

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 2022**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, January 7, 2022 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): Eric Fontana, Director; Jarrett Martin, Manager
San Luis Canal Company (SLCC): James Nickel, Director; John Wiersma, Manager
Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Chris Cardella, Vice-Chairman

STAFF MEMBERS:

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

OTHERS:

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:

Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Randy Houk, Manager
Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD): Dan McCurdy, Alternate Director; Jeff Bryant, Manager

OTHERS:

Andrew McClure, Minasian, Meith, Soares, Sexton & Cooper LLP; Cannon Michael, SLCC Director; Kimberly Brown, CCC Director; David Cory, Consultant; Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard; Manny Amorelli, James Irrigation District; Ben Fenters, CCID; Chase Hurley, Water & Land Solutions, LLC; Lauren Layne, Baker, Manock & Jensen; Eric Ruckdaschel, Landowner; and Don Wright, Journalist

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chairman Cardella opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and asked Manager Martin to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. The Executive Director then proceeded to take roll call of the Board members to confirm a quorum.

REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING:

Director Nickel made a motion to table the agenda item to next month's Board meeting in allow the member entity boards to discuss. The motion was seconded by Director Fontana. Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the December 3, 2021, December 10, 2021, and December 21, 2021 Board meetings were presented.

Director Nickel made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Fontana. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was no public participation presented.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER, 2021 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Finance Committee Report:

Joann White presented the December 2021 Expenditure List and Financial Report and provided highlights of the revenue and expenses for the General, Water Transfer, Water Resources Plan, and San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority Budget Comparisons. An outline of the Cash Activity Report was then presented.

Following the report, a motion was made by Director Nickel and seconded by Director Fontana to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was passed by a 4-0 vote.

Resolution No. 22-01 – Resolution to Adopt Annual Statement of Investment Policy and Guidelines:

The Executive Director explained that on an annual basis, the Board is asked to Adopt an Annual Statement of Investment Policy and Guidelines as proposed in Resolution No. 22-01. He concluded that there have been no changes to the proposed policy and guidelines since the previous year, and recommended approval.

A motion was made by Director Nickel and seconded by Director Fontana to approve Resolution No. 22-01, Adopt Annual Statement of Investment Policy and Guidelines. Upon a roll call vote, the motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

Annual Contributions:

Upon brief review of the proposed list of the Annual Contributions, a motion was made by Director Nickel and seconded by Director Fontana to approve the 2022 Annual Contributions as presented. Upon a roll call vote, the motion was approved by a 4-0 vote.

The Finance Committee meeting minutes of November 30, 2021 were provided for informational purposes.

WATER REPORT:

Water Resources Specialist, Adam Hoffman reviewed his water report that included the following data: Exchange Contractors' total demands: 208 cubic feet per second (c.f.s.), of that, 118 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 90 c.f.s from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). He then reported that releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River are 649 c.f.s., with 433 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. Currently, there is 300 c.f.s. entering the Mendota Pool from the San Joaquin River, with 275 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 – 1,369,444 acre-feet (a.f.); San Luis Reservoir – 644,994 a.f., stating that the Federal share in the San Luis Reservoir is 112,711 a.f., with the State project water at 532,283 a.f. Subsequent, he stated that Millerton's current storage is 344,716 a.f. and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is at 19,676 a.f. The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 216,982 a.f., which is about 84% of average, and the accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 81% of average.

The Delta Operation's data was then provided as follows: inflows are 25,414 c.f.s., with exports at 5,345 c.f.s. The outflow index is 18,469 c.f.s., noting the controlling factor for these flows.

In conclusion, Mr. Hoffman referred to additional data included in his report for informational purposes: Current Reservoir Conditions, San Luis Reservoir Storage Levels, Shasta Dam Operations, Millerton Lake Daily Operation's Report, and Daily CVP Water Supply Report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

The Executive Director gave brief updates on the following issues:

Operations: We will be tracking and routing operations as soon as we receive updated information on January 10th and continue to track for the potential Temporary Use Change Petition (TUCP) due to the State Water Board (SWB) process. The early rainfall/snowfall in December has been good but does not make our season. January and February are typically our best months for rain. Presently

the San Luis Reservoir federal storage is at about 120 TAF, with an estimated 200 TAF that will need to be made available for federal contractors rescheduled water.

Legislative: Senators Feinstein and Padilla wrote a letter to the Department of the Interior advocating funding for California water priorities which specifically mentioned the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir.

SGMA/Groundwater: Manager Martin reported that CCID staff has collected most of the data needed for the annual report with one last round of requests to be sent out this month. The State has completed their solicitation package for grant funding and the Delta-Mendota subbasin will likely be eligible for about \$7.6 million. Department of Water Resources (DWR) notified the Delta-Mendota subbasins that our collective GSPs were reviewed and deemed incomplete, expecting a formal letter from DWR later this month.

Subsidence: The field survey was completed in December but have not received results yet. CCID and SLCC are continuing to work with Triangle T Water District on completing the next extension of the subsidence avoidance agreement.

Museum/Water Office Facility Project: The project is progressing, and the next steps are to finalize a cost share agreement and to get surveying, soils and an architectural rendering to review with the project partners.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAMS REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided a report on the following issues:

San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP)

- *Mendota Pool Fish Screen and Control Structure* – On the reverse flow facility, Jacobs is continuing design of the Mendota Pool control gates and the controlling flow gates into the compact bypass channel.
- *Schedule* – An updated schedule from United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has been requested and they expect to have it available in Spring 2022.
- *Sack Dam, Fish Passage and Arroyo Canal Fish Screen* – The 30% design package is scheduled for review in mid-February 2022, and we will have 30 days to review and provide comments.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY WATER BLUEPRINT:

Director of Policy and Programs provided a brief presentation of the San Joaquin Valley Water Blueprint and asked the Board to consider authorizing the Exchange Contractors to join as a board member of the Water Blueprint for the San Joaquin Valley, a 501(c)(3), Educational non-profit.

Director Fontana asked that the item be tabled until the next Board meeting to be able to review this updated information with the CCID board. It was agreed to bring this matter back at the February Board meeting.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) UPDATE:

- *Orestimba Creek* – We have obtained entry permits from DWR and SLDMWA for the aquatic delineation survey. Edits and responses have received and incorporated on the NEPA/CEQA. We anticipate public circulation of the draft NEPA/CEQA by January 12. In December, 60% design was sent to Reclamation and responses are currently being developed. Working on the Water Rights application and will be submitting to the State Water Board by January 10.
- *Los Banos Creek Reservoir* – An initial operation’s plan has been developed for the project partners to review. Participants met in November to refine the plan. The Area Potentially Effected (APE) map has been developed and agreed upon. There is a projected completion of construction by mid-2023.
- *Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir* – The Executive Director reported that interviews with firms for the dam design has been scheduled for later in January. They continue to work with PG&E on the utility relocation to get it to a 30% design. The California Water Commission voted in favor of the project to move forward to the next process should there be a second Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) application opportunity.

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

Consultant, David Cory gave the following update:

CV-SALTS

- *Salt Control Program* – Phase 1 of the Salt Control Program involves the development of a Prioritization and Optimization Study (P&O Study). Currently consultants are compiling data to characterize current salinity conditions of both surface and groundwater across the Central Valley. Phase 1 is expected to take ten years to complete.
- *Nitrate Permitting Strategy* – The Westside San Joaquin River Watershed Coalition is in a Priority 2 basin and will receive a Notice to Comply from the Regional Board this year. The Coalition will likely need to take a leadership role if they want to meet the deadlines and avoid enforcement action by the Regional Board. It will take time, money, and effort to develop a Management Zone. The Westside SJR Coalition is investigating the most economical way to comply with these requirements. It is clear these requirements will cause Coalition assessments to significantly increase over the next few years.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

State: The Executive Director referred to Dominic DiMare’s report noting the California Citizens Redistricting Commission released the final maps in December and they were certified by the Secretary of State on December 27th. The Exchange Contractors’ service area is now overlaid by the new Senate Districts 4 and 14, Assembly Districts 22 and 27 and Congressional District 13.

Federal: The Executive Director presented Nancy Williams' report which discussed the budget and appropriations process and the implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Camille Touton was sworn in as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation in December.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

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

- SWB Comments for Reconsideration of the 2021 TUCP
- BiOP Litigation
- SGMA DWR Letter to Delta-Mendota GSPs
- Friant Court of Claims Litigation

FOUR ENTITIES' MANAGER REPORTS:

Central California Irrigation District:

Manager Martin reported that December was slightly above average, and they are meeting refuge demands at this time. With the canals at low levels, staff is focusing on winter maintenance.

Firebaugh Canal Company:

Manager Bryant stated they are in normal winter maintenance. They irrigated up until the end of December, with some pre-irrigation happening now. The new office project continues.

San Luis Canal Company:

Manager Wiersma reported on water deliveries. Currently working with CCID on the CEQA process for the aquatic herbicide application and about half of the canal systems are down for routine maintenance and capital projects.

Columbia Canal Company:

Manager Houk stated that winter maintenance continues and should be complete by mid-month.

INFORMATIONAL:

The Executive Director reminded everyone of the upcoming Water Users Conference to be held in Reno, Nevada from January 18-21, 2022.

CLOSED SESSION:

Vice-Chairman Cardella adjourned the meeting to Closed Session and called for a short recess at 9:55 a.m. Vice Chairman Cardella reconvened the meeting to Closed Session at 10:05 a.m.

Vice-Chairman Cardella returned the meeting to Open Session at 11:20 a.m. and announced that they reviewed and approved the Personnel Committee's recommendation that all employees receive a 5% Cost of Living increase in 2022 and gave direction to staff and legal counsel. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

CHRIS CARDELLA, VICE-CHAIRMAN

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

CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

(Signatures Continue on Following Page)

ERIC FONTANA, DIRECTOR

JAMES NICKEL, DIRECTOR

DAN McCURDY, ALTERNATE DIRECTOR