

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 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, September 4, 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): David Pruitt, Alternate Director

Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD): Mike Stearns, Director; Jeff Bryant, Manager

Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Kimberly Brown, Alternate Director (9:20 a.m.); Randy Houk, Manager/Alternate Director

OTHERS:

Paul Minasian, Minasian, Meith, Soares, Sexton & Cooper LLP; David Cory, Consultant; Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group; Don Wright, Journalist; Mike Henry, Consultant; Sarah Woolf and Kristi Robinson, Water Wise; Danielle Duncan, Wonderful Orchards; Lauren Layne, Baker, Manock & Jensen; Andy Neal, Woodard & Curran (participated from 9:25 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman O’Banion opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and asked Joann White to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. The Executive Director proceeded to take roll call of the Board members in attendance via teleconference and asked others on the call to announce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the August 7, 2020 Board meeting were presented. A motion was made by Director Stearns and seconded by Alternate Director Houk to approve the minutes as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Rick Iger of Provost & Pritchard announced the new location of their Los Banos office.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 2020 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Joann White presented the August 2020 Expenditure list and Financial Memo included in the meeting packet. Following her presentation, the Executive Director reported that the Finance Committee recommended approval of the financial report, in addition to a reduction of the General Budget fourth quarter dues by \$250,000 and authorizing staff to move ahead with getting a bond rating to support the business plan for the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir (DPCR), with a presentation of the plan to be provided to the Board in October.

Alternate Director Pruitt made a motion to accept the August 2020 Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented, along with the Finance Committee recommendations to reduce General Budget fourth quarter dues by \$250,000 and move forward with the consultant firm to get a bond rating and business plan relative to the DPCR. The motion was seconded by Director Stearns. Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

The Finance Committee meeting minutes of August 3, 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: 1,616 c.f.s., with 1,196 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 420 c.f.s. from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). He then reported that releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River are 423 c.f.s., with 193 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. Currently, there is 102 c.f.s. entering the Mendota Pool from the San Joaquin River, with 85 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 – 2,344,493 a.f.; Millerton – 213,243 a.f.; and San Luis Reservoir – 976,139 a.f., noting that the Federal share in the San Luis Reservoir is 251,418 a.f., with the State project water at 724,721 a.f. Pine Flat is 212,900 a.f. of storage and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is at 19,502 a.f.

The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 380,067 a.f., which is about 101% of average. The accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 58% of average.

The Delta Operations data was then provided as follows: inflows are 14,381 c.f.s.; Jones Pumping Plant is at 4,300 c.f.s., with Banks Pumping Plant running 1,900 c.f.s. The Outflow Index is at 4,700 c.f.s and 43% of Inflow Diverted, noting the controlling factor of Delta Water Quality.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) – Executive Director White stated that discussions relative to SJRRP current issues will be held in Closed Session.

Temperance Flat Reservoir Authority – We will continue to be involved with the Authority, but the project is currently on hold for this year.

Operations/Water Supply – An aquatic weed control coordination call was held on September 1st with San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (SLDMWA), James Irrigation District, Tranquility Irrigation District, and Fresno County and Parks. It has been determined that the Division of Water Ways will be out in the area to spray aquatics between Mendota Dam and Sack Dam within the next couple of weeks to help eliminate the problem.

Legislative – Continuing to work with our partners at SLDMWA, Friant Water Authority and others in tracking various bills. We are also working with Waters, Oceans and Wildlife (WOW) on legislation to help fund Sack Dam.

SGMA/Groundwater-

- **SGMA** – Cal SPA initial hearing to take place later this month. The next Exchange Contractors GSA board meeting will be scheduled in October.
- **Subsidence** – Currently working with Triangle T Water District on renewing their agreements with the deadline for renewal ending on September 30th.

Water Transfers – We continue to work with Rosedale Rio Bravo Water Storage District on a long-term agreement to bring back to the Board for final consideration. In addition, we are working with Valley Water on a potential exchange/transfer program. We are working with the managers on their schedules to determine the amount of Fall water we may have to support these two programs.

Water Resources Plan – Executive Director White stated that progress has been made in the water banking project at Orestimba, the reservoir recharge project at Los Banos Creek and the Red Top area project.

Other Items:

- **Drainage** – Manager Bryant reported on Palmer McCoy's progress as the new JPA manager and is currently working to get independent of Panoche Water District by December, with hopes of reestablishing grant funding by mid-2021.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAM REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided the following updates:

San Joaquin River Restoration Program – Jacobs Engineering and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) have agreed on a new footprint for the Fish Screen and Control Structure location, which is now on the north bank of the river. Further refinements took place over the last month and concentrated amount of modeling is beginning on the structures and fish screen. An official modification to the Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) will start in late 2020. We know that we are out of scope and over budget because of the revised 30% design. The redesign effort will set the schedule back about six months. At the Arroyo Canal Fish Screen, we are coordinating with SLCC, Jacobs and Reclamation on the required environmental review (CEQA) for the revised project and there is a need to come to agreement between SLCC and Reclamation to complete the draft of the revised scope of work for Jacobs.

WATER TRANSFER COMMITTEE REPORT:

The Executive Director presented an informational item pertaining to an agreement to facilitate the transfer of water from Eastside Canal and Irrigation Co. to Triangle T Water District by San Luis Canal Company.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE:

Del Puerto Creek Reservoir Project (DPCR): Andy Neal of Woodard and Curran provided an update on the recent activities with the reservoir project. Mr. Neal began by detailing the delivery of the feasibility report, which has been reviewed at regional level. They have been working on modeling to address some technical questions. He reported the Draft Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is scheduled to be published in October 2020, with a Record of Decision anticipated to be signed in April 2021. They have been working with both project agencies in moving forward this process for adoption by mid-October. Work continues in the public outreach area and it was noted that a pro-reservoir Facebook page has recently been started.

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

David Cory provided the following update:

Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP): Mr. Cory gave a brief summary of the surface water monitoring expert panel that has been put together by the Central Valley Regional Board in response to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to review the Eastside Coalition’s monitoring program. Given the similarity of the Westside Coalition’s monitoring program to the Eastside’s program, it is likely many of the recommendations will impact the Westside. The expert panel is expected to release a draft report in October and will possibly include some additional recommendations which will increase monitoring costs. The final report is expected to be submitted to the Regional Board in December.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

State: Executive Director White presented Dominic DiMare’s report noting the Legislative session ended on August 31st. Mr. DiMare summarizes the various issues during the pandemic that have caused many challenges for the legislative body to be able to do business.

Federal: The Executive Director discussed Nancy Williams’ report highlighting such issues as the 2020 elections, appropriations status, and the final feasibility report for the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project.

At this time, the Director of Policy and Program gave a brief summary of Representative Garamendi’s amendment to the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), with a recommendation to the Board to write a letter of support of the amendment if it is accepted by the Senate/House.

Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Director Stearns and seconded by Alternate Director Brown to approve the letter of support of the amendment. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT:

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

- Court of Claims proceedings
- Subsidence
- State Water Board
- Delta Tunnels

FOUR ENTITIES’ MANAGER REPORTS:

San Luis Canal Company:

Executive Director White presented Manager Wiersma’s report in his absence. SLCC water deliveries were average for August and their demands have dropped significantly. Staff is preparing bid documents for six capital projects to be completed during the Fall. Currently working on office upgrades and remodeling to make more office space available. It was also noted that Shannon Zuniga is SLCC’s new Administrative Assistant and is doing a great job.

Central California Irrigation District:

Manager Martin reported that deliveries have also dropped with refuge deliveries increasing. CCID is engaging with some private consultants to mechanically remove the aquatics in the Mendota Pool. Los Banos Creek storage project recently went to bid with construction scheduled to start later this month to put the pipeline into the reservoir.

Firebaugh Canal Company:

Manager Bryant stated FCWD is preparing for a 3-mile canal lining and a headworks automation project this Fall. The demolition of their office has been set back due to finding asbestos in the flooring, a specialized contractor has been hired to take care of this issue.

Columbia Canal Company:

Manager Houk reported water deliveries are down. CCC will be redesigning some weirs and wings on the older linings to last longer.

INFORMATIONAL:

Executive Director White reminded the Board of the Special Board meeting being scheduled for October 21, 2020 to adopt the EIS for the DPCR.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman O'Banion adjourned the meeting to Closed Session at 10:15 a.m.

The Chairman returned the meeting to Open Session at 10:30 a.m. and announced that direction was given to staff and legal counsel. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 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

DAVID PRUITT, ALTERNATE DIRECTOR

MIKE STEARNS, DIRECTOR

KIMBERLY BROWN, ALTERNATE DIRECTOR