

State of California
Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board

Minutes of the December 1, 2023 Board Meeting
Loma Linda City Hall
25541 Barton Road
Loma Linda, CA 92354
And via Video and Teleconference (Gov. Code, § 11133)

Court Reporter recorded items: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

Chair Murray called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Item 1. Introductions

Information pertaining to this item is contained in a verbatim transcript of the proceedings.

***Indicates that attendance was virtual.

Board Members Present at Board Meeting

Kris A. Murray, Chair
Letitia Clark, Vice Chair***
William Ruh, Board Member
Gloria Alvarado, Board Member
John Scandura, Board Member
Al Lopez, Board Member

Board Members Absent at Board Meeting

None

Staff Present at Board Meeting

Jayne Joy, Executive Officer
Jessica Baenre, Executive Assistant
Nick Amini, Branch Manager
Eric Lindberg, Branch Manager
Dan Mefford, Information Technology Specialist
Don Nguyen, Information Technology Associate
Fernanda Arechiga, Scientific Aid***
Julio Lara, Senior Water Resource Control Engineer***
Chuck Griffin, Senior Water Resource Control Engineer (Specialist)***
Hossein Shahrokhnia, Environmental Scientist
Adaoha Ollivierre, Water Resource Control Engineer

State Water Board Present at Board Meeting

Lori Okun, Regional Board Counsel
David Lancaster, State Board Counsel***

Court Reporter Present at Board Meeting

Marlee Nelson***

Public Attendance Present at Board Meeting

Irene Cordero, Orange County Coastkeeper

Rocky Welborn, East Valley Water District

Ronald Coats, East Valley Water District

Michael Moore, East Valley Water District

James Morales, East Valley Water District

Phil Goodrich, East Valley Water District

David Smith, East Valley Water District

Arlene B. Chun, San Bernardino County

Rosalyn Prickett, Rincon Consultants

Greg Woodside, San Bernardino Valley

John Ko, LSA Associates***

Item 2. Public Forum

Irene Cordero with Orange County (OC) Coastkeeper shared a presentation on cleanup efforts and pollution observations.

Ms. Cordero discussed the following trash statistics:

- Every year 8 million tons of plastics enter our ocean on top of an estimated 200 million tons that are circulating our marine environment.
- Plastic generally takes between 500- 1,000 years to degrade.
- 10% of plastic that we produce is currently being recycled.
- Worldwide more than 800 species of marine life have been harmed by debris.
- Plastic waste makes up 80% of all marine pollution.
- 80% of marine debris comes from land/ rain runoff.

Ms. Cordero mentioned that OC Coastkeeper hosts bi-monthly cleanups year-round:

- On the first Saturday of the month at Calafia State Beach.
- On the second Saturday of the month at Huntington Beach.
- On the third Saturday of the month a bi-monthly cleanup at the Santa Ana-Delhi Channel.
- In addition, OC Coastkeeper does emergency cleanups and corporate cleanups as requested.

As of December 1, 2023, OC Coastkeeper has completed 77 cleanups with the help of 5,682 volunteers and removed 13,291 pounds of trash.

Board Members asked questions and provided comments.

Item 3. State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Liaison Report

Written report submitted.

Media Releases

- November 14: Stanislaus SRWA New Water Treatment Plant Ribbon Cutting

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Proposed Adoption of the Direct Potable Reuse Regulation

- On December 19 the State Water Board will consider adoption of the Direct Potable Reuse (DPR) Regulation, a first-in-the-nation effort to develop uniform water recycling criteria that is protective of public health.
- AB 574 (2017) required the State Water Board to adopt uniform water recycling criteria for DPR through raw water augmentation on or before December 31, 2023.

Update to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan

- As part of the public process required to update and implement the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan, the State Water Board released a draft staff report on September 28 that evaluated environmental and related effects of instream flows and other potential changes to the Sacramento/Delta component of the plan.
- A multi-day series of in-person hearings and virtual workshops is underway. The first two in-person hearings were held in Sacramento on November 17 and December 1, and the third will be on December 11 beginning at noon. The public comment period has been extended from December 15, 2023 to Friday, January 19, 2024. A revised notice went out to reflect the change in time for the third workshop and the extended comment deadline.

Proposed Adoption of Amendments to the Water Quality Enforcement Policy

- On December 5 the State Water Board will consider adoption of proposed amendments to the Water Quality Enforcement Policy. The Board held a hearing on April 18, 2023 and received comments through April 28, 2023.

Commemoration of 100th SAFER Consolidation in Coachella

- On December 7 members of the State Water Board will travel to Coachella to commemorate the 100th consolidation resulting from the SAFER program and to attend a public meeting of the SAFER advisory committee.

Proposed Adoption of the Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook

- On December 19 the State Water Board will consider adoption of the proposed amendments to the Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook.

California's Water Supply Strategy

California Water Supply Strategy and Implementation Actions-

The Water Supply Strategy outlines California's strategy and priority actions to adapt and protect water supplies based on new data and accelerated climate change. To ensure California has the new water needed for generations to come, this strategy outlines four sets of actions the State will pursue, sets targets, and identifies specific implementation steps to prepare California for its new climate reality. The following is an update on the milestones and implementation steps since the last Executive Director's Reporting.

Division of Water Quality

Recycled Water-

Reuse at least 800,000 acre-feet of water per year by 2030 and 1.8 million acre-feet by 2040, with most of that additional recycling involving direct wastewater discharges that are now going to the ocean. (Action 1.1)

The California Water Supply Strategy requires the State Water Board, by January 1, 2024, to work with local water and sanitation agencies to identify recycled water projects that hold the potential to be operational by 2030 and by no later than 2040. The Water Supply Strategy also directs the State Water Board to convene a strike team to identify and resolve permitting and funding obstacles for recycled water projects.

Staff has developed the Draft List of Planned Recycled Water Projects (Draft List) that hold the potential to be operational by 2030 and by no later than 2040. The Draft List includes key project information and projections for increases in recycled water by 2030 and by 2040. The Draft List was developed through collation of multiple data sources and outreach to individual facilities and industry groups to verify project status and recycled water increase projections. Staff shared the Draft List at a November 13, 2023 Strike Team meeting and is finalizing the Draft List to prepare for transmittal to the Governor's Office by January 1, 2024.

Division of Water Rights

Groundwater Recharge (Action 2.1)

On November 6, the Division issued a 180-day temporary permit to North San Joaquin Water Conservation District. The permit allows the District to divert up to 1,350 acre-feet of water from the Mokelumne River in San Joaquin County from November 6 to 30 in response to anticipated releases from Lake Camanche, which received high runoff last winter. The District will store diverted water underground for later irrigation.

The Division is processing temporary groundwater recharge permit applications for the following districts: (1) Scott Valley Irrigation District, (2) Stockton East Water District, (3) South Sutter Water District, (4) Dunnigan Water District, (5) Aliso Water District, (6) Merced Irrigation District, and (7) Colusa Groundwater Authority. For project status, visit bit.ly/temporaryrechargepermits.

Water Code section 1242.1 (authorized in July 2023) clarifies how water diverted for flood management can be used to recharge aquifers without a permit and directs the Board to post related information on its website. The Division has developed that website: waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/groundwater-recharge/recharge-diversions.html. As of November 13, no parties are using the new provisions. Board staff gave a presentation on this as part of a recent California Department of Fish and Wildlife workshop.

Item 4. Regional Board Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2023

Information pertaining to this item is contained in a verbatim transcript of the proceedings.

Chair Murray asked the Board Members for a motion and asked Board Clerk Ms. Baenre for a roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Ruh, seconded by Board Member Alvarado, and the Regional Board Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2023 was approved as presented by roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Board Member Lopez- Abstain, Board Member Scandura- Aye, Board Member Alvarado- Aye, Board Member Ruh- Aye, Vice Chair Clark- Aye, Chair Murray- Aye.

Board Member Lopez abstained because he was not on the Board at the time of this meeting.

Item 5. Board Meeting Dates for 2024

Information pertaining to this item is contained in a verbatim transcript of the proceedings.

Chair Murray asked the Board Members for a motion and asked Board Clerk Ms. Baenre for a roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Ruh, seconded by Board Member Scandura, and the Board Meeting Dates for 2024 was unanimously approved as presented by roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Board Member Lopez- Aye, Board Member Scandura- Aye, Board Member Alvarado- Aye, Board Member Ruh- Aye, Vice Chair Clark- Aye, Chair Murray- Aye.

Item 6. Appointment of a Committee to Nominate Regional Board Officers for 2024

Information pertaining to this item is contained in a verbatim transcript of the proceedings.

Board Members agreed to appoint Board Member Lopez and Board Member Alvarado to nominate the Regional Board Officers for 2024. The nominations will be announced at the February 2, 2024 Board Meeting.

Item 7. Consideration of the Consent Calendar items are listed with an asterisk

Chair Murray asked the Board Members for a motion and asked Board Clerk Ms. Baenre for a roll call vote.

Item *8. Waste Discharge Requirements for Riverside County Transportation Department, Mission Boulevard Bridge Replacement at Santa Ana River Project, Riverside County; R8-2023-0061

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Ruh, seconded by Board Member Lopez, and Order Number R8-2023-0061 was unanimously approved as presented by roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Board Member Lopez- Aye, Board Member Scandura- Aye, Board Member Alvarado- Aye, Board Member Ruh- Aye, Vice Chair Clark- Aye, Chair Murray- Aye.

Item 9. Issuance of Waste Discharge Requirements and Master Recycling Permit for East Valley Water District's Sterling Natural Resource Center; Order Number R8-2023-0009

Information pertaining to this item is contained in a verbatim transcript of the proceedings.

The item was presented by Regional Board staff, Dr. Nick Amini.

Dr. Amini provided an overview of East Valley Water District's (EVWD) Sterling Natural Resource Center (SNRC), discussed the EVWD SNRC's Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) Order and Master Recycling Permit, reviewed comments received and provided the staff recommendation.

EVWD is a public agency that provides wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal to about 104,000 people living in southwest San Bernardino County. EVWD proposed to reuse recycled water for groundwater replenishment of the Bunker Hill-B Groundwater Management Zone (GMZ). This proposal consists of three main parts:

- 220 miles of sewer truck lines (gravity flow)
- One wastewater treatment plant
- One Outfall (Weaver Basins)

Dr. Amini explained that 8 million gallons per day of disinfected tertiary treated water will be for mostly indirect potable reuse and some non-potable reuse. The effluent from this facility will be tertiary treated and disinfected, and then transported via a pipeline to the Weaver Basins in the City of Highlands for infiltration into the subsurface. The Weaver Basins are comprised of 5 basins with a total surface area of 21.4 acres and a combined capacity of 48.9 million gallons. EVWD, Cities of San Bernardino and Redlands, and the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District are collaborating on this project.

Comments Received:

Three letters of support from the City of San Bernardino Municipal Water Department, City of Redlands, and San Bernardino Valley Water District were submitted to staff.

Recommendation:

Dr. Amini recommended the adoption of Order Number R8-2023-0009.

Board Members asked questions and provided comments.

Public Comments:

Phil Goodrich-

Chairman of the Board of Directors for East Valley Water District spoke in favor of Item 9. Mr. Goodrich mentioned that the East Valley Water District was formed in 1954 and provides water and wastewater services to the entire city of Highland and 1/3 of the City of San Bernardino. The Sterling Natural Resource Center is a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant that should produce between 8 to 10 million gallons of water for groundwater recharge every day. Mr. Goodrich states that the Sterling Natural Resource Center will be a tremendous asset for the region.

Michael Moore-

General Manager for East Valley Water District thanked Regional Board staff and the Division of Drinking Water. Mr. Moore discussed recycled water, the groundwater basin, plant technologies and racial equity. Mr. Moore asked the Board to approve the Master Recycling Permit.

Board Members provided additional comments.

Chair Murray noted that Item 9 had an errata sheet.

Chair Murray asked the Board Members for a motion and asked Board Clerk Ms. Baenre for a roll call vote.

Motion: It was moved by Board Member Ruh, seconded by Board Member Scandura, and Order Number R8-2023-0009 with the errata sheet was unanimously approved as presented by roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Board Member Lopez- Aye, Board Member Scandura- Aye, Board Member Alvarado- Aye, Board Member Ruh- Aye, Vice Chair Clark- Aye, Chair Murray- Aye.

Item 10. Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake Nutrient TMDL Revision

This item was postponed.

Item 11. Executive Officer's Report

Ms. Joy provided a verbal report on the following:

Water Quality Coordination Committee (WQCC)-

WQCC took place on October 23rd and October 24th, 2023 and all Regional Board members were present. WQCC provided information on beneficial uses for tribes, discussed the Sackett v. EPA decision on the waters of the United States, received a one-year report on the water supply strategy and discussed regional board updates. Ms. Joy mentioned that the Santa Ana Region is doing well with the water supply strategy.

Racial Equity-

Ms. Joy mentioned that the Racial Equity resolution for the Santa Ana Water Board is about 90% complete and anticipates that the resolution will be ready for public comment in early 2024.

Item 12. Board Member and Executive Officer Communications

Board Member Scandura-

Congratulated fellow Board Members on their reconfirmations and Board Member Lopez for his appointment to the Board.

Board Member Lopez-

Appreciates the opportunity to serve on the Board.

Board Member Alvarado-

Welcomed Board Member Lopez and is very excited to continue working and learning. Board Member Alvarado reminded the public that we are still in a drought and to conserve water.

Board Member Ruh-

Congratulated Board Member Lopez on his appointment and looks forward to working with him. Board Member Ruh also thanked staff for a great year, the Executive Officer for a great team and the public for showing up and providing input at the Board meetings.

Vice Chair Clark-

Thanked staff for a great year, is looking forward to 2024 and welcomed Board Member Lopez.

Chair Murray-

Thanked Executive Officer Joy for her leadership, mentioned that it is an honor to serve with fellow Board Members and welcomed Board Member Lopez. Chair Murray also wished everyone a safe and happy holidays.

Closed Session

None

Adjournment

Chair Murray adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

JAYNE JOY, P.E.

Executive Officer

/jb