



**SAWPA COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
September 5, 2023**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Bruce Whitaker, Chair, Orange County Water District  
T. Milford Harrison, Secretary-Treasurer, San Bernardino Valley  
Municipal Water District  
David J. Slawson, Eastern Municipal Water District  
Jasmin A. Hall, Inland Empire Utilities Agency

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Mike Gardner, Vice Chair, Western Municipal Water District

**ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS  
PRESENT; NON-VOTING**

Kelly Rowe, Orange County Water District  
Gil Botello, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

**STAFF PRESENT**

Jeff Mosher, Karen Williams, Edina Goode, David Ruhl, Ian  
Achimore, Dean Unger, Sara Villa, Zyanya Ramirez, Marie Jauregui,  
John Leete, Melissa Bustamonte

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Andrew Turner, Lagerlof, LLP; Shivaji Deshmukh, Inland Empire  
Utilities Agency; Kevin O'Toole, Orange County Water District; Lisa  
Haney, Orange County Water District; Craig Miller, Western  
Municipal Water District; Mallory O'Connor, Western Municipal Water  
District; Robert Ennis, City of Riverside; Nan Jia, CWE; Jason  
Pereira, CWE

The Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Bruce Whitaker on behalf of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, 11615 Sterling Avenue, Riverside, California.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL**

An oral roll call was duly noted and recorded by the Clerk of the Board.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments; there were no public comments received via email.

**4. ITEMS TO BE ADDED OR DELETED**

There were no items to be added or deleted.

**5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: JULY 18, 2023**

**Recommendation:** Approve as posted.

**B. 2024 MEDICAL INSURANCE CAP (CM#2023.50)**

**Recommendation:** To direct staff to adjust the medical insurance cap from \$1,944.00 to \$2,057.56 which is equal to the ACWA/JPIA 2024 Kaiser Family Plan Rate.

**MOVED**, to approve the Consent Calendar as posted.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Harrison/Hall
Ayes:	Hall, Harrison, Slawson, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	Gardner

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

### A. BASIN MONITORING PROGRAM TASK FORCE CONTRACT APPROVAL | SURFACE WATER QUALITY MONITORING (CM#2023.51)

Ian Achimore provided a presentation titled Basin Monitoring Program (BMP) Task Force Contract Approval | Surface Monitoring, contained in the agenda packet on pages 23-34. On June 20, 2023, the SAWPA Commission approved the release of Request for Proposals (RFP) to utilize consulting services for surface water quality monitoring within several reaches for the Santa Ana River. Three (3) proposals were received August 1, 2023, from CWE, ECORP Consulting, and West Yost & Associates. SAWPA staff and the BMP Task Force Scoping Committee reviewed and rated the proposals received and contacted the references for each firm; with CWE resulting in being the highest ranked. Sufficient funding has been budgeted by the BMP Task Force for the execution of the scope through a task order due to this work being included in the Task Force's current budget. If approved, the next steps are to hold a Kickoff Meeting September 14<sup>th</sup> and prepare for monitoring and develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), and the monitoring is anticipated 2024 through 2026. There was no discussion.

**MOVED**, to authorize the General Manager to execute the General Services Agreement and Task Order CWE374-01 with CWE in the amount not to exceed \$93,711.00 for the Consulting Services of Surface Water Quality Monitoring.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Slawson/Hall
Ayes:	Hall, Harrison, Slawson, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	Gardner

### B. HEADWATERS ARUNDO REMOVAL UPDATE (CM#2023.52)

Ian Achimore provided a presentation titled Headwaters Arundo Removal Update, contained in the agenda packet on pages 79-92. Arundo donax is an invasive plant, noxious weed that uses approximately 528 gallons of water per meter annually. The growth rate is 1.5 to 4 inches per day under optimal conditions and is highly combustible and survives fire and thrives causing flooding by altering flow regimes. Per the SAWPA Commission's approval of the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District (IERCD) five-year task order on July 19, 2022, the invasive weed Arundo donax has been surveyed and removed in several key areas in the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed's headwaters. Through the Task Order, IERCD has done 10,000+ acres of surveys using aerial imagery and, in the field, to determine the most upstream occurrences of Arundo in the watershed. There are six (6) areas in the upper watershed with the weed present per the survey results; Cajon and Lytle Creeks, Waterman Canyon, Santa Ana River Mainstem upstream of Highway 10, Redlands area, Yucaipa area, and San Timoteo Creek.

Over the course of Fiscal Year Ending (FYE) 2023, IERCD has acquired right of entry agreements from property owners in the Cajon Creek, Redlands Area, Yucaipa Area, and Yucaipa Creek. In FYE 2023, removal of the weed has taken place in the Redlands Area, Yucaipa Area, and Yucaipa Creek. For FYE 2024, follow up treatment with approved herbicide is planned for the Redlands Area, Yucaipa Area, and Yucaipa Creek. Initial removal is planned for the Cajon Creek Area, and possibly Lytle Creek.

There is outreach anticipated in the Cajon and San Timoteo areas. This involves community presentations, and letters to be distributed with a follow up “door knocking” for individual property owners by IERCD staff. Outreach is also to be performed in the Santa Ana River mainstem, Lytle Creek and Waterman Canyon which will include individual meetings with large scale property owners like Flood Control Districts and Native American Tribe.

It was questioned if the Arundo removal is done by a contractor. Mr. Achimore noted that the work is done by a subcontractor to a nonprofit like the Resource Conservation District or Santa Ana Watershed Association. It was asked if there is a use for it that can be produced into some type of revenue resource that could be grinded and used for cow feed. Mr. Achimore noted that there were discussions about a year ago with a firm based in North Carolina to use Arundo to make waterproof plywood and they were looking into the regulations of planting it like a crop in North Carolina, though there were issues due to Arundo being labeled as a noxious weed. It was suggested that staff reach out to the universities to see if they have any research opportunities for future projects in the removal of Arundo.

This is to receive and file; no action will be taken on Agenda Item No. 6.B.

## **7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

### **A. CASH TRANSACTIONS REPORT – JUNE 2023**

### **B. INTER-FUND BORROWING – JUNE 2023 (CM#2023.53)**

### **C. PERFORMANGE INDICATORS/FINANCIAL REPORTING – JUNE 2023 (CM#2023.54)**

### **D. PROJECT AGREEMENT 25 – OWOW FUND – FINANCIAL REPORT, JUNE 2023**

### **E. PROJECT AGREEMENT 26 – ROUNDTABLE FUND – FINANCIAL REPORT, JUNE 2023**

### **F. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

Jeff Mosher informed the Commission that SAWPA’s leadership staff has embarked on a transformative leadership development program that is led by Nate Sassman. SAWPA and its member agencies recently participated in the California Adaptation Forum Conference. Each of the member agencies talked about projects that are in line with increasing our resiliency in the watershed. Mr. Mosher noted that staff submitted the proposal under the ICARP program, and the grant is expected to be awarded in the November timeframe.

### **G. STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

### **H. CHAIR’S COMMENTS/REPORT**

Chair Whitaker noted that the recent hurricane brought more than 2 1/2 inches of rain over a short period which is about a third of the entire previous year's total at the Anaheim Station of OCWD.

**I. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

There were no Commissioners' comments received.

**J. COMMISSIONERS' REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no requests for future agenda items.

**8. CLOSED SESSION**

There was no closed session.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for review, Chair Bruce Whitaker adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

**Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, September 19, 2023.**

DocuSigned by:

*Bruce Whitaker*

Bruce Whitaker, Chair

Attest:

DocuSigned by:

*Sara Villa*

Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board