



**SAWPA COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 4, 2024**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Bruce Whitaker, Chair, Orange County Water District  
Mike Gardner, Vice Chair, Western Municipal 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**

None

**ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS  
PRESENT; NON-VOTING**

Gil Botello, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
Denis Bilodeau, Orange County Water District

**STAFF PRESENT**

Karen Williams, David Ruhl, Rachel Gray, Shavonne Turner, Ian  
Achimore, Sara Villa, Melissa Bustamonte, Dean Unger, John Leete,  
Alison Lewis, Natalia Gonzalez

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Andrew Turner, Lagerlof, LLP; Craig Miller, Western Municipal Water  
District; Mallory O'Connor, Western Municipal Water District; Derek  
Kawaii, Western Municipal Water District; John Kennedy, Orange  
County Water District; Lisa Haney, Orange County Water District;  
Adekunle Ojo, San Bernardino Valley Water District; Brian Dietrick,  
Woodard and Curran Michelle Joy Gold; Ryan Davison; Trisha Rims

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**

It was noted that there were two (2) public comments received via – email from public citizens Michelle Joy Gold and Ryan Davison requesting to speak regarding the Cloud Seeding Program. Commissioner Gardner noted that regarding Ms. Gold's original comments, since that time the legislation in Tennessee has been signed by the Governor, so it will become law in that State. Chair Whitaker emphasized that if the public has questions or concerns involving the Cloud Seeding Program to continue to bring the information forward to Commission.

Ms. Gold addressed the Commission and reiterated her questions and concerns written in her submitted comments and noted she wants to bring awareness of concerns in relation to public health, the environment, and the ecosystem. How can we collectively bring up these concerns and address them now so that we can move forward to create a safer environment and achieve goals collectively? Is it possible to pause/disrupt the pilot program with evidence collected at this time or does the pilot program have to be completed?

Mr. Davison addressed the Commission and asked if the cost of the program really benefits and who is paying for the program? Could the funds be used elsewhere? Mr. Davison thanked staff and the Commission for having all the resources/information available for the public and

appreciates the open lines of communication and willingness to have conversations regarding the program.

Chair Whitaker thanked Ms. Gold and Mr. Davison on their public comments and noted that what is being described is what the pilot project is all about, which is gathering evidence through this timeframe to be able to determine whether we want to move forward and whether this is going to be beneficial.

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

There were no items to be added or deleted.

#### 5. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

##### A. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: MAY 21, 2024**

**Recommendation:** Approve as posted.

##### B. **UPDATED PERSONNEL HANDBOOK APPROVAL (CM#2024.28)**

**Recommendation:** To approve the updated and revised Personnel Handbook.

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

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

#### 6. **NEW BUSINESS**

##### A. **COLA AND MERIT POOL INCREASES – FY 2024-25 (CM#2024.29)**

Karen Williams provided a verbal report on the Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) and Merit Pool increases for FY 2024-25 and referenced the memo contained in the agenda packet on pages 97-100. The recommendation is a 4% Merit Pool and a 4.3% COLA increase. While some of the SAWPA member agencies are still in negotiations for their COLA and Merit increases for FY 2024-25, the chart below lists the information currently available from the Chief Financial Officers. Commissioner Hall asked for clarification on the COLA and the Merit. Ms. Williams noted that the COLA is 4.3% across the board, and the 4% Merit pool is based on 4% of total salaries. It is based on the employee's performance evaluation.

<b>Member Agency</b>	<b>COLA</b>	<b>Merit</b>
EMWD	5.3% MOU	1% – 4%
IEUA*	TBD	TBD
OCWD	4.5% FYE 2025	3% Budgeted
SBVMWD	4.8% FYE 2025	2.5% - 5%
WMWD	2.9% FYE 2025	1% - 5%

\* Salary range increases for FYE 2025 are still in negotiations.

**MOVED**, to approve a 4% Merit Pool and a 4.3% COLA increase for FY 2024-25.

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

**B. SARCCUP PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES – CONSULTANT SUPPORT (CM#2024.30)**

Ian Achimore provided a presentation on the Santa Ana River Conservation and Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP) Project Management Services – FYE 2025 Consultant Support, contained in the agenda packet on pages 103-110. Mr. Achimore provided an overview of the past eight (8) fiscal years using Woodard & Curran to conduct the project management services. The task orders have been funded by a combination of contributions from the five (5) member agencies as well as the Proposition 84 IRWM Grant Agreement administered by SAWPA. The SARCCUP project is scheduled to be completed with construction on June 30, 2025, with the final grant-related project closeout to be completed in December 2025.

Woodard & Curran’s tasks include managing a web-based database to track and compile grant-required quarterly progress reports and invoices, develop a grant-required project monitoring plan, lead bi-monthly coordination meetings with the SAWPA member agencies and SAWPA, and provide support with amendments to the Proposition 84 IRWM Grant Agreement. The FYE 2025 Task Order was reviewed with the SAWPA member agency planning managers, and then provided to the SAWPA member agency General Managers on May 14, 2024. There were no concerns expressed regarding adopting the FYE 2025 Task Order. Although it represents a 43% increase over FYE 2024, it is necessary to cover the efforts needed related to grant reporting requirements and project close-out reporting. Mr. Achimore noted there are no additional contributions/invoicing needed from the SAWPA member agencies for the FYE 2025 budget with Woodard & Curran. There was no discussion.

**MOVED**, to authorize the approval of Task Order No. RMC504-401-11 in the amount not-to-exceed \$136,098 for FYE 2025 with Woodard & Curran for Project Management Services to support the Santa Ana River Conservation and Conjunctive Use Program (SARCCUP).

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

**C. INTEGRATED CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY PROGRAM REGIONAL RESILIENCE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANT PROGRAM: DEVELOPMENT OF THE SANTA ANA RIVER WATERSHED CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE PLAN (CM#2024.31)**

Rachel Gray provided a presentation on the Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan: Establishing Workgroups, contained in the agenda packet on pages 127-136. SAWPA staff applied for grant funding from Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program Regional

Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program and was chosen to receive grant funding. Staff is developing a strategy to supplement the One Water One Watershed (OWOW) Plan with a Regional Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (Plan). The Plan would define watershed-scale climate risks and vulnerabilities, develop climate adaptation strategies, develop a portfolio of planned and potential resiliency projects, connect the equity outcomes for underrepresented communities, and strengthen broad-based partnerships that advance shared interests across the watershed.

The planning process will be guided by two groups: the Watershed Resilience Technical Advisory Committee (WRTAC) and the Watershed Resilience Community Advisory Panel (WRCAP). This structure is designed to ensure that stakeholders are involved across all phases of the plan development. During the vulnerability assessment phase, the WRTAC will work to incorporate stakeholder input on existing studies and an analysis of the climate risks (i.e., extreme heat, extreme weather, drought, and wildfire). During the adaptation analysis phase, the WRTAC will work to incorporate stakeholder input on identifying existing or potential options, programmatic approaches, and prioritization criteria. The WRCAP will play a similar role through direct community engagement. Both groups will support implementation planning by ensuring that the right combination of stakeholders and partners are incorporated into resilience portfolios.

Ms. Gray noted that there is an RFP that is being developed to hire a consultant to work on an engagement plan/work plan, it is anticipated to be a 15-month period. Chair Whitaker commended Ms. Gray and staff for all the ongoing efforts.

This item is to receive and file; no action was taken on agenda item no. 6.C.

## 7. **INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

### A. **OWOW QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT: JANUARY – MARCH 2024**

### B. **ROUNDTABLES QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT: JANUARY – MARCH 2024**

### C. **GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

Karen Williams reported to the Commission that on May 22, SAWPA participated in the filming of an episode for PBS' Sustaining US television show and will feature SAWPA's Cloud Seeding Pilot Program.

### D. **COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

Karen Williams highlighted the Communication Reports, contained in the agenda packet on pages 157-158.

### E. **CHAIR'S COMMENTS/REPORT**

Chair Whitaker noted that he attended the 2024 Water infrastructure Networking Summit (WINS) and Senator Alex Padilla was a keynote speaker, and overall provided an effective speech.

### F. **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Trisha Rims, a public citizen, addressed the Commission and asked if everyone on the Board supported the weather modification program. Chair Whitaker emphasized that a lot of questions were brought forward though it was a unanimous vote. Commissioner Hall noted that her vote was to do the study and to gather the data so that we can decide for the future, and how much more we will be able to gain from this process to continue to

help with the drought and appreciates all the public comments so that they can gather the information and incorporate it into the study.

**G. 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 10:13 a.m.

**Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, June 18, 2024.**

DocuSigned by:

*Bruce Whitaker*

Bruce Whitaker, Chair

Attest:

DocuSigned by:

*Sara Villa*

Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board