



**SAWPA COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 19, 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

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT;
NON-VOTING**

Gil Botello, Alternate, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Andrew D. Turner, Lagerlof, LLP; Ken Tam, Inland Empire Utilities
Agency; Mallory O’Conor, Western Municipal Water District; Lisa
Haney, Orange County Water District; Adekunle Ojo, San
Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

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: NOVEMBER 5, 2024

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

MOVED, to approve the Consent Calendar as posted.

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|----------------|--|
| 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. SANTA ANA RIVER REACH 3 TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS SPECIAL STUDY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (CM#2024.63)

Ian Achimore provided a presentation on the Santa Ana River Reach 3 Total Dissolved Solids Special Study Request for Proposals, contained in the agenda packet on pages 15-33. The Basin Monitoring Program Task Force (BMP Task Force) was formed in 2004 to conduct water quality analysis and reports on Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) and nitrates in the watershed. The current concern is fluctuating TDS levels in Reach 3, which stretches from Mission Inn Boulevard to Prado Dam, and has seen several instances where TDS exceeded regulatory limits (700 mg/L). The task force is seeking approval for a consultant to create a comprehensive monitoring plan to investigate the reasons behind these fluctuations, particularly in non-storm conditions (base flow). This will involve a detailed assessment of surface and groundwater interactions, with the goal of improving the understanding of TDS variations and contributing to regulatory models.

The scope of work includes designing a monitoring plan that details what to monitor, where, and the associated costs, with a focus on achieving cost-effective data collection. The monitoring effort will span at least three years. The project is funded by dues from member agencies of the BMP Task Force, and the monitoring plan is expected to be developed in 2025, with the subsequent monitoring starting in 2026. The goal is to provide sound scientific data that can help guide future water quality management efforts and assist in regulatory compliance with the Regional Board.

Commissioner Hall asked what the total length of the area of interest (AOI) for the RFP (including the Santa Ana River Reach 3 and the tributaries). Mr. Achimore noted that it is about 18-20 miles, though he will provide the exact amount once confirmed. The proposed RFP schedule is to release the RFP with Commission approval, questions/comments are due January 13, 2025, and RFP submittal deadline January 23, 2025, and with Commission approval select the consultant February 18, 2025.

Commissioner Harrison asked what the preliminary estimate is anticipated to be? Mr. Achimore noted they do not have an exact estimate of the cost, some funding has been budgeted but the final amount will depend on several factors, such as whether the consultant decides to include groundwater in their analysis, and the technology they have available. The challenges in predicting costs include variables like vegetation levels and water evaporation, which may impact the scope and complexity of the project. The budgeting process is ongoing, and discussions are taking place with the BMP Task Force.

Commissioner Gardner asked if the consultant proposes groundwater monitoring will come back to Commission. Mr. Achimore noted that the scope of monitoring will be determined after the initial approval and will be reviewed in a draft, which may include groundwater monitoring. The Task Force has the authority to remove groundwater monitoring from the final plan if they choose. The Task Force will have ongoing flexibility to make decisions throughout the process, with regular updates and discussions occurring monthly, rather than making a final decision all at once. This ensures that the Task Force can assess whether groundwater monitoring is necessary and cost-effective.

MOVED, to direct the General Manager to issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for a Monitoring Plan – Santa Ana River Reach 3 Total Dissolved Solids Special Study.

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

B. FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 AND FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 BUDGET SCHEDULE (CM#2024.64)

Karen Williams referenced the Fiscal Year 2025-26 and 2026-27 Budget Schedule contained on page 109 of the agenda packet and provided a verbal report. SAWPA Staff will hold several Budget Workshops where each member agency’s financial staff will have an opportunity to review, discuss, and recommend changes to the budget. The budget will be presented to the Commission in segments for each project with the opportunity to approve the full comprehensive budget in April or May timeframe, and have it ratified by each one of the member agencies by June 30, 2025.

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

7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

A. CASH TRANSACTIONS REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2024

Presenter: Karen Williams

B. INTER-FUND BORROWING – SEPTEMBER 2024 (CM#2024.65)

Presenter: Karen Williams

C. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS/FINANCIAL REPORTING – SEPTEMBER 2024 (CM#2024.66)

Presenter: Karen Williams

D. PROJECT AGREEMENT 25 – OWOW FUND – FINANCIAL REPORT, AUGUST 2024

Presenter: Karen Williams

E. PROJECT AGREEMENT 26 – ROUNDTABLE FUND – FINANCIAL REPORT, AUGUST 2024

Presenter: Karen Williams

F. STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Jeff Mosher informed the Commission that the Climate Bond Proposition 4 has passed, currently receiving 59% of the vote. This includes an IRWM (Integrated Regional Water Management) component, though the specific implications for the project will become clear in time. West Coast Advisors will be presenting their quarterly report in December and will provide further details on this matter.

Commissioner Gardner added that Western Water received a briefing at their last board meeting regarding California Water for all working group. Senate Bill 366 will return as a differently numbered bill, with Senator Caballero still aiming to be the primary author. She is working on making the bill a priority piece of legislation, which means it will be introduced earlier in the legislative session.

G. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Jeff Mosher highlighted the upcoming agenda items for the meetings in December. On December 3rd, the CARP RFP will be brought forward for approval to release the RFP. On December 17th, SAWPA's Audit will be presented. There may also be a meeting on January 7th, but this is uncertain and will depend on several factors, which will be clarified in early December. Additionally, discussions with the general managers of member agencies have led to a delay in the rotation of officers, which typically occurs in January. Due to how assignments to various boards are handled, this will now take place in February, after the member agencies have appointed their representatives.

Mr. Mosher noted that Frank McDonough submitted the Cloud Seeding draft report with preliminary results, and staff is currently reviewing it. Once finalized, the report will include an estimate of the increase in acre-feet, which will help gauge the effectiveness of the project. While the results are still preliminary, they will be shared with the public.

Additionally, the operations contractor, NAWC, was sold to a company called Rainmaker, which specializes in drone-based seeding technology. Rainmaker, established in 2023 and based in El Segundo, now owns NAWC but continues to operate with the same staff. Mr. Mosher emphasized that there are no significant changes expected due to the purchase, but the commission will be kept informed of any developments. Mr. Mosher informed the Commission that the OWOW Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 21st at SAWPA.

H. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/REPORT

Chair Whitaker commended SAWPA staff (Ian and Rachel) for attending the Orange County Water District's Board meeting and delivering a well-received presentation on the Santa Ana River Trail.

I. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Harrison expressed concerns with SAWPA meetings being scheduled at the same time as member agency board meetings, citing the Santa Ana Sucker meeting as an example. He emphasized the importance of avoiding scheduling conflicts with both commission and member agency board meetings and suggested creating a standard to prevent this. Additionally, Commissioner Harrison noted that the December 3rd meeting falls during the ACWA Annual Conference. While he will attend the meeting online, he asked if this timing is problematic for others and suggested cancelling the meeting. Commissioner Hall noted she also will be attending the December 3rd Commission meeting remotely because she will be at the CRWUA Annual Conference in Las Vegas. Mr. Mosher noted that staff will look into following up with each Commissioner to confirm there is no scheduling conflict and how they will be attending.

J. COMMISSIONERS' REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items from the Commission.

Chair Whitaker recessed the meeting at 10:04 a.m. for Closed Session.

8. CLOSED SESSION

- A. **PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54957 – PUBLIC EMPLOYEE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**
Title: General Manager

9. CLOSED SESSION REPORT

Chair Whitaker resumed the Open Session at 10:28 a.m. and Legal Counsel, Andy Turner announced that the Commission received a report from Counsel; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 8.A.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for review, Chair Whitaker adjourned the meeting at 10:29 a.m.

Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, December 3, 2024.

DocuSigned by:

Bruce Whitaker

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Bruce Whitaker, Chair

Attest:

DocuSigned by:

Sara Villa

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Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board