



**SAWPA COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Mike Gardner, Chair, Western Municipal Water District
Gil Botello, Vice Chair, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
Philip E. Paule, Secretary-Treasurer, Eastern Municipal Water District
Jasmin A. Hall, Inland Empire Utilities Agency
Denis Bilodeau, Orange County Water District [via – zoom]

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT;
NON-VOTING**

David Slawson, Eastern Municipal Water District [via – zoom]
T. Milford Harrison, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District [via – zoom]
Fred Jung, Orange County Water District [via – zoom]

STAFF PRESENT

Jeff Mosher, David Ruhl, Rachel Gray, Shavonne Turner, Marie Jauregui, Dean Unger, John Leete, Rick Whetsel, Haley Gohari, Sara Villa, Zyanya Ramirez, Natalia Gonzalez

OTHERS PRESENT

Thomas S. Bunn, Lagerlof, LLP; John Kennedy, Orange County Water District; Adekunle Ojo, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; Carly Pierce, Western Municipal Water District; Mallory Gandara, Western Municipal Water District; Brenda Ponton, Woodard & Curran

The Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Mike Gardner on behalf of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, 11615 Sterling Avenue, Riverside, California, and Denis Bilodeau at 601 N. Ross Street, Room 327, Santa Ana, CA 92701.

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: FEBRUARY 4, 2025

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

B. TREASURER’S REPORT: DECEMBER 2024

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

MOVED, to approve the Consent Calendar as posted.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Paule/Botello
Ayes:	Bilodeau, Botello, Gardner, Hall, Paule
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. AMENDMENT TO THE OWOW STEERING COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENT TO INCLUDE SAN BERNARDINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (CM#2025.13)

Jeff Mosher provided a report and requested the Commission consider amending the OWOW Steering Committee Governance document (document) to rename the San Bernardino Association of Governments (SANBAG) to the San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG).

The current document lists the San Bernardino Association of Governments (SANBAG) as the entity responsible for appointing an OWOW Steering Committee City representative for the County of San Bernardino. However, as of last year, SANBAG amended its Joint Powers Authority Agreement to change its name to SBCOG.

Mr. Mosher noted that the next OWOW Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for February 27th and Commissioners Phil Paule and Gil Botello are representatives of the committee, with Commissioner Botello being the Convener. There was no discussion.

[Commissioner Denis Bilodeau attended the meeting via-zoom at 9:35 a.m. during agenda item no. 6.A.]

MOVED, to approve the amendment to the Santa Ana IRWMP “One Water One Watershed” Governance document dated December 3, 2024, to rename the San Bernardino Association of Governments (SANBAG) to the San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG).

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Botello/Paule
Ayes:	Bilodeau, Botello, Gardner, Hall, Paule
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

B. COMMISSION MEETINGS DURING LOBBY CONSTRUCTION (SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS AND ADA UPGRADES) (CM#2025.14)

David Ruhl provided a report on the Commission meetings during SAWPA’s Lobby construction.

SAWPA staff advertised bids for the SAWPA Lobby Security Improvements project. The award of construction contract is anticipated in April 2025, and construction would commence May 2025. Construction is expected to last approximately six (6) months through October 2025. During this time access to the front of the building will be restricted and there will be no access to the downstairs bathrooms while they are being remodeled to meet ADA requirements.

Mr. Ruhl noted that in order not to disrupt the SAWPA Commission and Committee Meetings, SAWPA staff are pursuing an alternate location for these meetings. Western Municipal Water District (WMWD) and Inland Empire Utilities Agencies (IEUA) have offered to host the

meeting at their offices due to the close proximity of their offices to SAWPA. Upon award of a Construction contract in April 2025, a detailed schedule for SAWPA Commission and Committee meeting locations will be provided.

Chair Mike Gardner noted it would be a longer drive for Orange County representatives, though overall IEUA's location would not be significant for the other Commissioners, and the virtual option is available as long as three (3) Commissioners are physically present. Commissioner Botello suggested exploring the possibilities of partnering with an agency in downtown Riverside that may be able to accommodate staff in a more centrally located area. Mr. Mosher noted that staff would look into it and provide a schedule in April.

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

C. SANTA ANA RIVER WATERSHED CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE PLAN – CONSULTANT SELECTION (CM#2025.15)

Rachel Gray provided a presentation on the Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP) – Consultant Selection, contained in the agenda packet on pages 33-50.

SAWPA received funding through the Regional Resilience Grant Program from the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (formerly OPR). The Grant program aims to develop a climate adaptation and resilience plan for the watershed, building on the 2018 OWOW plan. The goal is to enhance climate resilience by identifying and implementing projects on both local and regional scales. The Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan (CARP) will focus on strategic actions to address climate risks, not just for water resources but also for ecosystems and communities. It is a community-driven process, involving stakeholders from various sectors like transportation, agriculture, and energy. The plan also emphasizes implementation, aiming to secure funding and partnerships to carry out these projects.

The key benefit of this effort is fostering multi-jurisdiction collaboration and supporting funding for projects that enhance resilience. SAWPA's role as the lead entity is to manage the grant and work with consultants, a technical advisory committee, and our partners on tribal and community engagement. The Inland Southern California Climate Collaborative will handle community outreach, while a community advisory panel will engage with local organizations to understand climate risks and vulnerabilities.

Commissioner Botello inquired if during the community engagement if there were any thoughts to engage with the San Manuel Band of Mission. Ms. Gray noted that staff did reach out to San Manuel Band of Mission when they were developing the Grant application, though the timing did not work out, though it is anticipated to engage with them as part of the tribal engagement.

Ms. Gray noted that the Request for Proposal (RFP) was released in December with proposals due January 23rd. SAWPA staff are now seeking approval for consultant selection. Eleven (11) proposals were received and the selection committee evaluated submissions based on experience, ability to perform tasks, project understanding, innovation, proposal quality, and timeline. Out of 11 proposals, Woodard & Curran emerged as the top choice based on their scoring and project understanding.

Ms. Gray noted that the consultant is to develop a comprehensive work plan that includes roles, responsibilities, milestones, deliverables, and a schedule. Public agency engagement will involve workshops and online surveys focusing on climate risks, vulnerabilities, adaptation strategies, and resilience portfolio development. Engagement will also include quarterly planning meetings with member agencies, regular updates to the general managers, and

Commission. Ms. Gray noted that workshop survey forums will be approached to develop resilient metrics and indicators to assess watershed resilience, incorporating feedback from the tribal community. Additionally, staff aims to create a digital platform to effectively communicate information. This platform will be interactive and educational, providing the public with a useful tool.

Commissioner Botello noted that Gary Quinn, of UCR has presented at Science Symposiums at ESRI and is working on a Report Card project for the Watershed and requested that he be contacted regarding this project to get informed and he will provide Mr. Mosher with his contact information. Commissioner Botello asked if anyone is familiar with Woodard & Curran and noted that he is interested in being updated on a regular basis, particularly on public engagement due to his involvement with OWOW.

Mr. Mosher noted that SAWPA has used Woodard & Curran for Condition Assessments for the Brine Line and the SARCCUP Program Management project. Woodard & Curran are going to be responsible for pulling the CARP together and UCR under ISC3 has the primary responsibility for community engagement.

Commissioner Paule noted that EMWD has used Woodard & Curran a numerous time and believes they are an exceptional firm and agrees they are an excellent choice. Chair Gardner emphasized that through his experience at Western, Woodard & Curran is a good firm, very competent and responsive, and is a great selection.

Commissioner Hall referenced the proposal project deliverables optional tasks and noted that some of the options seem like they are good options and should be included, for instance the project list and roadmap. Ms. Gray noted that the base cost covers a digital presence, but we definitely want to enhance it with additional features, such as trends. These optional tasks are things we would like to implement, which is why we are requesting approval for the amount that includes these optional tasks, along with a negotiated cost, the project list, and the roadmap.

Mr. Mosher noted that staff have identified these optional tasks, but they were not included in the original proposal for the grant. SAWPA does have internal funding available that we can repurpose for these tasks, and they have been discussed with the general managers. If we all agree that these tasks need to be done, we will develop the scope and fee, continue discussions with the general managers and update the Commission on the details. However, the optional tasks are not fully defined. Chair Gardner noted that the not-to-exceed amount includes funding for the optional tasks. If during the course of developing the tasks something needs to expand, then staff will come back and say we would like to do this, and it will cost so much more.

MOVED, to authorize the General Manager, or his designee, to execute the following:

1. General Services Agreement with Woodard and Curran; and,
2. Task Order No. W&C376-01 with Woodard and Curran for an amount not to exceed \$620,000, which includes optional tasks for which SAWPA staff will negotiate the scope and fee proposal, to develop the Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote
Motion/Second:	Paule/Hall
Ayes:	Bilodeau, Botello, Gardner, Hall, Paule
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

A. CASH TRANSACTIONS REPORT – DECEMBER 2024

Presenter: Karen Williams

B. INTER-FUND BORROWING – DECEMBER 2024 (CM#2025.16)

Presenter: Karen Williams

C. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS/FINANCIAL REPORTING – DECEMBER 2024 (CM#2025.17)

Presenter: Karen Williams

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

Presenter: Karen Williams

E. PROJECT AGREEMENT 25 – OWOW FUND – FINANCIAL REPORT, DECEMBER 2024

Presenter: Karen Williams

F. PROJECT AGREEMENT 26 – ROUNDTABLE FUND – FINANCIAL REPORT, NOVEMBER 2024

Presenter: Karen Williams

G. PROJECT AGREEMENT 26 – ROUNDTABLE FUND – FINANCIAL REPORT, DECEMBER 2024

Presenter: Karen Williams

H. STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Presenter: Jeff Mosher

I. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

Jeff Mosher informed the Commission he attended the CalDesal Conference in Temecula. Several member agencies participated, and there was a tour of Eastern's desalters, which he thought went really well and was quite useful. There were a lot of discussions on salinity, and he was part of a panel on salinity management. Mr. Mosher also noted that he is heading to Denver to participate in a regional salinity discussion as they are facing similar challenges with increasing salinity in their water resources.

J. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/REPORT

Chair Gardner inquired about the process of issuing an RFP for legal representation. Mr. Mosher noted that staff are working on it, and it has been discussed with the general managers, and it will be happening sooner rather than later.

Commissioner Hall asked if staff are seeking the general managers' recommendations or input based on experience? Mr. Mosher noted that the member agency, general managers and staff provide suggestions, templates, or feedback. SAWPA staff rely on member agencies for everything from the Brine Line, Planning, HR, and Finance. Their input is invaluable because they often have experience with these processes at their own agencies, and we benefit from that knowledge.

Commissioner Hall emphasized that sometimes a long-standing relationship can result in thinking within the same framework, so it is good to explore other options. With some of the older attorneys retiring, there is a new generation that may have been overlooked simply

because we have grown comfortable with tradition. When you come back to us with options, she would like to see a variety of potential candidates.

Commissioner Botello commended staff for all their efforts and acknowledged the importance of having staff discuss with the general managers prior to going to Commission. The general managers can provide insight and are able to get a good sense of what is doable or feasible in terms of fiscal capacity at the agencies.

K. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

There were no Commissioners' comments received.

L. 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 Mike Gardner adjourned the meeting at 10:11 a.m.

Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, March 4, 2025.

Signed by:



5A146A6BF4DAF4C0...
Mike Gardner, Chair

Attest:

DocuSigned by:



722360038ACC422...
Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board