

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2020 AT 9:00 A.M.**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, June 5, 2020 in the Board Room of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority*, 541 “H” Street, City of Los Banos, County of Merced, State of California.

The following persons were present:

REPRESENTATIVES:

Central California Irrigation District (CCID): James O’Banion, Chairman

STAFF MEMBERS:

Chris White, Executive Director; Steve Chedester, Director of Policy and Program; Joann White, Director of Finance and Administration; Adam Hoffman, Water Resources Specialist; and Darlene O’Brien, Administrative Assistant

In accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order (N-29-20) and the declared State of Emergency as a result of the threat of COVID-19, the following members of the Exchange Contractors’ Board of Directors and staff, and members of the public participated via teleconference:

REPRESENTATIVES:

CCID: Jarrett Martin, Manager
San Luis Canal Company (SLCC): James Nickel, Director; John Wiersma, Manager
Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD): Mike Stearns, Director; Jeff Bryant, Manager
Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Chris Cardella, Vice-Chairman; Randy Houk, Manager

OTHERS:

Paul Minasian, Minasian, Meith, Soares, Sexton & Cooper LLP; Kimberly Brown, CCC Director; Cannon Michael, SLCC Director; David Cory, Consultant; Eric Ruckdaschel, Landowner; Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group; Don Wright, Journalist; Mike Henry, Consultant; Danielle Duncan, Wonderful; Bill Diedrich, Landowner; and Andy Neal, Woodard & Curran (9:28 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman O’Banion opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. The Executive Director took roll call of those participating via teleconference.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the May 1, 2020 Board meeting were presented. A motion was made by Director Stearns and seconded by Director Nickel to approve the minutes as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There were no public comments presented.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE MAY, 2020 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Joann White presented the May 2020 Expenditure list and provided a summary of the Financial Memo included in the meeting packet for May, 2020

Director Stearns made a motion to accept the May 2020 Expenditure and Financial Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Nickel and upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

The Finance Committee meeting minutes of April 28, 2020 were included for informational purposes.

WATER REPORT:

Water Resources Specialist, Adam Hoffman provided a review of his water report that included the following data: Exchange Contractors' total demands: 2,403 c.f.s., with 1,955 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 448 c.f.s. from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). He then reported that releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River are 350 c.f.s., with 184 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. Currently, there is 119 c.f.s. entering the Mendota Pool from the San Joaquin River, with 100 c.f.s. going past Sack Dam as part of the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) flows.

Mr. Hoffman next reported on the following current reservoir storage: Shasta – 3,511,290 a.f.; Millerton – 453,109 a.f.; and San Luis Reservoir – 1,286,842 a.f., noting that the Federal share in the San Luis Reservoir is 403,530 a.f., with the State project water at 883,312 a.f. Pine Flat is 814,936 a.f. of storage and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is at 20,632 a.f.

The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 481,090 a.f., which is about 107% of average. The accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 56% of average.

Mr. Hoffman then reviewed the Delta Operations and River Forecast Center's data. Concluding his report, he referred to the additional material included in his report as informational.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Executive Director White stated that staff has recently been focusing on the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) matters, water operations and supply and the Water Resources Plan projects.

San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) – The Executive Director discussed the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) proposal of a set of alternatives at the Mendota Pool Control Structure and will be meeting with Reclamation this afternoon to discuss some outstanding issues. Manager Martin gave a brief update on the situation and hopes that from the outcome of the meeting, we will be able to come to a resolution on the alternative and move forward to the 60% design.

The land acquisition process has been ongoing with a lack of response at times from Reclamation. Reclamation has acknowledged they have an internal issue and are working through it. The land acquisitions are an important part of getting the projects completed on time to get the regulatory coverage before 2025.

Manager Wiersma reported on the Sack Dam project. SLCC met with Reclamation's front office with some success and are currently moving forward with the 60% design.

Subsidence – Clayton Water District has made progress on their water budget and Manager Martin continues to work with them on that issue.

Water Transfers – We received the return water from Valley Water last month and will be asking for Board approval today to transfer that water to Triangle T Water District as part of their subsidence reduction plan.

Water Resources Plan – Orestimba Creek – CCID had applied for grant funding for the next phase in the project and it was determined they are eligible for \$800,000 with no matching funds. CCID and Del Puerto Water District are currently working together on a plan on how to use the funds.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAM REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided a report on the following issues:

San Joaquin River Restoration Program – We have received and reviewed the draft appraisal plan for potential mitigation measures from Reclamation on April 29th. Exchange Contractors submitted comments and a revised Appraisal Plan is due from Reclamation by mid-summer. On the reverse flow facility, three design alternatives were provided to Reclamation with anticipation of selecting the preferred option by mid-June. Revisions of the fish recapture facility was provided in April, and we have been given authorization to move forward to the 30% design. The geotechnical work on the MLT property took place in April but because of a hawk nest sighting, the last bore hole will be completed in July. Mowry Bridge construction is anticipated to start this Fall.

Los Banos Creek – The group is working on the pilot project, permits are now complete and the bidding process should begin at the end of June with construction starting in August. They anticipate beginning to start running water into the project for a few months this Fall.

WATER TRANSFER COMMITTEE REPORT:

The Executive Director reported the Water Transfer Committee had met on May 20, 2020 and said that the Committee recommended approval of the following transfer proposals: CCID groundwater exchange transfer of up to 55 AF to San Luis Water District and up to 249 AF to Del Puerto Water District and SLCC with up to 1,494 AF of water to be added to the land following transfer proposal to Semitropic Water Storage District.

Director Nickel made a motion to approve CCID’s groundwater exchange transfers and SLCC’s proposed increase of 1,494 AF of water to Semitropic Water Storage District. The motion was seconded by Director Stearns. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

The Executive Director then asked for approval of the Water Transfer Agreement with Triangle T Water District of up to 1,500 AF. He added that the water being transferred is the return water from Valley Water. Director Stearns made a motion to approve the Water Transfer Agreement with Triangle T Water District as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Cardella. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

The Water Transfer Committee meeting minutes of April 23, 2020 were included as informational purposes.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE:

Del Puerto Creek Reservoir Project: Andy Neal of Woodard and Curran provided an update on the recent activities with the reservoir project, specifically detailing the work to achieve the critical milestone of drafting and submittal of the Feasibility Report to Reclamation.

BAY-DELTA WATER QUALITY AND REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD (RWOCB) REPORT:

Consultant David Cory gave an update on the following matters:

Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP): Coalitions are finalizing a Groundwater Protection Formula (GWP Formula) as required by the State Water Regional Control Board (SWRCB) which must be submitted next month for approval.

Grassland Bypass Project: Reclamation and the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (SLDMWA) entered into a new agreement for the use of the San Luis Drain. The new agreement extends the use of the drain through December 31, 2029.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

The Executive Director indicated that both the State and Federal Lobbyist's reports were in the Board packets for review.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

Legal counsel briefly outlined the following issues and noted that some of the discussions will take place in Closed Session:

- Friant Court of Claims
- Flood Water Diversions State Board Filings
- Temperature Plan

FOUR ENTITIES' MANAGER REPORTS:

Firebaugh Canal Company:

Manager Bryant reported that one of FCWD's employees had to self-quarantine after a known exposure setting their spraying back a couple of weeks. He is spending most of his time on the JPA, indicating the manager's search should end next week and that various ad hoc committees have been set up for the JPA. Manager Bryant also continues to work with Reclamation on the ground and environmental work for the proposed canal lining projects.

Columbia Canal Company:

Manager Houk reported average water use for May and that they are currently having tremendous issues with the aquatics at the Mendota Pool and Delta Mendota Canal (DMC), with mechanical and hand labor being the only solution at this time.

Central California Irrigation District:

Manager Martin stated that they are dealing with the aquatics issue as well, which has become a huge problem, stemming from the DMC and entering into CCID's facilities. They are working with SLDMWA and their spray permit on resolving the issue. CCID staff is starting to work on their winter construction projects list.

San Luis Canal Company:

Manager Wiersma reported that SLCC deliveries were a little below average by about 3,000 AF. They passed their budgets and their allocation has been lifted based on the current hydrology information. SLCC is trying a new method to battle the algae issue called Microbes which is an eco-friendly solution that goes in the water and competes with the algae for the nutrients and kills off the algae.

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING BOARD MEETING:

Due to the Fourth of July holiday, staff recommended to move the July Board meeting to Friday, July 10, 2020.

Director Stearns made a motion to move the July Board meeting to Friday, July 10, 2020. The motion was seconded by Director Cardella. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman O'Banion adjourned the meeting to Closed Session at 10:20 a.m.

The Chairman returned the meeting to Open Session at 10:43 a.m. and announced that direction was given to staff and legal counsel. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

JAMES O'BANION, CHAIRMAN

Attest a true record of proceedings had
And taken at the foregoing meeting, our
Presence thereat and our consent thereto.

CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

JAMES NICKEL, DIRECTOR

MIKE STEARNS, DIRECTOR

CHRIS CARDELLA, VICE-CHAIRMAN