

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

APRIL 8, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Indian Wells Valley Water District was called to order by Vice President Saint-Amand at 4:30 p.m. in the Board of Directors Hearing Room, 500 West Ridgecrest Boulevard, Ridgecrest, California. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by George Croll. **PLEDGE**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Vice President David C.H. Saint-Amand
Director Mallory J. Boyd
Director Charles D. Griffin
Director Stan G. Rajtora **ROLL CALL**

DIRECTORS ABSENT: President Ronald R. Kicinski

STAFF PRESENT: George Croll, General Manager
Jim Worth, Attorney
Jason Lillion, Operations Manager
Renée Morquecho, Chief Engineer
Tyrell Staheli, Chief Financial Officer
Lauren Smith, Recording Secretary

AGENDA DECLARATION **AGENDA DECLARATION**
Recording Secretary, Lauren Smith, reported that the agenda for today's Regular Board Meeting was posted on Thursday, April 4, 2024.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
Director Saint-Amand stated his opinions shared during this meeting are his own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of his employer, nor the Board.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
None.

With no further Board or Public comments, Vice President Saint-Amand recessed the meeting and adjourned to Closed Session at 4:32 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION **CLOSED SESSION**
The meeting was reconvened in Closed Session at 4:35 p.m.

Closed Session was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened to Open Session at 6:09 p.m.

No action was taken that requires disclosure under the Brown Act.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

None.

**PUBLIC
COMMENTS**

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: was made by Vice President Saint-Amand and seconded by Director Rajtora approving the Minutes of the March 11, 2024, Regular Board Meeting, and Payment of Accounts Payable totaling \$1,012,189.97. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: Kicinski.)

**CONSENT
CALENDAR**

ADMINISTRATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Board reviewed the draft sick leave policy changes. The changes made to the policy will comply with the 2024 California sick leave law updates. Draft Policy included in the Board packet.

**ADMIN/EXEC
CM:
SICK POLICY**

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk.

MOTION: was made by Director Boyd and seconded by Director Griffin approving the sick leave policy as presented. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: Kicinski.)

SALARY SURVEY

The Board reviewed the Salary Survey as presented by staff.

SALARY SURVEY

Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk.

MOTION: made by Director Boyd and seconded by Director Griffin to approve the presented Salary Survey. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: Kicinski.)

INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (IWVGA)

The Board discussed items on the March 29th agenda, including:

- Water Year 2023 Annual Report
- Shallow Well Mitigation Funding Request for two wells
- Change in Scope of Work and Budget for contract with Provost and Pritchard Consulting Group for CEQA/NEPA documents for the Imported Water Pipeline

IWVGA

The Board heard public comment from Judie Decker.

COMPREHENSIVE ADJUDICATION

Vice President Saint-Amand commented on recent newspaper articles that have maliciously maligned the Water District's reputation and reported falsehoods and opinions as facts.

**COMPREHENSIVE
ADJUDICATION**

Jim Worth provided a recap of the Hearing from March 22, 2024. The purpose of the Hearing was to address any outstanding issues and try to get a Phase 1 Trial set on two matters, the Federal Reserve Right and the amount of groundwater in storage. The Federal Reserve Right Hearing was scheduled for April 2025.

Mr. Worth clarified the article which falsely commented that the District was anti-Navy and was trying to curtail the Navy's pumping.

Mr. Worth clarified the reasons for the Comprehensive Adjudication and the requirement to serve notices to the public.

The IWVGA's preliminary junction against Mojave Pistachios is set to be heard on June 14th.

The Board heard public comment from Judie Decker, Mike Neel, and Renee Westa-Lusk.

GENERAL MANAGER AND STAFF UPDATE

**GENERAL
MANAGER AND
STAFF UPDATE**

George Croll reported the monthly water data for March. Water produced: 107,432,000 gallons, water consumed: 83,174,000 gallons (11% commercial, 4% other, 85% residential), and estimated loss 5,646,420 gallons (which is water lost to meter inaccuracy, flushing, and theft, etc.)

Mr. Croll reported on conservation efforts: Comparing January 2024 to 2013, there has been a 30% reduction in water production, and comparing 2020 to 2023, there was a 16% reduction.

Staff will have a booth at the Maturango Museum's Conservation in The IWV event on Saturday, April 13th. Mr. Croll attended the Republican Club meeting on Friday, March 15th and provided a brief overview.

**PUBLIC
OUTREACH**

Mr. Croll provided an update on the AB 1668 and SB 606 California Conservation as a Way of Life. It is proposed to be adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and in effect January 2025.

**STATE REG.
UPDATES**

The following updates were given on items assigned at the January 12, 2024, Special Board Workshop:

**BOARD
WORKSHOP
UPDATES**

➤ **Updated Costs and plans for Wastewater Project**

Follow up to be had with CEC and presented to the Board accordingly

➤ **Follow up with LADWP on capturing water overflow**

Mr. Croll to engage with LADWP on potential releases in the coming year.

➤ **Project Priority List based on FY 24 Funding**

Staff is working on the list, including costs, and will present to the Board at a future Board meeting

Complete, signed contract documents were received by the District. Nicholas Construction expects to mobilize by the end of June/early July. Staff plans to have the pre-construction meeting in Mid-June. Bond proceeds closed last month. The funds are now in the trust account. The District also executed the contract with the State for the \$3M that was earmarked in the last State budget.

**NW TRANSM.
PIPELINE**

Staff will be working on submitting documents to SWRCB to proceed with an expedited funding option available. Renee Morquecho will be providing an update regarding the Dune 3 and Hometown Water Consolidations at the IWVGA meeting on Wednesday.

**CONSOLIDATION
PROJECTS**

The estimated year-to-date revenues as of March 31, 2024, are \$11,115,407 and expenses are \$12,448,638. Expenditures exceeded revenues by \$1,333,231, which is over budget by \$236,127. To date, the District has paid \$13,775,255 in GA Fees to the Groundwater Authority.

**FINANCIAL
STATUS**

Mr. Staheli reported on the following conservation items:
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Water Waster Report - there have been four water waste reports received with four contacts made. There has been one formal Second Notice and one penalty issued.

CONSERVATION

Plants are off for the season. The 50% invoices were paid to order the media from Pureflow and Filtronics. Pureflow is scheduled for media delivery May 1st. We are still waiting for Filtronics to provide a date of delivery.

ARSENIC
TREATMENT

Mr. Lillion reported for the month of March, six services were repaired and 33 were replaced. The NO-DES truck made two runs in March. Since inception, the NO-DES truck has filtered 9,263,099 gallons. 35 valves were exercised.

OPERATIONS

BOARD COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

**BOARD
COMMENTS**

Vice President Saint-Amand thanked the public for their participation and staff for their professionalism and hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lauren Smith

Recording Secretary

APPROVED: May 13, 2024