

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER EXCHANGE CONTRACTORS WATER AUTHORITY
HELD FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2023**

The Board of Directors of the *San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors Water Authority (SJRECWA)* met in Regular Session on Friday, February 10, 2023 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 Water District (SLCC): James Nickel, Director; John Wiersma, Manager

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

Columbia Canal Company (CCC): Chris Cardella, Chair; Randy Houk, Manager

STAFF MEMBERS:

Chris White, Executive Director; Steve Chedester, Director of Policy and Programs; Joann White, Director of Finance and Administration; and Adam Hoffman, Water Resources Specialist

PRESENT:

Andrew McClure, Minasian, Meith, Soares, Sexton & Cooper LLP, and David Cory, Consultant

The following participated via Conference Call:

Rick Iger, Provost & Pritchard; Lauren Layne, Baker, Manock & Jensen; Mike Gardner, Pacheco Water District; Don Wright, Journalist - Water Wrights; and Kristi Robinson, Water Wise

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Chris Cardella opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and asked Jarrett Martin to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Introductions were then provided by those in person and those participating via teleconference.

REVIEW OF AGENDA:

There were no proposed changes to the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The unapproved minutes from the January 6, 2023 Board meeting were presented.

Director Nickel made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Director Fontana, and unanimously carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Upon asking for any public comments, none were provided.

BOARD TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 2023 EXPENDITURES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Joann White presented the January 2023 Expenditure List and Financial Report which included end of the year budget updates for 2022, in addition to revenue and expenses for January 2023. An outline of the Cash Activity Report was then presented.

A motion was made by Director Stearns and seconded by Director Nickel to approve the Expenditure List and Financial Report as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

Staff responded to a question regarding the public relations firm being utilized, adding that a monthly report will be added to the Board packets for their consideration.

2022 Summary of Charges on Visa Cards:

Executive Director White reported that an annual summary of the Visa cards assigned to staff is provided for the Board's review and information. Upon review, no comments were submitted.

2022 Report – Reimbursement to Employees in Excess of \$100:

There were none to report for 2022.

WATER REPORT:

Water Resources Specialist, Adam Hoffman initially stated that there was approximately 225,000 Acre Feet (AF) of flood flows down the San Joaquin River but began ramping down at the end of January, adding that flows are now being considered Restoration Flows. Mr. Hoffman next reviewed his water report that included the following data: Exchange Contractors' total demands: 379 cubic feet per second (c.f.s.), of that, 269 c.f.s. from the Mendota Pool and 110 c.f.s. from the Delta Mendota Canal (DMC). Recapping releases from Friant Dam into the San Joaquin River, he reported a total of 568 c.f.s., with 616 c.f.s. at Gravelly Ford. Currently, there is 530 c.f.s. entering the Mendota Pool and 240 c.f.s. going past Sack Dam.

Mr. Hoffman continued his report by reviewing the following current reservoir storage: Shasta – 2,617,863 acre-feet (AF); San Luis Reservoir (SLR) – 1,392,216 AF, with the Federal share in the SLR is 543,000 AF, and the State project water at 849,216 AF. He stated that Millerton's current

storage is 323,303 AF and the Los Banos Creek Detention Dam is at 21,153 AF. The Upper San Joaquin Basin combined storage is 322,643 AF, which is about 122% of average, and the accumulated full natural flow into Shasta Lake is 90% of average.

The Delta Operation’s data was then provided as follows: inflows are 31,145 c.f.s., with exports at 8,431 c.f.s. The outflow index is 21,814 c.f.s. In conclusion, Mr. Hoffman referred to additional data included in his report that covers current reservoir conditions and projected forecasts.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

The Executive Director reported a lot of time has been spent on modeling and coordinated operations with U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority (SLDMWA) and Friant Water Authority (FWA). He then stated that they had a few tours come through for legislators and/or their staff this past month and continue to schedule additional tours throughout the year. In concluding, Mr. White said that they are tracking some newly proposed legislation and will be coordinating with others to determine potential impacts.

DIRECTOR OF POLICY & PROGRAMS REPORT:

Steve Chedester provided a brief update on the Reach 2B project explaining that borings will be completed by the end of February and a final report is expected to be completed within 60 days. He also reported that a new project manager had been assigned.

WATER RESOURCES PLAN (WRP) – UPDATE:

The Director of Policy and Programs provided an update on the following WRP projects:

- *Orestimba Creek* – Received four protests to the 5-year Water Rights application which all have been addressed.
- *Los Banos Creek Project* – Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA) is moving forward; continue working on funding agreement with Reclamation in obtaining the grant funds awarded to the project. Still on schedule to start construction by the first of next year.

The Executive Director provided a highlight of the activities happening at the Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir project and said that the next Technical Review meeting has been scheduled in March, at which time they will look at results of the Phase 1 drilling and geotechnical investigations and look at recommendations for Phase 2 work. They also continue to support Reclamation in completing the NEPA process.

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

Consultant, David Cory outlined his report specifically noting that the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Authority is trying to put together a cost estimate to cover efforts needed to implement the Groundwater Protection (GWP) Targets being imposed by the Regional Board. The coalition is hoping the RWQCB’s executive officer approve their revised proposal which will allow them to

initially work to achieve interim milestones before being required to meet more challenging GWP Targets.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT:

State: The Executive Director stated that DiMare’s office is putting together the list of proposed legislative bills that he anticipates being circulated to the Board within the next month. Steve Chedester next reported on recent discussions involving AB 460 and SB 23, and outlined the impacts or benefits of each of those proposed bills.

Federal: An outline of Nancy Williams’ report on Washington DC activities throughout the past month was provided.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT:

Legal Counsel provided a brief update on the following matters: Del Puerto Canyon Reservoir CEQA litigation relative to both litigants, Friant Water Supply Protection Association and Sierra Club, et al. The other matter pertained to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act litigation in Merced County Superior Court noting that the next hearing has been scheduled for March 17th. In conclusion, Legal Counsel stated that further discussions regarding litigation will take place in Closed Session.

FOUR ENTITIES’ MANAGER REPORTS:

Columbia Canal Company: Manager Houk reported that they have finished winter maintenance and will charge up the system if needed as a result of heavy frost. They are reinstalling and calibrating their meters throughout the district to provide their usage to the SWRCB. He also stated that as a result of the past month’s flood flows, a good recharge was reported in the CCC’s Resource Conservation District and Aliso Water District’s service area.

Firebaugh Canal Water District: Manager Bryant stated that they received substantial damage to system as a result of Silver Creek’s encroachment. They are starting on the canal lining project; continue work on the solar project; and communicated with Kenneth Schmidt in completing the annual groundwater pumping report. Mr. Bryant concluded by reporting that FCWD will be bringing three land following transfer proposals to their board later this month.

San Luis Canal Company: Manager Wiersma reported that they have not had any deliveries, and even though they had some delays in winter maintenance as a result of the rain, they are pushing to be completed by mid-February as initially scheduled. He also announced that SLCC will have their annual meeting lunch this year after a pause for the past few years at which time their election will also be held during the annual meeting with seven people running for seven positions on the board.

Central California Irrigation District: Manager Martin reported that they were on flood control watch throughout their service area for most of the past month. Regarding winter maintenance, they are wrapping up two of their long crested weir projects and will be starting up their system for deliveries next week.

INFORMATIONAL:

There was no information provided.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chair Cardella asked if there was any public input and hearing none, adjourned the meeting to Closed Session and called for a short recess at 9:59 a.m. The meeting was reconvened to Closed Session at 10:10 a.m.

Chair Cardella returned the meeting to Open Session at 11:08 a.m., and said that direction was provided to legal counsel and staff. The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

CHRIS CARDELLA, CHAIR

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

CHRIS WHITE, SECRETARY

ERIC FONTANA, DIRECTOR

JAMES NICKEL, DIRECTOR

MIKE STEARNS, DIRECTOR