

May 26, 2021  
Regular Meeting  
5:00 p.m.

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*On March 18, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20, which enhances State and Local Governments' ability to respond to COVID-19 Pandemic; this meeting was conducted with some members participating via conference phone. Because of this, all voting was done by roll call vote.*

The Board of Directors of the San Benito County Water District convened in regular session on Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. at the San Benito County Water District office at 30 Mansfield Road, Hollister, California. Members present were: President Doug Williams, and Directors Sonny Flores, Andrew Shelton and John Tobias. Vice President Joe Tonascia attempted to participate via Zoom but due to technical difficulties, was unable to participate. Also present were District Manager/Engineer Jeff Cattaneo, District Counsel Jeremy T. Liem, Assistant Manager Sara Singleton, Deputy District Engineer Garrett Haertel, Water Conservation Program Manager Shawn Novack and Board Clerk/Office Specialist III Barbara Mauro. Participating remotely were: Finance Manager Natalie Sullivan and Operations and Maintenance Supervisor Michael Craig.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

President Williams called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

- a. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**  
President Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- b. **Roll Call**  
Mrs. Mauro called roll. President Williams and Directors Flores, Shelton and Tobias were present at the District; Vice President Tonascia was absent.
- c. **Speakers will be limited to 5 minutes to address the Board; rebuttal will be limited to 3 minutes; no new business agenda items will be heard after 8:00 p.m.**
- d. **Approval of Agenda**  
With a motion by Director Tobias and a second by Director Flores, the Agenda was approved by 4 affirmative votes, Williams, Flores, Shelton and Tobias and 1 absence, Tonascia.
- e. **Public Input: Members of the Public are Invited to Speak on any Matter not on the Agenda**  
There were no public comments.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

1. **Approval of Minutes for: April 28, 2021 Regular Meeting**
2. **Allowance of Claims**
3. **Acknowledgement of Paid Claims prior to the May Board Meeting**

With a motion by Director Flores and a second by Director Shelton, the Consent Agenda was approved by 4 affirmative votes, Williams, Flores, Shelton and Tobias and 1 absence, Tonascia.

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

**4. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan Update**

**a. Proof of Publication**

Mrs. Mauro verified the proof of publication.

**b. Presentation of 2020 Urban Water Management Plan Update**

Mr. Novack gave a brief overview of the Urban Water Management Plan and then introduced Maureen Reilly and Arden Wells of Todd Groundwater, who gave a presentation on the plan

Ms. Reilly stated this was a collaborative effort between the three agencies, San Benito County Water District, the City of Hollister and Sunnyslope County Water District. She reviewed the agenda of the presentation, the water code requirements of the State of California Department of Water Resources and the importance of having this plan in place for grant and loan purposes. She further reviewed the study area, the water demand and the water supply sources.

Ms. Wells reviewed the changes in the Water Shortage Contingency Plan from the 2015 report. Also new is the annual water supply/demand assessment, which will be done in conjunction with the annual report for the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Ms. Wells stated the keys in the contingency plan are the blending of groundwater with CVP to meet water quality goals; maximize the use of CVP water supply; prioritize health and safety over irrigation and continue conservation programs during drought times.

Ms. Reilly stated this is the first of the 3 public hearings that are required by the State. The City of Hollister will hold theirs on June 7<sup>th</sup> and the Sunnyslope County Water District will hold theirs on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Following the hearings, the next step will be the adoption and submittal to the State of California Department of Water Resources (DWR).

**c. Questions of Directors**

There were no questions from the Directors.

**d. Open Public Hearing**

President Williams opened the Public Hearing.

**e. Close Public Hearing or continue to later date**

With no questions or comments from the public, President Williams closed the Public Hearing.

**f. Consider Resolution Approving of the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan Update**

With a motion by Director Tobias and a second by Director Shelton, the Board of Directors approved Resolution #2021-11 *A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the San Benito County Water District Approving of the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan Update* by 4 affirmative votes, Williams, Flores, Shelton and Tobias and 1 absence, Tonascia.

5. **Discuss and Consider Approving Purchase of 3 vehicles and Authorize the District Manager to sign all necessary documents (NTE \$135,000 total)**

Mr. Cattaneo reviewed the condition of several of the District's vehicles and what staff proposed to replace them with. Also, one of the trucks can be kept as a back-up in case it is needed. Mrs. Singleton added the lead time is long with the vendor, so the cost of the new vehicles will be in the 2021-2022 budget.

With no questions from the Board, a motion was made by Director Shelton and seconded by Director Flores; the Board of Directors approved the purchase of 3 vehicles and authorized the District Manager to sign all necessary documents (NTE \$135,000) by 4 affirmative votes, Williams, Flores, Shelton and Tobias and 1 absence, Tonascia.

6. **Confirmation of President's creation of a standing committee, to wit, the Groundwater Sustainability Agency Committee, and appointing Director Flores and Director Williams to said committee**

Mr. Cattaneo reviewed the reasoning behind why this committee is needed. One action would be the appeal process for the groundwater management fees, which could be reviewed by the committee prior to coming before the Board. Discussion ensued about reactivating the Governance Committee. Mr. Cattaneo stated he foresees keeping the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) active. He further added the Hollister Urban Area Water and Wastewater Master Plan will be having an update, so reforming the Governance Committee will certainly be needed.

With a motion by Director Shelton and a second by Director Flores, the Board of Directors confirmed the President's creation of a standing committee, to wit, the Groundwater Sustainability Agency Committee and the appointment of Director Flores and Director Williams to said committee, by 4 affirmative votes, Williams, Flores, Shelton and Tobias and 1 absence, Tonascia.

7. **North San Benito County Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA)**

• **Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Update**

Mr. Cattaneo reported our consultant is close to having an administrative draft of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The TAC will receive the draft GSP in June and the Board will receive it in either late June or early July. The next steps, per Mr. Cattaneo, would be the release for public review and then the Board to consider approval of the final report in October.

Director Tobias asked why the name is different on the GSP. Mr. Cattaneo stated it is because there are combined basins, so it was called the North San Benito County GSA, to include these basins.

Mrs. Singleton added the District will be notifying all of the interested parties as well as having another public workshop. There will also be a special meeting for the Board to consider Groundwater Management Fees.

8. **Status on Water Year 2021-2022 Water Supply**

Mr. Cattaneo reported the water supply is more difficult now, as the DWR and the USBR's predictions were off. Mrs. Singleton reported that from April 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup> is when the snow melts and is stored into reservoirs; this year the amount of snowmelt that

made it to the reservoirs was significantly reduced. It is estimated 800,000 AF were lost and did not get into the system.

Mr. Cattaneo added if the releases from reservoirs continued, in August the reservoirs will likely be out of water and the Delta would have severe salinity issues.

Mr. Cattaneo reviewed the changes for the Board:

AG allocation—was 5% is now 0%

M & I allocation—was 50% of historical use is now 25% of historical use

On Tuesday, Mr. Cattaneo met with the City Manager from the City of Hollister (COH) and General Manager from Sunnyslope County Water District (SSCWD) and explained the current water situation. Also, the District staff mailed out letters to M & I customers, stating the contract customers were being reduced to 25% of historical use and the small parcel customers were being reduced from .5 AF to .25 AF. The result of the meeting with COH and SSCWD was to go to a Stage 1 in the Drought Contingency Plan, which equates to a 10% voluntary reduction. Also, for the 2 treatment plants, we will switch from a 60/40 (surface/groundwater) blend to a 40/60 (surface/groundwater) blend.

**9. Committee/Agency Representative Reports:**

**a) San Luis Delta Mendota Water Authority (Tonascia/Cattaneo)**

As per Mr. Cattaneo, he will cover this under his manager's report.

**b) Association of California Water Agencies—Joint Powers Insurance Authority Board of Directors Meeting, May 10, 2021 (Shelton)**

Director Shelton found the virtual meeting very informative. Health benefits are holding flat, medical rates are near a 3. Workers compensation may see a 10% rate reduction and liability remain stagnant. Discussion was had about the effect of COVID-19. The COVID hit to the pool was approximately \$3 million. Tele-visits increased from 5500 to more than 18,500. Regarding property benefits, the 6 biggest burns on record were in California in 2020 and they anticipate property rates going up by 10% for JPIA in California.

**10. Monthly Operations and Maintenance Report**

Mr. Craig showed photos of some of the valves the maintenance staff have been working on. The challenge is replacing nuts and bolts while water continues to flow through the valve. 1 16-inch valve takes about 2-2.5 days to fully replace the nuts and bolts. Mr. Craig stated while this work, prior to the painting scheduled for later, is time consuming it is necessary preventative maintenance. Mr. Craig stated staff intends to have 4 structures completed prior to the shutdown later this year.

**11. District Manager/Engineer's Report:**

**a) Reach 1 Operations**

Mr. Cattaneo reported a meeting with Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) regarding the pump project is scheduled in June.

**b) Zone 3 Operations**

Mr. Cattaneo reported all the water has been released from Hernandez Reservoir, which was about 5000 AF.

- c) **Zone 6 Operations**  
Mr. Cattaneo reported the difficulties the District staff is facing with the reductions. He further reported the change to the operations will be to hold San Justo Reservoir at 493 feet and taking all the water we can through Bifurcation.
- d) **San Luis Delta Mendota Authority Activities**  
Mr. Cattaneo reported there may be a situation in the Delta with Friant. The Bureau is unable to make deliveries to the Exchange Contractors or the Refuges, so Friant will have to release water. Friant is attempting to have the USBR take the rescheduled water away from agencies such as our District. Mr. Cattaneo stated they have attempted this in the past.
- e) **Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project**  
Mr. Cattaneo reported SCVWD's Board have reviewed the project, including the cost which has risen to \$2.6 billion, and their board gave staff direction to continue. Considering the drought situation, Mr. Cattaneo senses there is more of an urgency now.
- f) **City of San Juan Bautista Water Supply Plan**  
Mr. Cattaneo reported this project is moving forward. HDR is working on a feasibility study. There are 2 properties this project would need to cross, and these property owners are asking for access to the treated water. Mr. Cattaneo stated this is unlikely, as it would create another water system.

12. **CLOSED SESSION: Conference with legal counsel—  
Existing litigation**

- a) **Government Code 54956.9(a)  
San Benito County Water District v. Randy McAlpine  
(CL-13-00437)**
- b) **Government Code 54956.9(a)  
Randy McAlpine v. San Benito County Water District  
(CU-17-00050)**

13. **CLOSED SESSION: Conference with Labor Negotiator  
Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6  
Agency Designated Representative: Jeff Cattaneo, District Manager  
Employee Organization: SEIU 521 Office and Field Employees Unit**

14. **CLOSED SESSION: Conference with Labor Negotiator  
Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6  
Agency Designated Representative: Jeff, Cattaneo, District Manager  
Unrepresented Employees: Management/Confidential/Professional Employees:  
Accountant, Assistant Engineer, Associate Engineer, Deputy District Engineer,  
Finance Manager, Human Resources/Administrative Assistant, Operations and  
Maintenance Manager, Senior Engineer, Supervising Accountant, Water  
Conservation Program Manager**

*(The Board convened in Closed Session at 6:10 p.m.)*

15. **OPEN SESSION:**

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*(The Board reconvened in Open Session at 6:37 p.m.)*

**Report any action from Closed Session**

President Williams reported the following, from Closed Session:

12 (a) No Action.

12(b) No Action.

13. No Action.

14. 1% increase effective 7-12-21 and no furloughs.

16. **Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

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*Approved at the June 30, 2021 Board Meeting and signed  
by the presiding Board member.*

*/s/ Doug Williams*

Doug Williams, President

*/s/ Barbara L. Mauro*

Barbara L. Mauro, Board Clerk