

# AGENDA ITEM 4A

## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CENTRAL BASIN WATERMASTER WATER RIGHTS PANEL

PROGRESS PARK, BOARD ROOM  
15500 DOWNEY AVE PARAMOUNT CA

1:30 P.M, THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2024

Chair Moore called the meeting of the Central Basin Watermaster Water Rights Panel to order at 1:34 pm.

### 1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Moore led the pledge of allegiance.

### 2. ROLL CALL

#### Panel Members

Steve Lenton	Bellflower-Somerset Mutual Water Company
Dan Mueller	City of Downey
Derek Nguyen	City of Lakewood
Anatole Falagan	City of Long Beach (Absent)
Adriana Figueroa	City of Paramount (Absent)
Thomas Bekele	City of Signal Hill
Toby Moore	Golden State Water Company
Joanna Moreno	City of Vernon (New Panel Member)
Raymond Cordero	City of Whittier (New Panel Member, arrived during item 7)

#### Also Present

Sahar Andalib	LADWP
Jim Markman	RWG Law
Jackie Ramirez	Water Replenishment District (Secretary)
Asha Kreiling	Water Replenishment District
Rob Beste	Water Replenishment District

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were received.

### 4. CONSENT CALENDAR

Chair Moore entertained a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion was made by Panel Member Mueller and seconded by Panel Member Lenton.

The consent calendar was approved by a unanimous voice vote of 5 ayes, 0 abstentions, and 0 no's (5-0-0).

## **5. RESOLUTION FOR 2024 WATER RIGHTS PANEL ELECTION**

During this time Chair Moore stated that there was a quorum present consisting of Panel Members with terms beginning prior to the May 9 election. He indicated the resolution for consideration cites the fact that the Water Rights Panel Election was held on May 9<sup>th</sup> bearing the results of such matters provided by the law.

Attorney Markman stated that once the Panel passed the resolution, the results would be lodged with the court.

The election results are placing the City of Whittier, City of Lakewood, and City of Vernon in their respective positions.

Chair Moore entertained a motion to receive and file the 2024 Water Rights Panel Election from the original Panel Members. The motion was made by Treasurer Nguyen and seconded by Panel Member Lenton.

The 2024-01 Election Resolution was approved by a unanimous voice vote of 5 ayes, 0 abstentions, and 0 no's (5-0-0).

*After the 2024-01 resolution passed there was a quorum present of 5 of 7 Panel Members (City of Downey, City of Lakewood, City of Vernon, Bellflower Somerset Mutual Water Company, and Golden State Water Company).*

## **6. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Nguyen presented the Treasurer's Report.

The Water Replenishment District's summary reports showed the activities from Fiscal Year from July 1, 2023, to June 17 2024. As of June 17, payments totaling \$40,713.84 were processed leaving a balance of \$644,283.96.

The CBWRP summary tables showed payments broken down into four types of services: Administrative Services, Meter Testing, Legal Services, and Miscellaneous. For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, the April and May payments totaled \$10,990.15, bringing the overall 2023-2024 Fiscal Year expenditures to \$73,447.24. The current account balance is \$78,452.76; approximately 52% of the total budget.

Chair Moore entertained a motion to receive and file the Treasurer's Report. The motion was made by Panel Member Mueller and seconded by Panel Member Moreno.

The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote of 5 ayes, 0 abstentions, and 0 no's (5-0-0).

## 7. ADMINISTRATIVE BODY REPORT

Asha Kreiling provided an update on the status of the Administrative Body.

### 2023 – 2024 Groundwater Pumping

For Administrative Year (AY) 2023-24 through the end of May, Central Basin groundwater pumping was 115,333.78 acre-feet (af), which is 6.6% less than the same period in the previous AY. The decrease can be attributed to the increase in precipitation and storage withdrawals.

### 2023– 2024 Water Rights Activity

For AY 2023-24 through July 1, there were 39 leases processed transferring 19,620.60 af of rights, of which 32 leases are with flex and 7 leases without flex.

There were 5 sale transactions transferring a total of 117.00 af in AY 2023-24.

### 2023–2024 Storage Activity

For Administrative Year (AY) 2023-24 a total of 25,192.67 af have been withdrawn from storage.

### 2024-2024 Watermaster Invoices

Staff mailed the 2024-25 consolidated watermaster invoices on June 5<sup>th</sup> and payments are due on July 17<sup>th</sup>. Please mail your payments on time to avoid late fees.

### Other Announcements

On May 30<sup>th</sup> staff mailed a comprehensive summary of active water rights. We hope that this will provide an opportunity for pumpers to collaborate, and that the information was helpful. Reminder that the water rights calculator is also available and can be used to run scenarios.

### Abandoned Water Rights

Rob Beste advised the Panel of Lincoln Memorial Park's situation. The cemetery owner abandoned the cemetery location and his funeral and cemetery licenses.

There have been general discussions regarding abandoned water rights, currently there are a little over 90-acre feet of APA from various small entities in the Central Basin that the Admin Body has made attempts to contact. Rob provided this information to open discussion amongst the Panel Members to determine any next steps.

*Special Notation: Panel Member Cordero arrived during item 7 at 1:45pm.*

Attorney Markman stated that unclaimed property goes through the escheatment process within the Attorney General's office. There is a company that makes various attempts to find a family member or heir who can possibly benefit from the property.

There was discussion amongst the Panel Members regarding forfeiting of rights from these entities that no longer pay their assessment.

Treasurer Nguyen questioned how the escheatment process would begin.

Panel Member Mueller had concerns of how we would distinguish someone who is simply ignoring notices or has abandoned their rights.

Attorney Markman stated that you provide the abandoned rights list information and documentation of contact attempts to the State Controller's Office which manages the state's list of abandoned property.

Treasurer Nguyen sought clarification regarding WRD exhausting contact attempts and Rob clarified that WRD wasn't in business of investigating the entities since WRD has already made multiple attempts at emails and phone calls.

Attorney Markman also recommended opening the Judgment and making a change that abandoned rights after lack of response after certain time can be held for bid or distributed amongst producers by the WRD.

Rob stated that WRD could document the attempts that have been made or can be made in the next couple of months and provide the information to the Panel to later decide on potential actions.

Treasurer Nguyen requested WRD provide the past due watermaster assessment balances along with documentation of the contact attempts.

Chair Moore entertained a motion to approve and file the Administrative Body Report. The motion was made by Treasurer Nguyen and seconded by Panel Member Mueller.

The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote of 6 ayes, 0 abstentions, and 0 no's (6-0-0).

## **8. ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Attorney Markman reported back on Panel Member Falagan's request to review the election process and suggested that the nomination process be separate from the voting process.

Attorney Markman discovered that the Judgment talks about holding a nomination process. He suggested changing the rules by starting the process with a first notice of election and nomination rules by producer group and allow producers to nominate during the voting process, which is similar to how it is currently done, except there would be a first notice of nomination and when the second notice of nomination and election is mailed, it will have a list of the nominees through that date. He stated that

this process would have to start earlier like February time frame with the addition of a standalone nomination process.

Panel Member Mueller stated concerns of people getting nominated and potentially getting elected who are not interested. He believes it makes more sense to allow pumpers to nominate themselves, so others know who is interested in taking a seat.

Chair Moore suggested, since Vice Chair Falagan was not present, that the Panel bring back the topic at a later meeting, so Vice Chair Falagan could speak to his position and the Panel could discuss further and determine potential action.

#### **9. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Secretary Ramirez reported that she onboarded the two new Panel members, City of Vernon and City of Whittier. She also requested authorization letters from City of Lakewood and City of Downey for a primary and alternate Panel Member contact to assure all info is up to date.

Secretary Ramirez also updated the Panel regarding files and a USB drive that prior Panel Administrator KJ Services dropped off at WRD headquarters due to their office closing.

#### **10. WATER METER TESTING**

Secretary Ramirez presented the meter testing report summaries for April and May 2024. During this period, 30 meters were tested, and 29 meters were determined to be within the acceptable margin of error.

#### **11. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

#### **12. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2024 WATER RIGHTS PANEL MEETING**


Chair Moore would like to add an election item for Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer at the next Panel Meeting. These seats are up for election every two years and the term expired on June 30, 2024.

#### **13. WATER RIGHTS PANEL MEMBER COMMENTS**

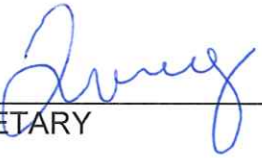
Chair Moore welcomed both new Panel Members. He also thanked the City of Signal Hill and City of Paramount for their service on the Panel.

Panel Member Moreno thanked everyone and mentioned she was excited to serve on the Panel.

Regular Meeting was adjourned at 2:06 pm.

  
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CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

  
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SECRETARY