



**SAWPA COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 3, 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 [via – zoom]
David J. Slawson, Eastern Municipal Water District
Jasmin A. Hall, Inland Empire Utilities Agency [via – zoom]

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT;
NON-VOTING**

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

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Andrew D. Turner, Lagerlof, LLP; Nick Kanetis, Eastern Municipal
Water District; Derek Kawaii, Western Municipal Water District;
Kayla Arias, Orange County Sanitation District; Leo Ferrando, San
Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; Robert Ennis, Riverside
Public Utilities; Hye Jin Lee, City of Chino; Beth Olhasso, West
Coast Advisors; Michael Boccadoro, West Coast Advisors; Steven
Wolosoff, GEI Consultants; Kwabena Asante, GEI Consultants; Mike
Antos, Stantec; Hannah Mize, Rincon Consultants

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, and T. Milford Harrison located at JW Marriott Desert Springs 74-855 Country Club Drive, Room #7096, Palm Desert, CA 92260, and Commissioner Jasmin A. Hall participating remotely under the “Just Cause” option of AB 2449 as she is attending the Colorado River Water User Association (CRWUA) Conference.

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 19, 2024

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

B. TREASURER’S REPORT: OCTOBER 2024

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

MOVED, to approve the Consent Calendar as posted.

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

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED INVESTMENT IN PLANNING FOR THE DELTA CONVEYANCE PROJECT (CM#2024.67)

Jeff Mosher referenced the memo and letter of support and provided a brief report for the continued investment in planning for the Delta Conveyance Project (Project), contained on pages 19-22 of the agenda packet.

The Project is being considered for funding approval by the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) to support planning, design, and environmental mitigation efforts. The Project aims to address future water supply challenges in California, particularly as climate change is projected to reduce Delta water availability by 600,000 acre-feet per year. The Project would replace 400,000 acre-feet of that loss, but still leave a shortfall. The funding approval would ensure the Project stays on track, enabling design innovations and cost-effective solutions. Mr. Mosher requested a letter of support for the project to be considered for Commission approval.

Commissioner Gardner noted that this request was made on behalf of Western Municipal Water District and stated that this project is critical not only to each of our agencies, but also to the region. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) projects that, due to climate change, we will lose 600,000 acre-feet of Delta water annually in the coming years. The Project would help recover 400,000 acre-feet of that loss, though a shortfall would remain. As we know, water conditions on the Colorado River are also changing, and California is likely to receive less water than it currently does. If MWD decides not to fund the ongoing studies for the project, it could at best delay the effort and, at worst, cause it to fail. That would be a significant setback for everyone. Both the Administration and DWR are in favor of this project, and he believes it is extremely important for us to support it.

Commissioner Gardner requested adopting a resolution instead of submitting a letter of support. A resolution carries more weight, especially with elected officials, many of whom sit on the MWD Board and it would have a greater impact and convey a stronger message to the board. The legal Counsel recommended submitting the letter of support now, with language indicating that a resolution will be forthcoming, and agendaizing the resolution for the next meeting.

MOVED, to authorize the General Manager to send a letter of support for continued investment in planning for the delta conveyance project.

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

B. EXTENSION OF AGREEMENT WITH WEST COAST ADVISORS FOR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS (CM#2024.68)

Jeff Mosher provided a verbal report to the Commission requesting approval to extend the West Coast Advisors' (WCA) Agreement to provide state legislative affairs services for an additional period of one (1) year for an amount not to exceed \$117,000.00. WCA has been SAWPA's legislative consultant for several years and their current contract expires in December 2024; rather than going out for a Request for Proposal (RFP), it is requested that the agreement be extended for one year. Beth Olhasso and Michael Boccadoro of WCA host weekly legislative calls with member agency staff and provide an up-to-date view of what is going on in Sacramento, such as tracking things that are relevant to SAWPA, IRWM funding, budget, future bonds, and how the operations are working with the Department of Water Resources. It is a huge benefit for SAWPA to continue to have these services. Beth Olhasso noted he appreciates the opportunity and looks forward to a continued relationship.

MOVED, to authorize the General Manager to extend the West Coast Advisors' (WCA) Agreement to provide state legislative affairs services for an additional period of one (1) year for an amount not to exceed \$117,000.00.

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

C. AMENDMENT TO THE OWOW STEERING COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT – APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVES (CM#2024.69)

Jeff Mosher referenced the memo and Amendment to the OWOW Steering Committee Governance Document, contained on pages 27-32 of the agenda packet.

The OWOW Steering Committee consists of county supervisors from the three counties in our watershed, as well as mayors representing municipalities in each of those counties. Given the busy schedules of these members, and the constant struggles of having a quorum for the meetings, it is recommended to designate an alternate representative. Commissioner Brenda Dennstedt is the convener of the OWOW Steering Committee and Commissioner Milford Harrison serves on the committee.

This item has been discussed at the most recent OWOW Steering Committee meeting, and the committee recommended this change for approval. However, this amendment must be approved by the Commission. The proposed change would allow steering committee members to designate an alternate, who could then represent them at steering committee meetings. The members would need to provide a written notice of their alternate, though it would be entirely voluntary. We request that the Commission consider approving this change to the governance document, allowing for the designation of alternate representatives for Steering Committee members.

Commissioner Harrison noted that this change is meant to support our County Supervisors, who are often overwhelmed with numerous responsibilities and may frequently be called away from their jurisdiction. They would likely designate their chiefs of staff or other key staff members as alternates, ensuring continuity and preventing gaps in attendance rather than having an empty seat at the table.

MOVED, to approve the Amendment to the Santa Ana IRWMP “One Water One Watershed” Governance document dated January 15, 2013, allowing for the appointment of alternate representatives.

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

D. SANTA ANA RIVER WATERSHED CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE PLAN REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (CM#2024.70)

Rachel Gray provided a presentation on Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan – Request for Proposals, contained in the agenda packet on pages 37-55.

SAWPA staff recommends that the Commission authorize the General Manager to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop a Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP) for the watershed. This plan will address climate change risks and vulnerabilities affecting water resources, ecosystems, and communities in the region. The grant program initially awarded \$644,190 by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (now the Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation), funds projects that assess climate risks, develop resilience priorities, and build local capacity. The CARP will serve as a strategic framework for adapting to climate change by implementing regional and local strategies. Its goals include supplementing existing plans, promoting multi-jurisdictional collaboration, and enabling future funding for resilience projects from both member agencies and other stakeholders.

The RFP is part of the process to secure a consultant to develop the CARP, which will be managed by SAWPA overseeing the grant. The process will involve a Technical Advisory Committee to engage with stakeholders, identify vulnerabilities, and develop adaptation strategies. Additionally, the Southern California Climate Collaborative (ISC3), led by UC Riverside’s School of Public Policy, will oversee community engagement, and a Community Advisory Panel will collaborate with identified community organizations. Tribal communities will also have a role in the process, focusing on climate risks specific to their communities within the watershed.

The overall goal is to ensure collaboration across various stakeholders, manage grant funds effectively, and integrate input from local communities and tribes into the resilience planning process. The work plan for the CARP will serve as the project's roadmap, outlining key milestones, deliverables, and timelines. The first task for the selected consultant is to develop this work plan, along with a public and agency engagement strategy to involve all watershed stakeholders. This will include identifying data needs and reviewing available planning documents to avoid duplicating existing efforts in the region. The process will involve a series of workshops organized by member agency service areas to assess climate risks, vulnerabilities, and potential adaptation strategies. These workshops will help prioritize projects and refine the overall plan. To complement the workshops, online surveys will be used to gather additional input.

Community and tribal engagement efforts will be incorporated into the CARP, ensuring that local perspectives are included in the planning process. The engagement will also involve meetings with staff from member agencies and planning managers. Regular updates and reports will be provided to the Commission to keep them informed on the progress of the project.

Ms. Gray noted that the proposed schedule is as follows: Request the Commission's approval to release the RFP. The deadline for consultants to submit inquiries will be December 20th, with the deadline for submitting proposals set for January 20th. If interviews are required, they will take place shortly after. An update on the consultant selection process will be provided to the Commission by the end of January. The final consultant selection and approval will be brought back to the Commission for approval on February 18th.

MOVED, to authorize the General Manager, or his designee, to issue a Request for Proposals to develop a Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan for the Santa Ana River Watershed.

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

7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

A. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Jeff Mosher reported that he will be at the ACWA Conference this week and will be presenting on cloud seeding. SAWPA staff received preliminary draft information from the validation consultant, and he will be presenting the expected benefits.

Mr. Mosher noted there is a positive benefit from cloud seeding in the northeast area, specifically the San Bernardino Mountains. There was also some benefit in the southeast, but not as much. However, there was no benefit observed in the northwest or southwest areas, which was not entirely unexpected either, considering this is just the first year of the pilot. While the results are still being reviewed from a staff perspective, the important takeaway is that cloud seeding is working in some areas, though not as much in others, which is why we are conducting this pilot study. It is all part of validating the process and understanding its effectiveness in different regions. Mr. Mosher noted he will provide a copy of the presentation to the Commissioners.

B. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/REPORT

There were no Chair comments received.

C. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Gardner noted that the California Water for All Coalition is hosting a reception on the Starbucks patio at 6 p.m. It will be a casual opportunity to discuss what happened last year and the goals for this year. Beverages and snacks will be provided. Anyone interested in attending is welcome to join.

D. COMMISSIONERS' REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Gardner requested a future agenda item for the adoption of a resolution for the Delta Conveyance Project.

Chair Whitaker recessed the meeting at 10:06 a.m. for Closed Session.

8. CLOSED SESSION

A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9: one case | PFAS Regional Analysis Phase II Update

B. 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 11:03 a.m. and Legal Counsel, Andy Turner announced that the Commission received a report from Counsel; no action was taken on Agenda Items No. 8.A. and 8.B.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for review, Chair Whitaker adjourned the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, December 17, 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