

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 90723**

1:30 P.M, THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026

Chair Falagan called the meeting of the Central Basin Watermaster Water Rights Panel to order at 1:31 pm.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Falagan led the pledge of allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

Panel Members

Steve Lenton	Bellflower-Somerset Mutual Water Company
Dan Mueller	City of Downey (Absent)
Derek Nguyen	City of Lakewood
Anatole Falagan	City of Long Beach
Joanna Moreno	City of Vernon
Raymond Cordero	City of Whittier
Toby Moore	Golden State Water Company

Also Present

Jackie Ramirez	Water Replenishment District (Secretary)
Esther Rojas	Water Replenishment District
Reza Waloewandja	Water Replenishment District
Jim Markman	RWG Law
Dean Wang	City of Lakewood

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

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

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Nguyen presented the Treasurer's Report.

The Water Replenishment District's summary reports showed the activities from July 1, 2025, to February 18, 2026, payments totaling \$20,739.83 were processed leaving a balance of \$692,704.72.

The CBWRP summary tables showed payments for four types of services: Administrative, Meter Testing, Legal, and Other.

For the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year, January and February payments totaled \$13,642.86, bringing the overall Fiscal Year expenditures to \$21,049.86. The current account balance is \$30,850.14; approximately 86% of the total budget.

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

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

6. ADMINISTRATIVE BODY REPORT

Esther Rojas provided an update on the status of the Administrative Body.

2025 – 2026 Groundwater Pumping

For Administrative Year (AY) 2025-26 through January, Central Basin groundwater pumping was 98,853.47 acre-feet (af) including storage withdrawals, which is 2% more than the same period in the previous AY.

2025 – 2026 Water Rights Activity

For AY 2025-26 as of March 3, there were 25 leases processed transferring 14,952.50 af of rights, of which 19 leases are with flex and 6 leases without flex.

There have been two sales permanently transferring 8.14 af of APA and one transaction permanently transferring 20.00 af of one-year carryover.

2025 – 2026 Storage Activity

For AY 2025-26 a total of 29,415.34 af has been withdrawn from storage.

2025-2026 Watermaster Budget

Esther announced that staff is preparing the AY 2026-27 budget and will mail out notices before April 1st in accordance with the Judgment. She expects there will be a 3% increase in the budget due to increase in cost of living. Staff will bring the budget for consideration to the May Panel meeting to create the consolidated watermaster invoices.

Chair Falagan entertained a motion to receive and file the Administrative Body Report. The motion was made by Panel Member Lenton and seconded by Panel Member Moreno.

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

7. ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Markman reported on Item No. 11 regarding preparation of the Large Pumper Election documents and the election. Summary provided under Item 11.

Chair Falagan in this item noted direction and concurrence from the Panel to proceed with beginning the process of mailing the large pumper election document to hold election at the next Panel meeting.

8. SECRETARY'S REPORT

None.

9. WATER METER TESTING

Secretary Ramirez presented the meter testing summary for November and December 2025. During this period, 35 meters were tested, and 35 meters were determined to be within the acceptable margin of error.

Secretary Ramirez also noted that there is a typo on the summary where it lists month of "August 2025" but should be "November 2025."

Treasurer Nguyen advised reminding the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to adhere to the meter testing schedule, noting that missed tests throughout the calendar year can affect reports.

Secretary Ramirez noted that DWR had staff transitions and was also acting as an emergency response team during the fires in early 2025, which could've thrown off meter testing schedule in the last year. She reminded the Panel that entities can always reach out to DWR and schedule testing as needed; furthermore, she will remind DWR to adhere to the meter testing schedule.

10. FY 26/27 PRELIMINARY BUDGET REVIEW

Chair Falagan recommended establishing an ad-hoc committee to prepare a recommended budget for FY 2026-27 and to determine a recommended Assessment Fee for FY 2026-27. Chair Falagan asked Treasurer Nguyen if he was willing to lead the process like prior years.

Treasurer Nguyen noted that in the prior year he and Vice Chair Mueller and Panel Member Moreno formed a three-person ad hoc committee and stated he reached out to Vice Chair Mueller (not present) and is willing to assist in the Ad Hoc Committee.

Secretary Ramirez will send an email with all the information needed for the ad-hoc committee.

Chair Falagan entertained a motion to create a three-person ad hoc committee, including Treasurer Nguyen, Vice Chair Mueller, and Panel Member Moreno. The motion was made by Treasurer Nguyen and seconded by Panel Member Cordero.

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

11. LARGE PUMPER ELECTION

Attorney Markman recommended mailing the ballots and notices well in advance of the May election and the next Panel meeting. He noted that the absence of a formal nomination process continues to cause confusion and, with the Panel's concurrence, he and staff will work to clarify this process.

Attorney Markman further explained the nomination process, noting that qualified pumpers will receive a notice of election, a ballot, and instructions on how and where to return the ballot. He emphasized the importance of mailing these materials early enough to hold the election in May and have the elected members start in July.

Esther asked whether there is a required minimum number of days before the notices must be sent. Attorney Markman responded that there is not.

Panel Member Moore asked if the notices can be sent by email to help ensure they reach the appropriate recipients, and Esther Rojas confirmed that this can be done. Notices will be sent via mail and email.

Chair Falagan in item no. 7 noted direction and concurrence from the Panel to proceed with beginning the process of mailing the large pumper election document to hold election at the next Panel meeting.

12. WATER METER TESTING CONTRACT

Chair Falagan presented the recommendations for discussion and possible action of continuing with DWR Agreement 33182 Amendment No. 6 or explore the bid process for meter testing services.

Panel Member Moore asked whether the new amendment would maintain the same terms.

Secretary Ramirez stated that the new amendment has not been provided, but DWR has indicated that all terms will remain the same.

Treasurer Nguyen commented that costs have consistently been below budget and recommends continuing services with DWR.

Panel Member Moreno added that DWR has been responsive in accommodating off-schedule meter testing requests.

Chair Falagan stated that having DWR as the auditing function to meter testing brings value as a respected party which validates basin management and the role of the Panel.

Treasurer Nguyen brought up the point that every time the contract is renewed it is increased to an additional \$150,000 and many times the Panel is not expending that much in two years. He recommends staff investigate past year's invoices to determine how much total dollars are being spent before the new amendment is voted on.

Secretary Ramirez stated that she will bring the contract amendment to the next Panel meeting for formal consideration and a vote.

Chair Falagan stated that based on conversations, the direction is to continue with the action of bringing the contract amendment with DWR for consideration and voting at the next meeting.

13. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Esther provided a copy of certified mail that was sent by Midland Park Water Trust to WRD, in which the Central Basin Watermaster Panel was cc'd . The letter included reference to a public records request submitted to WRD on December 4, 2025, which stated that no action was taken within the required 45-day period and that the claim was therefore deemed rejected by operation of law under Government Code 913. Esther noted that WRD has been in communication with Midland Park Water Trust regarding this matter and is responsive to all public records requests.

14. AGENDA ITEMS FOR MAY 14, 2026, WATER RIGHTS PANEL MEETING

Secretary Ramirez suggests including the FY 2026-27 Administrative Body budget and assessment, FY 2026-27 Panel assessment, Large Pumper Election, and the contract amendment with DWR.

15. WATER RIGHTS PANEL MEMBER COMMENTS

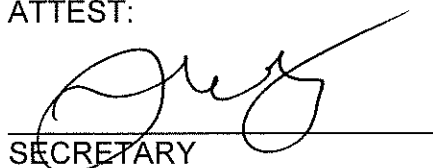
None.

Regular Meeting was adjourned at 1:58 pm.



CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:


SECRETARY