



**SAWPA COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 1, 2025**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Mike Gardner, Chair, Western Municipal Water District  
Gil Botello, Vice Chair, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
David Slawson, Alternate, Eastern Municipal Water District  
Jasmin A. Hall, Inland Empire Utilities Agency

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Denis Bilodeau, Orange County Water District

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT;  
NON-VOTING**

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

**STAFF PRESENT**

Jeff Mosher, Karen Williams, David Ruhl, Rachel Gray, Shavonne Turner, Dean Unger, John Leete, Rick Whetsel, Sara Villa, Alison Lewis, Natalia Gonzalez, Haley Gohari

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Thomas S. Bunn, Lagerlof, LLP; Nick Kanetis, Eastern Municipal Water District; Lisa Haney, Orange County Water District; John Kennedy, Orange County Water District; Adekunle Ojo, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; Carly Pierce, Western Municipal Water District; Craig Miller, Western Municipal Water District; Mallory O'Connor, Western Municipal Water District; Ryan Shaw, Western Municipal Water District; Joe Kingsbury, Water Systems Consulting

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, CA 92503.

**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.

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

There were no items to be added or deleted.

**5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: MARCH 18, 2025**

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

**B. TREASURER'S REPORT: FEBRUARY 2025**

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

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

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

## 6. **NEW BUSINESS**

### A. **LOBBY SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT AWARD (CM#2025.27)**

David Ruhl provided a presentation on the SAWPA Lobby Security Improvements Project, contained in the agenda packet on pages 33-43. The Lobby Security Improvements project involves several security and accessibility improvements to the SAWPA building. Key aspects include reinforcing the entrance with a wall to improve security while allowing the lobby to remain open during business hours. Exterior ADA improvements with an ADA-compliant ramp to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities, in addition, both downstairs restrooms will be renovated to meet ADA compliance standards.

On March 13<sup>th</sup>, eight (8) bids were received for the project. The engineer's estimate was \$600,000. The lowest bidder, CO Brothers, was deemed non-responsive due to insufficient qualifications and references. Bridgerock Construction, Inc., the second-lowest bidder, was deemed responsive and qualified, and their bid is recommended for approval.

Falcon Engineering, with prior experience working with SAWPA on past projects, has been selected to provide construction management services. They have a strong track record, including work on the Agua Mansa project. Gillis + Panichapan Architect is recommended for the engineering support services for the design of the project and staff requests to retain them to answer any potential questions during construction.

The total project cost is \$722,000, which includes construction and management services. It is recommended that the Commission approve \$594,681 from the Building Reserve Fund, and \$127,447 of interest earnings from the General Fund for construction and inspection support services for the project. There was no discussion.

**MOVED**, that the Commission:

1. Reject the lowest bid from CO Brothers, LLC. as a nonresponsive;
2. Authorize the General Manager to award a contract for public works construction to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, Bridgerock Construction, Inc., for the Lobby Security Improvements Project (Project), in an amount not-to-exceed \$552,988;
3. Authorize the General Manager to execute Task Order No. GPA100-03 with Gillis + Panichapan Architects (GPa) for services during construction for and amount not-to-exceed \$27,000;
4. Authorize the General Manager to execute Task Order No. FALC100-02 with Falcon Engineering Services, Inc. for Construction Management and Inspection Services for an amount not-to-exceed \$142,140; and
5. Approve \$594,681 from the Building Reserve Fund, and \$127,447 of interest earnings from the General Fund for construction and inspection support for the Project.

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

**B. APPROVAL OF CONSULTANT CONTRACT WITH WATER SYSTEMS CONSULTING, INC. FOR MONITORING PLAN – SANTA ANA RIVER REACH 3 TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS SPECIAL STUDY (CM#2025.28)**

Rachel Gray provided a presentation on the Approval of Consultant Contract with WSC, Inc. for Monitoring Plan – Santa Ana River Reach 3 Total Dissolved Solids Special Study, contained in the agenda packet on pages 107-127. Ms. Gray provided a brief overview of the Basin Monitoring Program Task Force (BMP) for the purpose of monitoring water quality to avoid regulatory issues like TMDLs.

The Santa Ana River Reach 3 has had exceedances of the water quality objective (700 mg/L) for TDS since 2013. The task force wants to understand the sources of these TDS increases before the next integrated report to prevent future regulatory challenges. Reach 3 spans from Mission Boulevard in Riverside to Prado, covering tributaries like South Tributary, Mill Creek, Chino Creek, and Cucamonga Creek.

Ms. Gray noted that the BMP Task Force issued a Request for Proposal, and four (4) bids were received. Water Systems Consulting, Inc. (WSC) is selected based on their experience and approach, including innovative techniques like thermal infrared imagery to detect groundwater-surface water interactions, which could help identify the sources of TDS in the area.

The objectives and deliverables for the project is to develop a monitoring plan to help guide the Task Force on why there are fluctuating TDS concentrations during baseflow conditions at the downstream terminus of the Santa Ana River Reach 3, and the plan will outline what to monitor, where, and at what cost.

The overall contract for WSC's work is \$159,602, and the project is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2026. The costs will be covered by the task force's budget. Ms. Gray noted that WSC requested language revisions to the General Services Agreement, not the cost of services. Legal counsel reviewed the changes to ensure they were acceptable. There was no discussion.

**MOVED**, that the Commission authorize the General Manager, or his designee, to execute the following to implement the Monitoring Plan for the Santa Ana River Reach 3 Total Dissolved Solids Special Study:

1. General Services Agreement with Water Systems Consulting, Inc. (WSC); and
2. Task Order No. WSC374-02 for an amount not to exceed \$159,602.

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

**C. LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL (SB) 72: CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN: LONGTERM WATER SUPPLY TARGETS (CM#2025.29)**

Chair Mike Gardner provided a report on the Letter of Support for Senate Bill (SB) 72: California Water Plan: Longterm Water Supply Targets, contained in the agenda packet on pages 131-132.

SB 72 is a new version of a bill that was initially pushed by WMWD and supported by various water agencies across California. The bill aims to direct the Department of Water Resources to secure 9 million acre-feet of new water by 2040, with further development goals set for 2050. It introduces concrete planning and measurable targets into California's water management strategy. The bill, by Senator Caballero, passed through the Legislature last year as SB 366, receiving unanimous support without a single "no" vote. However, the Governor vetoed it due to concerns about the economic impact. Senator Caballero, who chairs the Senate Finance Committee, is addressing those concerns with a budget request as part of the new legislation.

Chair Mike Gardner noted that the overall goal of SB 72 is to help manage California's water resources more effectively by improving infrastructure, such as capturing excess water during wet years and storing it for dry years. This would help ensure water is available where it is needed, particularly during droughts. California has not seen significant new water infrastructure projects in over 50 years, so this bill is seen as critical for the state's future water security. Chair Gardner made a motion to direct the General Manager to send the letter in support of SB 72, as referenced in the agenda packet. There was no discussion.

**MOVED**, that the Commission authorize the General Manager to send a letter of support for SB 72 (Caballero): California Water Plan: Longterm Water Supply Targets – Support, as amended on March 18, 2025.

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

**D. FYE 2026 AND 2027 BUDGET (CM#2025.30)**

Karen Williams provided a presentation on the FYE 2026 and 2027 Draft Budget, contained in the agenda packet on pages 135-224.

On January 21, 2025, staff presented the FYE 2026 and 2027 Goals and Objectives to the Commission for their review. Following this, on February 6, 2025, the first draft of the FYE 2026 and 2027 Budget was shared with member agencies' financial staff at the Budget Workshop. During this workshop, there were comments and suggested changes from the member agencies' financial staff, which were then incorporated into the budget.

As part of the Budget Schedule, the budget has been presented to the Commission in stages over three (3) meetings; the OWOW and Roundtable Budgets were presented on March 4<sup>th</sup>, the Brine Line Budget was presented and approved by the PA 24 Committee on March 4<sup>th</sup>, and the General Fund Budget was presented on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Today, staff will present the combined budget for the Commission's review and possible adoption. If the budget is not adopted today, it will be brought back for final adoption on May 6, 2025.

Chair Mike Gardner asked how the phone and utilities went down by 16.7%. Ms. Williams noted that the budget for utility costs was initially set at \$13,200, but the actual costs came a bit lower than expected. As a result, the budget for the next two years was adjusted.

Commissioner Jasmin Hall asked where Cybersecurity is integrated into the budget, Ms. Williams noted there is a Cybersecurity Plan in place, which is managed primarily through the General Fund. This plan is implemented to safeguard the networks and ensure the systems remain secure. Additionally, there is an insurance policy specifically for Cybersecurity. This policy covers any potential damage that might arise due to cyber incidents. The IT Department is responsible for maintaining and upgrading the current cybersecurity infrastructure.

Commissioner Jasmin Hall asked how many people will be retiring within the next year or two. Ms. Williams noted that other than her, there are a few people that are eligible for retirement, however, no specific plans or announcements have been made regarding these retirements. Commissioner Jasmin Hall referenced the Organization Chart and asked what happened to the HR position. Mr. Mosher noted that with limited staff, the team is very capable and handles multiple responsibilities. Shavonne Turner, SAWPA's Administrative Services Manager, oversees HR in addition to other tasks. HR is managed by Ms. Turner and Zyanya Ramirez, working together to meet the organization's HR needs, alongside their other duties. Staff also have access to a consultant who provides expert advice when needed. This consultant serves as a valuable resource, allowing the team to address any complex HR issues or questions that may arise.

Mr. Mosher commended Ms. Williams for all her efforts in making the budgeting process run smoothly. Ms. Williams' ability to work closely with the department managers and managing relationships with the CFO's and coordinating the budget workshops is helpful in addressing concerns and ensuring clear communication between the general managers and the financial team. The Commission thanked Ms. Williams for always providing thorough, clean, and concise financial reports. Chair Mike Gardner called for a motion to approve the FYE 2026 and FYE 2027 budget. There was no discussion.

**MOVED**, that the Commission review and discuss the draft FYE 2026 and 2027 Budget and consider adoption.

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

## **7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

Recommendation: Receive for Information.

### **A. COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

**Presenter:** Jeff Mosher

### **B. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

Jeff Mosher reported that there was an in-person meeting with the planning managers that went well, the discussions were productive, with lots of valuable conversations taking place regarding Invasive Species and the CARP program.

Ms. Williams is managing the update on the Compensation Study, a preliminary report was received from the consultant, Ralph Anderson and Associates. They are currently working on an updated report, which is expected to be available in the next several weeks.

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

There were no Chair comments received.

**D. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

There were no Commissioners' comments received.

**E. 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 10:24 a.m.

**Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, April 15, 2025.**

Signed by:

*Mike Gardner*

SA145ABF4DAF4C0...  
Mike Gardner, Chair

Attest:

Signed by:

*Sara Villa*

F81561326E9F448...  
Sara Villa, Clerk of the Board