

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

APRIL 10, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Indian Wells Valley Water District was called to order by President Boyd at 4:30 p.m. in the Board of Directors Hearing Room, 500 West Ridgecrest Boulevard, Ridgecrest, California. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jason Lillion. **PLEDGE**

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** President Mallory J. Boyd  
Director Charles D. Griffin  
Director Stan G. Rajtora  
Director David C.H. Saint-Amand **ROLL CALL**

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:** Vice President Ronald R. Kicinski

**STAFF PRESENT:** Don Zdeba, General Manager  
Jim Worth, Attorney  
Ty Staheli, Chief Financial Officer  
Jason Lillion, Operations Manager  
Renée Morquecho, Chief Engineer  
Lauren Smith, Recording Secretary

**AGENDA DECLARATION**

Recording Secretary, Lauren Smith, reported that the agenda for today's Regular Board Meeting was posted on Thursday, April 6, 2023. **AGENDA DECLARATION**

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION**

Director Saint-Amand stated his opinions shared during this meeting are his own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of his employer, nor the Board. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION**

None. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

With no further Board or Public comments, President Boyd recessed the meeting and adjourned to Closed Session at 4:31 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The meeting was reconvened in Closed Session at 4:35 p.m. **CLOSED SESSION**

Closed Session was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened to Open Session at 6:02 p.m.

No action was taken which would require disclosure under the Brown Act.

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

The Board heard public comment from Judie Decker.

**PUBLIC  
COMMENTS**

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

MOTION: was made by Director Saint-Amand and seconded by Director Griffin approving the Minutes of the March 13, 2023, Regular Board Meeting, and Payment of Accounts Payable totaling \$1,280,069.31. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: Kicinski.)

**CONSENT  
CALENDAR**

**PLANT & EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE**

The Board reviewed the prepared Notice of Exemption for the consolidation with the Dune 3 Mutual Water Company. The project is exempt under Section 15302 and 15303. This is a replacement/reconstruction project and will not result in an increase in the number of customers served at this time.

**P&E  
NOE FOR DUNE  
3 MUTUAL WTR  
CO.**

Documents have been reviewed by legal counsel.

MOTION: was made by Director Griffin and seconded by Director Saint-Amand authorizing staff to file a Notice of Exemption for Dune 3 Mutual Water Company Consolidation Project. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: Kicinski.)

**SALARY SURVEY**

The Board reviewed the Salary Survey as presented by staff.

**SALARY SURVEY**

MOTION: was made by Director Griffin and seconded by Director Rajtora to approve the presented Salary Survey. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: Kicinski.)

**ADMINISTRATION/EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Board reviewed the nomination of Oliver Smith, Board member of the Valley Center Municipal Water District, to the Executive Committee of the Association of California Water Agencies Joint Powers Insurance Authority (ACWA JPIA)

**ADMIN/EXEC  
ACWA  
NOMINATION**

No action taken.

**INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (IWVGA)**

Director Griffin stated the last meeting was held on March 8<sup>th</sup> and he had already reported at the March IWVWD Regular Board meeting. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. Director Griffin encouraged the public to attend the meeting.

**IWVGA**

The Board discussed items on the upcoming meeting agenda.

**COMPREHENSIVE ADJUDICATION**

Jim Worth reported on the Case Management Conference that took place on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Judge Claster has still not been assigned by the judicial council. As a result, he is hesitant to make any ruling.

**COMPREHENSIVE  
ADJUDICATION**

Service of all the parcel owners in the basin has been completed.

#### GENERAL MANAGER AND STAFF UPDATE

Don Zdeba updated the safety record to 97 consecutive days without a recordable injury.

GENERAL  
MANAGER AND  
STAFF UPDATE  
SAFETY,  
PRODUCTION &  
NEW SERVICES

Metered water production at the wells for the month of March was 106,738,000 gallons (327.6 acre-feet). The number the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is using for comparison is metered water through the distribution system, or consumptions, and non-revenue water which is water lost to leaks, flushing activities, blow-offs, etc. That number is 86,454,000 gallons (265.3 acre-feet). The preliminary and full report were submitted to SWRCB on April 4<sup>th</sup>. The conservation results for March show consumption down 21.9% compared to March of 2013, the baseline year established by the SWRCB. The 20% conservation target established by the District Board took effect in June 2016 for comparison. Through March, the cumulative result remains at 23.6%.

In response to Governor Newsom's request for a voluntary 15% reduction to address current drought conditions, the SWRCB is also comparing current water consumption to the same month in 2020/2021. Comparing March 2023 to March 2021, there is a 12.3% reduction in consumption. This percentage is much higher than previous months and can likely be attributed to the cooler temperatures and significant precipitation during the month. Comparing March conservation results to recent years, consumption was 11.9% lower than the baseline year, 2021 was 10.9% lower, 2020 was 10.1% lower, and 2019 was 25.2% lower.

The Residential gallons per capita per day (R-qpcd) for the month was 69.6. This includes both indoor and outdoor usage. There were two new connections during the month of March. There have been 19 new connections during this fiscal year, contributing \$167,288 in Capital Facility Fees.

Mr. Zdeba did attend the April 4<sup>th</sup> Community Collaborative meeting at City Hall. He provided an update on the status of the 30-inch transmission line repairs, mentioned LADWP had started releasing water from the aqueduct in anticipation of damage from flooding due to record snowpack.

PUBLIC  
OUTREACH

The District staffed a booth at the Annual Home & Leisure Show the weekend of March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. (Report in packet.) Based on the number of conservation items distributed as well as observation, attendance was down compared to last year. The fact this was the week for Spring Break may have been a factor. Thanks to Isabel Tejada, Ana Chavez, Diana Nguyen, and Lauren Smith for staffing the booth and to Robert Renfro, Amber Chapin, Joe Rivera, Jack Kennedy, Johnny Estrada, and Dan Beardsley for helping with setup and teardown.

A new General Manager's column entitled, "IWVWD New Rate Structure Explained" was provided for publication in both The Daily Independent and The News Review last week and has also been posted on the District's website.

Staff continues to work with Providence Strategic Consulting to promote WaterSmart. As of this morning, there are 1,505 active WaterSmart accounts accounting for 12.2% of customers. The number of accounts signed up is down significantly from last month, but the percentage is

actually 0.1% higher because the total number of accounts decreased. There were 597 customer alerts issued in March and there have been 13,116 in the past twelve months.

Mr. Zdeba reported that recognizing we are facing similar and likely more significant flooding conditions to 2017, he reached out to LADWP last month about the possibility of releasing water from the aqueduct into the Indian Wells Basin as they did when they declared an emergency in 2017. STATUS ON LADWP RELEASES

On March 17<sup>th</sup> LADWP did declare an emergency concerned about flooding damage to Eastern Sierra communities and Owens Lake resulting from the rains and melting record snowpack in the Sierra. There are five release points in the Indian Wells Valley; one sluice gate and five sand traps. A web meeting was arranged March 23<sup>rd</sup> with staff from Stetson Engineers and the IWVGA General Manager, as well as Tim Parker to discuss a monitoring program to sample and track the releases. A web meeting between BLM staff, Stetson staff, and District staff and consultants took place April 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss a project intended to put the water to beneficial use by replenishing the aquifer.

Staff is working with Krieger & Stewart and Tim Parker to present a project involving possible catch basins and sand dams. Staff is in contact with the local BLM office which has expressed support for the work to commence as an emergency. The proposed locations are on State lands so we will also be contacting Kern County as well as Fish & Wildlife about a stream alteration permit. LADWP started releasing water from the Freeman Sluice Gate March 29<sup>th</sup>. Boulder Draw and Bird Springs sand traps were opened April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Releases are being monitored and adjusted as necessary. LADWP is providing regular updates on release points and rates and the information is being passed on to Stetson staff. LADWP anticipates releases could continue as late as August.

The Board heard public comment from Judie Decker and Renee Westa-Lusk.

Staff is planning a potluck luncheon for Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. and requests office closure for one hour so that all employees may attend. The Board unanimously agreed to allow for the aforementioned office closure. EMPLOYEE POTLUCK

Layne was scheduled to be onsite today; however, they were unable to and plan to be onsite on Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. WELL 31 REHAB

The new MCC and pumps are scheduled to ship this month for the booster station. The C-zone tank was put into service the week of March 29<sup>th</sup>. At the College tank site, construction of the new tank began the week of the March 20<sup>th</sup>. BOOSTER STATIONS AND TANKS PROJECT

Ty Staheli reported that the estimated year-to-date revenues as of March 31, 2023, are \$11,573,664 and expenses are \$13,054,868. Expenditures exceeded revenues by \$1,481,204, which is more than budget by \$443,968. FINANCIAL STATUS

The Board directed staff to contact State officials regarding Single-Family Resident (SRF) Funding.

Mr. Staheli reviewed the report provided by ENGIE Services for July 2022 through March 2023 with the Board. SOLAR PRODUCTION

For March, the actual savings was \$50,926.72 and the guaranteed savings \$47,917.37. The total savings this fiscal year is \$404,056.64. At the Well 35 site (Phase 2), the actual savings for March was \$2,085.60 and guaranteed was \$1,977.02. The total savings since at the Well 35 site this calendar year is \$4,686.61.

Mr. Staheli reported on the following conservation items:  
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Water Waster Report - Thus far in 2023, there have been a total of 28 water waste reports received with 28 contacts made. There has been 11 formal Second Notices and four penalties issued.

CONSERVATION

Staff pot-holed 50' on either side of the new break, with the hope of doing another repair to get through the summer. Unfortunately, the excavation uncovered the same longitudinal cracking and corrosion. Staff is now working on bid documents for pipeline replacement. Documents are expected to be out by the end of the month, with awarding at the June Board meeting.

INYOKERN RD  
TRANSM. MAIN

Plant 2 is offline as of April 6<sup>th</sup>. The installation of the underdrain system at Plant 1 was approved at the March Board meeting. Pureflow is scheduled to be onsite for the installation the week of April 24<sup>th</sup>. District staff is currently sifting media to separate the treatment media from the support gravel and will assess how much replacement media is needed, if any.

ARSENIC  
TREATMENT

Mr. Lillion reported for the month of March, six services were repaired and 32 were replaced. The NO-DES truck made 13 runs in March. Since inception, the NO-DES truck has filtered 8,746,425 gallons. One valve was exercised.

OPERATIONS

**BOARD COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

President Boyd thanked staff for their hard work, and the public for their participation.

BOARD  
COMMENTS

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



Lauren Smith  
Recording Secretary

APPROVED: May 8, 2023