

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

DECEMBER 9, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Indian Wells Valley Water District was called to order by President Kicinski 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 Jim Worth. **PLEDGE**

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

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: George Croll, General Manager
Jim Worth, Attorney
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, December 5, 2024.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
Director Griffin will abstain from voting on agenda item no. 9.B.1.: Dedication of Facilities for Townplace Suites by Marriot.

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

With no further Board or Public comments, President Kicinski 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 4:34 p.m.

Closed Session was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened to Open Session at 6:00 p.m.

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

President Kicinski announced the Public Hearing regarding the Rate Increase has been rescheduled for the February 10, 2025, Regular Board meeting due to a misprint on the original notice distributed.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

CONSENT CALENDAR

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MOTION: was made by Vice President Saint-Amand and seconded by Director Boyd approving the Minutes of the November 12, 2024, Special Board meeting, and Payment of Accounts Payable totaling \$1,098,170.44. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Kicinski, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: None.)

PLANT & EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

P&E: DEDICATION OF FACILITIES

The Board reviewed dedication paperwork for water facilities installed to serve the Townplace Suites by Marriott at the corner of Ward Ave and Chelsea Street. The developer and contractor are Klassen Corporation. This dedication came before the Committee and Board last year but the construction cost(s) needed to be updated. The value of the constructed water facilities is \$69,230.00.

MOTION: was made by Vice President Saint-Amand and seconded by Director Boyd accepting the Dedication of Facilities for Townplace Suites by Marriot, valued at \$69,230.00. Motion was carried, by the following roll call vote:

President Kicinski:	Aye
Vice President Saint-Amand:	Aye
Director Boyd:	Aye
Director Griffin:	Abstain
Director Rajtora:	Aye

INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (IWVGA)

IWVGA

The Board discussed items on the agenda for the upcoming December 11th meeting.

The meeting will begin with Closed Session at 10:00 a.m., followed by Open Session at 10:45 a.m., with a second Closed Session at the end of the meeting.

Director Griffin will ask IWVGA staff when the updated Groundwater Sustainability Plan and Annual Report will be available for a periodic review by the Board.

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

George Croll commented that District staff has opened the discussion with IWVGA staff inquiring if they are willing to change their pipeline design. No response has been received yet.

INJECTION WELLS DISCUSSION

COMPREHENSIVE ADJUDICATION

**COMPREHENSIVE
ADJUDICATION**

The Court granted the motion for Searles Valley Minerals for a Safe Yield Trial, which is set for March 30, 2026. The IWVGA filed a petition with the Appellate Court for writ of mandate, asking for the trial court's decision to be overturned and authority for determination of safe yield, independent of the GSP. The Court denied the IWVGA's petition for writ of mandate. The IWVGA then filed a petition with the Supreme Court to hear it, or at least direct the Appellate Court to. Staff hopes for a decision by the Supreme Court within 60-days.

Phase 1 trial is to quantify the federal reserve water rights and is scheduled for April 28, 2025. Discovery is ongoing.

The Board heard public comment from Judie Decker and Mike Neel.

President Kicinski opened nominations for Board President and Vice-President. He nominated Vice President Saint-Amand for President for the 2025 calendar year. President Kicinski nominated Director Griffin for Vice President.

**ELECTION OF
OFFICERS
PRESIDENT AND
VICE
PRESIDENT**

With no other nominations for President and Vice President, the nomination for both positions were closed.

MOTION: was made by President Kicinski and seconded by Director Boyd, appointing Vice President Saint-Amand as Board President, and Director Griffin as Vice President for the 2025 calendar year. Motion was carried, unanimously by the following roll call vote:

President Kicinski:	Aye
Vice President Saint-Amand:	Aye
Director Boyd:	Aye
Director Griffin:	Aye
Director Rajtora:	Aye

2025 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

**2025
COMMITTEE
ASSIGNMENTS**

Incoming President Saint-Amand asked the Directors to notify George Croll, Lauren Smith, and himself of their Committee preferences by December 23, 2024.

JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT REPRESENTATIVE

JPA REPS

President Kicinski opened nominations for primary and alternate representatives for the Joint Powers Agreement related to the Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority (IWVGA). The Board unanimously agreed to remove the "two-year term" requirement for the representatives on the IWVGA Board.

MOTION: was made by Director Griffin and seconded by Director Boyd, for the current primary representative, Director Griffin, and alternate representative, Director Boyd, to continue as representatives until voted otherwise. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Boyd, Griffin, Kicinski, Rajtora, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: None.)

GENERAL MANAGER AND STAFF UPDATE

**GENERAL
MANAGER AND
STAFF UPDATE**

Mr. Croll reported on the District's previous and upcoming outreach efforts. He also mentioned the annual Economic Outlook Conference will not be discussing the topic of water at the 2025 event. Mr. Croll updated the Board on water consumption/production for the month of November.

Mr. Croll gave special recognition to an employee who will be retiring at the end of the month, Joe Rivera, who has served at the District for more than 35 years.

Mr. Croll summarized the topics of discussion on the Committee agendas, including GA Imported Water Costs, Groundwater Model Cost Breakdown, Recycled Water Feasibility Study, and Recycled Water Project. (Committee Reports included in Board packet.)

COMMITTEE
MEETING
UPDATES

The contractor is working on punch list items at this time and should have a plan to remove the old water pipe off the right-of-way next week. Due to the delay in removal of the old pipe, the contractor has submitted a request for a time extension which Staff is reviewing at this time. Caltrans held a meeting last week with the contractor and staff to discuss final items in order to close out the permit.

NW TRANSM.
PIPELINE

The District has signed agreements with the State for both the Hometown Water and Dune 3 grants. State legal will soon approve the language for the agreement between the District and each water system. District legal counsel sent draft of a right-of-entry agreement that can be used for the both projects. Krieger & Stewart continues working on design of Phase 2 for the Rademacher Way project. Easement paperwork to be sent to property owners. First invoice to Stetson and the IWVGA for reimbursement.

CONSOLIDATION
PROJECTS

Renee Morquecho provided the Board with an overview on the Annual Conservation as A Way of Life Report spreadsheet. The Annual report is due by January 1, 2025 and covers the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

CONSERVATION
AS A WAY OF
LIFE REPORT

The estimated year-to-date revenues as of November 30, 2024, are \$7,459,702 and expenses are \$8,260,372. Expenditures exceeded revenues by \$800,670, which is better than budget by \$463,669. To date, the District has paid \$16,506,984 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 15 water waste reports received with 15 contacts made. There has been two formal Second Notice and one penalty issued.

CONSERVATION

Both Plants are winterized. Plant 2 will have media addressed this offseason.

ARSENIC
TREATMENT

For the month of November, 15 services were repaired and 17 were replaced. The NO-DES truck made one run in November. Since inception, the NO-DES truck has filtered 9,445,891 gallons. 34 valves were exercised. GIS system continues Water Supply Testing.

OPERATIONS

BOARD COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

**BOARD
COMMENTS**

The Board collectively wished staff and the public Happy Holidays.

Director Boyd commented on another Water District that utilized percolation wells to inject water into their basin, and suggested the same method for the District.

Director Griffin recognized upcoming retiree, Joe Rivera, for all his hard work.

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

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lauren Smith', is written over the typed name. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Lauren Smith

Recording Secretary

APPROVED: January 13, 2025