley and the City of Beaumont.

Ms. McNeill said Stormwater Management is to protect public health and safety and is the original purpose of the District. Created in 1945, the District jurisdiction covers 2700 square miles and the western 40 percent of Riverside County. The District has 700 miles of storm drains, channels and levees with 67 detention basins and dams. The District

serves as the principal permittee of three NPDES MS4 Permits in Riverside County to preserve water quality while protecting the communities from flood waters.

Board Member Joe said the presentation was amazing and informative.

Item 12. Groundwater Contamination/Cleanup Update

This item was presented by Regional Board staff, Mr. Nick Amini, Chief of Site Cleanup Program. Follow up presentation by Ms. Kathleen Aisling, Environmental Protection Agency, and Ms. Carlin Hafiz, Environmental Protection Agency.

This presentation was an overview of groundwater contamination in the Santa Ana Region. Mr. Amini said groundwater is a critically important and invaluable resource within the Santa Ana Region and Water Boards mission is to protect beneficial uses of groundwater, surface water, and reduce or eliminate threats to human health and environment.

Mr. Amini noted the watershed is divided into groundwater management zones (GMZs) for a more efficient management of water resources. The Groundwater Protection Division includes the following main programs: Site Cleanup, Underground Storage Tanks (USTs), and Land Disposal/Department of Defense. Mr. Amini covered the program activities in the Site Cleanup section.

Mr. Amini pointed out various historical activities that have impacted the groundwater quality in the Santa Ana Region. He explained and discussed the industrial resources such as waste disposal, fuel storage, contamination of regional plumes, vapor intrusion and groundwater cleanup.

Board members had questions for Mr. Amini.

Orange County North Basin Site Listing and Status

This item was presented by Kathleen Aisling, Superfund Remedial Project Manager, Environmental Protection Agency, and Carlin Hafiz, Community Involvement Coordinator, Environmental Protection Agency.

Ms. Aisling and Ms. Hafiz provided a presentation and explained the Superfund process and the implications of the finalization of the Orange County North Basin Site on the National Priorities List.

Board members had questions for Ms. Aisling and Ms. Hafiz.

Break from 12:20 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. - The Regional Board reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

Item 13. Update on Investigation of PFAS Contamination in the Santa Ana Region

This item was presented by Regional Board staff, Ms. Mehrnoosh Behrooz, (Mona) Water Resources Control Engineer. Follow up presentation by Mr. Sean McCarthy, State Water Board, Division of Drinking Water.

Mona provided an overview of a group of chemicals known as Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and an update on the status of the investigations of these chemicals within California and in Santa Ana Region. She presented that PFAS family includes thousands of manmade chemicals. These chemicals are resistant to heat, water, and oil and due to these unique properties, they have been used in many industries and consumer products. She introduced two main groups of PFAS family, PFOA and PFOS, that have been used in largest amount in the United States.

The presentation covered the results of the PFAs investigations in California and in the Santa Ana Watershed. PFAS has been detected in many locations throughout the region, and the State Water Board and the Santa Ana Water Board are strategically collecting data in areas where PFAS would likely be present, such as, airports, landfills, chrome plating facilities, refineries and bulk terminal facilities, and wastewater treatment plants. Santa Ana Water Board is working with Division of Drinking Water that have tested drinking water wells for PFAS to determine that source of these compounds.

Board members had questions for Ms. Behrooz.

PFAS Contamination Update

Presentation by Mr. Sean McCarthy, State Water Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW).

Mr. McCarthy provided a quick overview of the PFAS impact on the public drinking water systems within the Santa Ana Region and their activities related to PFAS investigations statewide. DDW has collected PFAS data under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule for some water distribution systems. As of January 1, 2020, AB756, gives DDW authority to issue general orders to monitor for PFAS to a broader extent and increase public awareness of PFAS in drinking water. Mr. McCarthy explained their approach using general orders to obtain PFAS data in the Santa Ana Region. Mr. McCarthy explained that water agencies are installing wellhead treatment for PFAS in the Santa Ana Region drinking water wells.

Speaker: Mark Norton, Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, commented about the PFAS emergent constituents study and their Emerging Constituents Program Task Force.

Board members asked questions to Ms. Behrooz and Mr. McCarthy.

Item 14. Executive Officer's Report

None

Item 15. Regional Board Member and Executive Officer Communications

Hope Smythe announced the proposed scheduled dates for the continued Hearing of the Poseidon Desalination Facility. This will be a two-day hearing and the selected dates are April 16, 2021 and April 23, 2021. Board members agreed to the hearing dates and Executive Officer, Hope Smythe will verify with Board member Joe Kerr. Board member Joe Kerr left before the Board meeting ended.

Item 21. Closed Session

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There was no closed session.

Adjournment – Chair Ruh adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m. to the regular Board Meeting of March 12, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. This will be a video and teleconference meeting. Due to the COVID-19 emergency and the Governor’s Executive Order N-33-20, Board meetings have been presented as video and teleconference meetings with no physical meeting location, and solely via remote presence. Please follow our website for further updates.

Respectfully submitted:

HOPE A. SMYTHE
Executive Officer

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