
Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

December 12, 2023, 9:00 am to 11:30 am

In-Person and Zoom Video/Teleconference Meeting

Archived audio and video webcasts of Board meetings are available at the following link:
<https://cal-span.org/static/meetings-RWQCB-COLO.php>

Introductory Matters

1. Introductions, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Meeting was called to order by Chair Muzik at 9:00 am on December 12, 2023.

Ed Muzik, Peter Satin, Nancy Wright, were physically at the start. Vivian Perez was participating in the meeting via Zoom.

The Board Clerk stated that a quorum was present.

Beatriz Gonzalez subsequently arrived at 9:15 am.

State and Regional Water Board Staff Present

Paula Rasmussen, Cassandra Owens, David Lancaster, Mary Castaneda, CJ Jasieniecki, Dan Mefford, Jose Cortez, Emma Mc Corkle, Angela Garcia, Logan Raub, Michael Perez, Zak Owens, Fatima Alrahem, Hajer Dawoody, Jeff Fitzsimmons, Monica Aragon-Guzman, Daniel Echeverria Palencia. Kai Dunn and Laurel Firestone attended via Zoom.

Public Attendance

Jennifer Harkness, USGS
Miranda Fram, USGS
Anoop Sukumaran, CalEnergy
Lillian Garcia, United For Justice, Inc.
Joanne Le, Coachella Valley Water District
Reed McConnell

Remote Public Attendance

Lidia, Sierra, Salton City resident
Victoria Russell, Slab City resident
Ralph Beatty, Laguna Asset Management
Jayne Powell
Marlee Nelson, Court Reporter
Caroline Pradeau Fonseca, Office of Public Participation
Marc Gutierrez, Interpreter
Aldo Renteria, Interpreter

2. Presentation of Resolution Expressing Appreciating to Jayne Powell

(No votes or regulatory actions taken.)

3. Public Forum

Comments were received from the following members of the public:

Lidia Sierra, Salton City resident

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the October 10, 2023 Board meeting.

Motion to approve Item 4: Nancy Wright moved, Peter Satin seconded, a roll call vote was taken.

Roll Call Vote: Ed Muzik – Aye, Peter Satin – Aye, Beatriz Gonzalez – Aye, Vivian Perez – Aye, Nancy Wright – Aye

Motion carried.

5. Update from the State Water Resources Control Board Liaison, Laurel Firestone

The State Water Board Liaison, Laurel Firestone, presented an update on State Board actions, strategies for statewide and regional activities, and responded to Board member questions.

Uncontested Calendar of Items for Adoption (Items 6 and 9)

The Chair called for a motion to summarily adopt the entire uncontested calendar (agenda items 6-9):

6. Waste Discharge Requirements Order R7-2023-0046 and Monitoring Reporting Program Date Gardens Asset Partners, L.P., Mobile Home Park

Wastewater Treatment Plant, Imperial County (NPDES Permit No. CA0104841)

- 7. Waste Discharge Requirements R7-2023-0048 and Monitoring and Reporting Program for CalEnergy Operating Corp. And Magma Power Co., J.M. Leathers Geothermal Power Plant, Class II Surface Impoundment (Brine Pond), Imperial County**
- 8. Rescission and Substitution Order R7-2023-0047 (substitution of parties under existing orders and/or rescissions of existing orders)**
- 9. Waste Discharge Requirements Order R7-2023-0049 and Monitoring and Reporting Program for Enrollees under Irrigated Lands General Order, Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, Multiple Counties**

Motion to approve Items 6-9: Peter Satin moved, Beatriz Gonzalez seconded, a roll call vote was taken.

Roll Call Vote: Ed Muzik – Aye, Peter Satin – Aye, Beatriz Gonzalez – Aye, Vivian Perez – Aye, Nancy Wright – Aye

Motion carried unanimously to adopt items 6 – 9.

Contested and Discussion Calendar of Items for Adoption (Item 10)

- 10. Resolution R7-2023-0050 for the Triennial Review of Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin Region, Multiple Counties**

Staff Contact: Hajer Dawoody, Engineering Geologist

Speakers: Lillian Garcia, United For Justice, Inc.
Victoria Russell, Slab City resident

Staff presented the final 2023 Triennial Review Resolution to the Board and the public, and was provided in bilingual format, and via oral translation. Staff detailed changes made to the staff report after input obtained from public comments and Board members at the October 10 workshop. Board members commented on public engagement at the Salton Sea and the lack of staff resources available. A brief discussion was held, and staff recommended the Resolution for adoption.

Motion to approve Item 10: Nancy Wright moved, Peter Satin seconded, a roll call vote was taken.

Roll Call Vote: Ed Muzik – Aye, Peter Satin – Aye, Beatriz Gonzalez – Aye, Vivian Perez – Aye, Nancy Wright – Aye

Motion carried unanimously to adopt item 10.

Information Items (Items 11-17)

No action was taken on these items.

11. Coachella Valley Geological Survey Data Update

A presentation was provided by Jennifer Harkness, USGS on Salinity trends and sources in a groundwater system supplemented by 50 years of imported Colorado River water. She discussed the increases and changes in the groundwater subbasin of the Coachella Valley basin, and how salinity is increasing. She stated that currently, two-thirds of the resource exceeds the natural background level, with changes due to increased use of Colorado River water for aquifer replenishment. Managed aquifer recharge in the Coachella Valley with use of Colorado River water is the primary source of increasing salinity concentrations in the Indio subbasin.

12. Annual Performance Updates, Regional Board Management Staff

Regional Board staff provided an update on the status of program activities, metrics, and demonstrate how the programs are integrating the objectives of the strategic plan. The programs which were discussed are NPDES, Water Quality Standards, Land Disposal, Cleanup and Enforcement. This update is anticipated to be provided twice annually.

Board member Wright requested project fact sheets and work notices be provided to the Board on a regular basis.

Vice-Chair Satin requested information on the impacts of floods to water quality infrastructure or permits issued.

13. Legal Updates, David Lancaster, Legal Counsel

There were no legal updates provided.

14. Report from Executive Officer, Paula Rasmussen

The Executive Officer, Paula Rasmussen, presented an update on activities and plans for the region. She welcomed and introduced new staff Monica Aragon-Guzman, Engineering Geologist and Daniel Echeverria Palencia, Scientific Aide.

15. Comments from Board Members

Board member Wright stated that she attended the Safe and Affordable Funding and Equity and Resilience (SAFER) event. Board member Gonzalez also attended the event.

16. Report from Board Chair, Ed Muzik

Chair Muzik reported that he attended the Chair's meeting in November, comments included that the WQCC meeting held in October provided great updates from all the Regional Boards. He stated that he feels fortunate to be part of the Board at Region 7, which has excellent staff, Executive Officer, and Assistant Executive Officer. He thanked the staff for a job well done.

17. Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair 2024

This item was moved to a future meeting.

Closed Session (Item 18)

There was no closed session held.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 am