



**SAWPA COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 17, 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  
Jasmin A. Hall, Inland Empire Utilities Agency [via - zoom]

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

None

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT;  
NON-VOTING**

David J. Slawson, Eastern Municipal Water District [via – zoom]  
Denis Bilodeau, Alternate, Orange County Water District  
Gil Botello, Alternate, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

**STAFF PRESENT**

Jeff Mosher, Karen Williams, David Ruhl, Rachel Gray, Shavonne  
Turner, Rick Whetsel, Ian Achimore, Marie Jauregui, Dean Unger,  
John Leete, Sara Villa, Zyanya Ramirez

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Andrew Turner, Lagerlof, LLP; Nick Kanetis, Eastern Municipal  
Water District; Lisa Haney, Orange County Water District; John  
Kennedy, Orange County Water District; Mallory O’Conor, Western  
Municipal Water District; Gene Hernandez, Yorba Linda Water  
District; Beth Olhasso, West Coast Advisors; Michael Boccadoro,  
West Coast Advisors

The Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission was called to order at 9:31 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: SEPTEMBER 3, 2024**

**Recommendation:** Approve as posted.

**B. 2025 MEDICAL INSURANCE CAP (CM#2024.51)**

**Recommendation:** To direct staff to adjust the medical insurance cap from \$2,057.56 to \$2,168.93, which is equal to the ACWA/JPIA 2025 Kaiser Family Plan rate.

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

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

## 6. WORKSHOP DISCUSSION AGENDA

### A. LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Michael Boccadoro of West Coast Advisors provided a presentation on the Sacramento Update. Regarding the Drought/Water Supply, the carryover storage in major reservoirs in California remains above historic levels. There is discussion taking place regarding salinity control in the Delta, about 350,000-acre feet of water could get sent down the Delta in pursuit of salinity control with very little benefit to the Delta smelt that it is designed to protect. Both urban and agricultural agencies are pushing hard to find a different way to approach some of the issues in the Delta that will not cost significant amounts of water.

On August 31<sup>st</sup> the Legislature adjourned the 2023-24 two-year regular session. Lots of Bills were passed by both houses and the Governor has until the end of the month to act on those measures. Mr. Boccadoro noted that the Governor at the end of the regular session called a special session on fuel prices. The Governor feels strongly about a reserve supply of California gasoline that could be utilized during times of shortage or outage. There are concerns about inflation and energy costs whether its electricity, natural gas, and fuel prices in the State and has implications for water and sewer rates as well. The legislatures are returning to the Assembly in Sacramento this week to initiate some of the discussions.

Beth Olhasso continued the presentation and noted that the two-year session ended and there were about 1,500 Bills sent over to the Governor for signature. A brief update was provided on the following Legislative Bills:

The Water Supply Bills:

- SB 366 (Caballero) CA Water Plan: Long-term supply targets
- AB 460 (Bauer-Kahan) Water Rights
- SB 1390 (Caballero) Flood Flow Diversion

PFAS:

- SB 903 (Skinner) CASA & NRDC ban all non-essential uses of PFAS by 2034

Connection & Capacity Fees:

- SB 1210 (Skinner)
- SB 937 (Weiner)
- AB 1820 (Schiavo)

Water Use Efficiency:

- SB 1110 (Ashby) Urban Water Use Efficiency
- SB 1330 (Archuleta) Urban Water Use Efficiency
- AB 3120 (Heart) Urban Water Use Efficiency

Groundwater:

- AB2079 (Bennett) Groundwater Wells

Ms. Olhasso noted that the Legislative Budget closed with a \$45 billion shortfall. The specifics for SAWPA are \$74.4 million for Recycled Water (\$100 million reverted), \$24 million for PFAS support, and the Watershed Climate Resilience maintains \$133 million, but reduced allocations by \$298 million for 2024-25 and 2025-26.

Ms. Olhasso highlighted a few regulatory updates; the Urban Water Use Efficiency Regulations were finalized on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and the implementation of standards has been delayed by five (5) years. Agreements to support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (voluntary agreements) are currently on hold, the Department of Water Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, and Water Agency Partners responded to questions on the agreements from the State Board, and staff is waiting for next steps. The State Board adopted the Hexavalent Chromium MCL of 10 parts per billion, and the third draft of the Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance was released in August and the comment period just ended.

Commissioner Gardner noted that SB 366 made it through all the committees and both houses of legislature and asked if Governor Newsome has a history that we are aware of not taking an active position on bills and just letting them fall. Mr. Boccadoro said no, that is not a pattern he has seen in the past. Chair Whitaker commended Mr. Boccadoro and Ms. Olhasso for their report and appreciates all their efforts.

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

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. SANTA ANA RIVER TRAIL AND PARKWAY UPDATE (CM#2024.52)**

Ian Achimore provided a presentation on the Santa Ana River Trail and Parkway (SARTP) Update, contained in the agenda packet on pages 19-36. A brief overview was provided of the history and purpose of the SARTP partnership. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was active among the counties of Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino, cities in the three counties, the Wildlands Conservancy, and SAWPA. This MOU was created to facilitate planning, project implementation, reporting and accountability amongst the various entities related to the SARTP.

The SARTP is approximately 100-mile-long trail that runs from lands within the San Bernardino National Forest to the River's outlet at Huntington Beach. In 2014, Senate Bill 1390 created the Santa Ana River Conservancy (SARCON) which is taking an active role in SARTP completion. SARCON (administered by California Coastal Conservancy) is charged with developing a SARTP implementation plan and creating an advisory group comprised of local leaders that have decision-making authority. The SARTP Implementation Plan was released in 2018.

Through the MOU, a Policy Advisory Group (PAG) of elected officials was created as well as a Technical Advisory Committee by staff. The PAG meets quarterly and provides local decision-making authority and expertise to guide the Coastal Conservancy as the State agency implements the SARTP Plan and funds various projects that have been highlighted in the SARTP Plan. Mr. Achimore highlighted that SAWPA has the following role in the SARTP and Advisory Group:

- SAWPA has a member and is the Vice Chair of the Advisory Group to the Coastal Conservancy, Commissioner T. Milford Harrison.
- In 2014, a 25-year long operations and maintenance agreement was signed by SAWPA with Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District (RivCo Parks) for the segments of the trail.
- SAWPA coordinates with RivCo Parks on certain trail segment construction.

- In 2024, the SAWPA PA 24 Committee approved staff preparing license agreements with AT&T and Southern California Edison to assist in their relocation of utilities within SAWPA property to assist with trail segment construction.

Mr. Achimore noted that the trail segments remaining to be constructed are three miles in Orange County, 10 miles in Riverside County, and 20 miles in San Bernardino County. A Grant application was submitted by Orange County Park on September 11<sup>th</sup> to Coastal Conservancy for \$250,000 to fund a phasing plan, updated cost estimate and regulatory permits for the Extension Project and the construction schedule is to be determined. Riverside County Parks estimates \$100 million is needed to finish construction of trail on the non-completed segments. San Bernardino County SART 3 (3.8 miles), construction will resume after bird nesting season and is anticipated to be finished December 2025. SART 4A (3.9 miles), project completion is estimated in 2026. SART 4B and C (3.3 miles), San Bernardino Regional Parks is waiting on the outcome of its Active Transportation Program grant application, and it is expected to be received in 2025. SART 4D and E, no work has been started.

The potential future role for SAWPA is to review large SARTP projects before the Advisory Group to see if there are opportunities to expand the multi-benefit aspects of the projects, to assist with outreach to Federal/State legislatures on SARTP funding needs, assist with grant application for project implementation, assist counties with coordination with property owners who are water agencies on trail construction, and lead the development of a SARTP website that can potentially provide construction updates. The Commissioner commended Mr. Achimore for all his efforts and the detailed report.

This item is to receive and file; no action was taken on agenda item no. 7.A.

## 8. **INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

### A. **CASH TRANSACTIONS REPORT – JULY 2024**

**Presenter:** Karen Williams

### B. **INTER-FUND BORROWING – JULY 2024 (CM#2024.53)**

**Presenter:** Karen Williams

### C. **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS/FINANCIAL REPORTING – JULY 2024 (CM#2024.54)**

**Presenter:** Karen Williams

### D. **FOURTH QUARTER FYE 2024 EXPENSE REPORT**

- General Manager
- Staff

**Presenter:** Karen Williams

### E. **BUDGET VS ACTUAL VARIANCE REPORT FYE 2024 FOURTH QUARTER – JUNE 30, 2024 (CM#2024.55)**

**Presenter:** Karen Williams

### F. **FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER ENDING JUNE 30, 2024**

**Presenter:** Karen Williams

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

**Presenter:** Jeff Mosher

**H. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

Jeff Mosher informed the Commission that SAWPA staff has been contacted by the Flood Control District regarding their concerns of burn scars and debris flows due to the three (3) current fires (Line, Airport, and Bridge). It is anticipated to make it challenging to foresee being able to cloud seed for Year 2. Staff are looking into it internally and will be bringing it back to the Commission for a future meeting. Mr. Mosher noted that Direct Potable Reuse (DPR) is being talked about because the final regulations are going through the administration process by the State and are to be effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. There has been a lot of interest in Brine and Brine Management, SAWPA staff have been tracking it through CASA and other groups and there's potential to reopen the Ocean Plan. The Ocean Plan deals with how Brine is discharged to the Ocean. Mr. Mosher noted this item will be brought back to the Commission with more details. Mr. Mosher also acknowledged the new San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Boardroom sign and thanked the member agencies' staff for tracking their information on the signage.

**I. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/REPORT**

Chair Bruce Whitaker noted that the OC Water Summit is scheduled for Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at the Westin in South Coast Plaza. Mr. Mosher noted that SAWPA is a sponsor for the event.

**J. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Harrison commended staff for the informative reports and all their efforts.

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

There were no requests for future agenda items.

**9. CLOSED SESSION**

There was no Closed Session.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for review, Chair Bruce Whitaker adjourned the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

**Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, October 1, 2024.**

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*Bruce Whitaker*

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Bruce Whitaker, Chair

Attest:

DocuSigned by:

*Sara Villa*

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Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board