

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

May 15, 2019, 10:30 a.m. to 1:26 p.m.
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
City of Blythe Council Chambers
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 92250

Roll Call (Board members only) and Introductions

Nancy Wright, Buford Crites, Tom Davis, Ed Muzik, Jayne Powell, and Peter Satin were present. The Board Clerk stated that a quorum was present.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Nancy Wright at 9:00 a.m. on April 11, 2019 in Palm Desert, California.

State and Regional Board Staff Present:

Paula Rasmussen, Frank Gonzalez, Abdi Haile, Katharine Buddingh, Kai Dunn, Nadim Shukry-Zeywar, Mary Castaneda, Terry Barnes, Dan Mefford, Brianna St. Pierre, Jose Valle-DeLeon, Francisco Costa, Logan Raub, Jennie Snyder, and Scot Stormo.

Others Present

Arturo Estrada, City of Calexico
Martin Bermudez, City of Calexico
Rachel Johnson, Riverside County Farm Bureau
Ellen Trover, Riverside County Farm Bureau
Cheryl Cloud, Bard Water District
Charles Sanchez, Bard Water District
Steve Almeda, Bard Water District
Mark Stover, Bard Water District
Anthony Duttle, Bard Water District
Steve Bigley, Coachella Valley Water District
Zoe Rodriguez, Coachella Valley Water District
Michael Rethwisch, Palo Verde University of California Cooperative Extension
Victor Lujan, Palo Verde Irrigation District
Kim Shoff, Palo Verde Irrigation District
Shirley Nash, Palo Verde Irrigation District
J.R. Echard, Palo Verde Irrigation District
Brea Mohammed, Imperial County Farm Bureau
Al Kalin, Imperial County Farm Bureau
Joseph Lechuga, PERC Water, ICPW
James Strang, PERC Water, ICPW
Dave Kachelski, PERC Water, ICPW

Public Forum

There were no speakers during the public forum at this meeting.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes
Minutes of April 11, 2019 Board Meeting

Motion: Buford Crites moved, Jayne Powell seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt minutes of April 11, 2019.

Uncontested Items

* *Uncontested Items 2, 3, and 4 were considered and heard together.*

2. R7-2019-0004 – Consideration of adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements (NPDES) for the City of Calexico, Calexico Water Pollution Control Plant, Calexico, Imperial County [*Jose Valle De Leon, WRCE*]

Motion: Jayne Powell moved, Buford Crites seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Order R7-2019-0004 with Errata.

3. R7-2019-0005 – Consideration of adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements (NPDES) for Niland County Sanitation District, Niland Wastewater Treatment Plant, Niland, Imperial County [*Jose Valle De Leon*]

Motion: Jayne Powell moved, Buford Crites seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Order R7-2019-0005 with Errata.

4. R7-2019-0036 – Consideration of adoption of Rescission of Waste Discharge Requirements for Imperial Community College District, Imperial Valley College Wastewater Treatment Plant, Imperial, Imperial County [*Kai Dunn, Sr. WRCE*]

Motion: Jayne Powell moved, Buford Crites seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Order R7-2019-0036.

Contested and Discussion Items

5. R7-2019-0030 – Consideration of adoption of General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Waste from Irrigated Agricultural Lands for Dischargers that Are Members of a Coalition Group in Palo Verde Valley and Palo Verde Mesa, Imperial County [*Francisco Costa, ES*]

Francisco Costa, an Environmental Scientist with the Regional Water Board, gave an overview of the proposed Agricultural General Order for Palo Verde and Mesa and its requirements. He also discussed public comments received and responses to those comments. Scot Stormo, an Engineering Geologist with the Regional Water Board, also presented on areal groundwater conditions.

Speaker Cards: Michael Rethwisch, Public/Palo Verde University of CA Cooperative Extension
Brea Mohammed, Imperial County Farm Bureau
Don Robinson, Palo Verde Irrigation District
Victor Lujan, Palo Verde Coalition

Motion: Buford Crites moved, Tom Davis seconded, and the motion was carried to adopt Order R7-2019-0030 with Errata.

Roll Call Vote: Member Muzik-Yes, Member Powell-No, Member Davis-Yes, Member Satin – Yes, Vice Chair Crites – Yes, Chair Wright-Yes, Approved by vote 5-1.

Workshop

6. Bard Valley Agricultural General Order Workshop [*Logan Raub, ES*]

The Board held a public workshop discussing the draft General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Wastes from Irrigated Agricultural Lands for Dischargers that are Members of a Coalition Group in Bard Valley (Bard Agricultural General Order).

Logan Raub, an Environmental Scientist with the Regional Water Board, gave an overview of the expired Bard Agricultural Conditional Waiver as well as the proposed Bard Agricultural General Order. He provided details about requirements for the coalition and coalition members, and also described the difference between the proposed order and the expired waiver. Stakeholders were given an opportunity to present their comments and concerns during the workshop.

Speaker Cards: Anthony Duttle, Bard Water District
Steve Alameda, Bard Water District
Charles Sanchez, University of Arizona, Environmental Sciences

** No voting or Board action was taken during the workshop*

Informational Items

7. Colorado River Basin Water Board Executive Officer's Report [*Paula Rasmussen*]

Paula Rasmussen reported that the Regional Water Board was now fully staffed with a recent hire of returning staff member Jay Mirpour, Water Resources Control Engineer.

She noted that she and Board Chair Nancy Wright attended a Chair's Meeting in Sacramento which was very interesting and provided valuable information. She and Chair Wright also attended a community forum with the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC). At the meeting, Bruce Wilcox, the Natural Resources Agency's (CNRA) Assistant Secretary of Salton Sea Policy, provided an update on the CNRA's activities at the Salton Sea. Additionally, Ms. Rasmussen shared that Regional Water Board staff participated in an educational forum held at California State University San Bernardino campus. The purpose was to introduce middle school and high school students to environmental issues, and various agencies participated in the forum. Board staff also hosted an information table at this event.

Ms. Rasmussen also mentioned upcoming meetings board staff will be attending:

- May 16, 2019 - CEQA Scoping Meeting on proposed Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) Basin Plan Amendment
- May 21, 2019 - Board Workshop on Bard Irrigated Agricultural Lands General Order
- May 23-24, 2019 - Environmental Justice Roundtable and tour, with Joaquin Esquivel, State Water Board Chair, in attendance
- May 29-30, 2019 - Bi-National Technical Committee Meeting and tour relating to New River border pollution issues, with Laurel Firestone, State Water Board member, in attendance
- Early June 2019 - Stakeholder Meeting with USEPA and IBWC on transboundary pollution (Tijuana and Mexicali, Mexico)
- June 13, 2019 - Laurel Firestone, State Water Board member, will attend the next Board Meeting in Yucca Valley. A tour of Hi-Desert Water District's new wastewater treatment plant is scheduled prior to the Board Meeting.

8. Colorado River Basin Water Board Member Comments

Board member Buford Crites inquired about the possibility of moving the Bard Agricultural General Order agenda item scheduled for the June Meeting to another date or location.

Board member Tom Davis suggested a discussion between Bard Valley Agricultural Dischargers and Regional Water Board staff be held regarding the location and time of the Board Meeting to accommodate stakeholders traveling from the Bard area.

Board member Buford Crites recommended reading an article published the Los Angeles Times titled *Governor Newsom's New Approach to Old Water Problems*.

9. Colorado River Basin Water Board Chair's Report

Chair Nancy Wright mentioned that draft federal bill HR 358 – California New River Restoration Act of 2019 (Vargas), was discussed at the Association of California Water Agencies conference. The draft bill contains a history of the New River and mentions the Colorado River Basin Water Board, and would task the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with creating a new program to assist with projects, plans, and initiatives for the New River.

10. Closed Session

There was no closed session held, and no action was taken.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:26 p.m.