

SAN GORGONIO PASS WATER AGENCY
1210 Beaumont Avenue, Beaumont, California 92223

Official Minutes
Board of Directors Regular Meeting
May 5, 2025

THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN PERSON,
WITH PUBLIC AVAILABILITY PROVIDED VIA ZOOM.

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Invocation

The San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors meeting was called to order by Board President Mickey Valdivia at 1:30 p.m., Monday, May 5, 2025, at the office of the Agency. President Valdivia provided the invocation, and Treasurer Ybarra led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

President Valdivia requested a roll call.

Board Present:

Mickey Valdivia, President
Chander Letulle, Vice-President
Robert Ybarra, Treasurer
Kevin Walton, Secretary
Blair M Ball, Director
Sarah Wargo, Director
Larry Smith, Director

Staff Present:

Lance Eckhart, General Manager
Thomas Todd, Jr., Chief Financial Officer
Maricela Cabral, Exec. Asst. /Clerk of the Board
Emmett Campbell, Sr. Water Resources Planner
Matt Howard, Operations Manager

Consultant Present:

Holland Stewart, Legal Counsel

A quorum was present.

3. Adoption and Adjustment of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as published.

4. Public Comment

Ron Miller, a resident of Sun Lakes Country Club and former Chief Probation Officer for Riverside County, addressed the Board to express appreciation for the work done by water agency board members and his interest in learning more about local water governance.

5. Consent Calendar

- A. Approve Minutes of the April 21, 2025, Regular Meeting of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors
- B. Approve Finance and Budget Committee Meeting Report for March 2025

Dr. Ball requested Item 5.B be pulled for discussion.

On a motion by Treasurer Ybarra, seconded by Director Smith, the board approved Item 5.A on the Consent Calendar.

Approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Wargo, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

Motion passed 7-0.

Item pulled for Discussion

- B. Approve Finance and Budget Committee Meeting Report for March 2025

Director Ball inquired about the use of grant funds by South Mesa Water Company and the process of reimbursements. CFO Todd explained the agency's approach to tracking repayments and the rationale behind allowing South Mesa to retain grant reimbursements for continued construction. President Valdivia and other directors affirmed support for the transparent approach discussed by the Finance Committee.

On a motion by Treasurer Ybarra, seconded by Vice President Letulle, the board approved Item 5.B, Finance and Budget Committee Meeting Report for March 2025.

Approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Wargo, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

Motion passed 7-0.

6. Reports

A. General Manager's Report

General Manager, Lance Eckhart reported on the following:

1. Final draft of the Water Portfolio Strategic Program Report has been posted to the agency website.
2. Cabazon Heli-Hydrant sites (North and South) are nearing completion, with a ribbon cutting scheduled for June 12.
3. State Water Project allocation increased to 50%.
4. Recycled Water Utilization Meeting with Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District/City of Beaumont on April 30, 2025.
5. Recap and distribution of summary packet of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Act.
6. Update on Ventura Agreement.

B. Legal Counsel's Report

Counsel Stewart had no report.

7. Informational Presentations and Updates:

A. State Water Project Fundamentals – Cubic Feet and Cubic Feet Per Second

Sr. Water Resources Planner Campbell presented a demonstration on the concepts of cubic feet and cubic feet per second using props and visual aids.

B. Weather Modification Pilot Program Update

General Manager Eckhart and Operations Manager Howard provided historical background and current findings on the cloud seeding pilot program. Results from the first year indicate seeding occurred during 13 storms. Measurements confirmed the presence of silver iodide in the snowpack, and preliminary models suggest potential for increased precipitation. Year two operations have been paused due to recent wildfire burn scars and flood control district input.

8. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action:

A. Authorize the General Manager to Execute a Professional Services Agreement with Provost and Pritchard Consulting Group, including their subconsultant INTERA, for Basin Underflow Studies, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$99,995

Following a detailed presentation and extended discussion by Operations Manager Howard, General Manager Eckhart, and several directors, the Board discussed the importance of coordinated basin modeling, access to shared data, transparency, and the potential future influence of SGMA on adjudicated basins. The conversation emphasized how collaborative science and interagency cooperation can help avoid conflict and litigation, particularly as stakeholders respond to state scrutiny and evolving water demands.

On a motion by President Valdivia, seconded by Vice President Letulle, the board approved the General Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with Provost and Pritchard Consulting Group, including their subconsultant INTERA, for Basin Underflow Studies, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$99,995.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Wargo, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

Motion passed 7-0.

B. Approve the Heli-Hydrant Installation and Maintenance Agreement with High Valleys Water District (HVWD), and Authorize the General Manager to Effectuate Non-Substantive Changes as Needed

Sr. Water Resources Planner Campbell presented the Heli-Hydrant Installation and Maintenance Agreement with High Valleys Water District

which allocates \$600,000 for two-heli-hydrants in Twin Pines and Poppet Flats under High Valley Water District.

On a motion by Director Wargo, seconded by President Valdivia, the board approved the Heli-Hydrant Installation and Maintenance Agreement with High Valleys Water District, and authorized the General Manager to Effectuate Non-Substantive Changes as needed.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Wargo, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

Motion passed 7-0.

C. Authorize the General Manager to Execute the 4th Street Paving Agreement with the City of Calimesa

Sr. Water Resources Planner Campbell provided background on the 4th Street Paving Agreement which aligns paving efforts between the Agency and City to avoid duplicative work and ensure coordination on the County Line Road project.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Secretary Walton, the board authorized the General Manager to execute the 4th Street Paving Agreement with the City of Calimesa.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Wargo, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

Motion passed 7-0.

9. Reports - Directors and Committee Report

The following meetings were reported on:

- April 8, 2025, Water Conservation and Education Committee Meeting (Valdivia)
- April 9, 2025, Westside Tour (Valdivia)
- April 11, 2025, Meeting with Supervisor Yxstian Gutierrez on Morongo and Pass Agency potential infrastructure development (Valdivia)
- April 14, 2025, Capital Improvement Committee Meeting (Valdivia)
- April 21 – 24, 2025, CSDA Special District Leadership Academy Conference (Valdivia)
- April 22 – 25, 2025, Water Education Foundation Central Valley Tour (Smith & Ybarra)
- April 22, 2025, Banning City Council Meeting (Wargo)
- April 23, 2025, Board Handbook Committee Meeting (Walton)
- April 24, 2025, Finance and Budget Committee Meeting (Walton)
- April 28, 2025, GM Evaluation Committee Meeting (Smith, Valdivia & Walton)
- April 28, 2025, USGS Monitoring Well Field Visit (Wargo)

- May 2, 2025, IERCD Know Your Water Program at Cabazon Elementary School (Wargo)
- May 2 – 3, 2025, SoCal STEAM Challenge (Wargo)

Directors Letulle and Ball had no report.

10. Board Requests for Future Agenda Items

The following requests were made for future agenda items:

- Director Smith - Legislative Water Education Outreach
- Secretary Walton – Agency Law Workshop
- Director Wargo – Update on Golden Mussels

11. Closed Session Agenda

A. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Government Code Section 54957

Title: General Manager

B. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS

Government Code 54957.6

Agency designated representative: Board President Mickey Valdivia

Unrepresented employee: General Manager

12. Reconvene

A. Report out of Closed Session

President Valdivia reconvened the meeting. Counsel Stewart announced there was no reportable action on items 11.A or 11.B.

13. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action:

A. Approve the Sixth Amendment to the Employment Agreement between San Geronio Pass Water Agency and Lance Eckhart, General Manager/Chief Hydrogeologist

Counsel Stewart provided background on the Sixth Amendment to the Employment Agreement with General Manager Eckhart. Director Smith presented an amendment to Section 5.G of the agreement, increasing PTO to 15 days per year with no accrual, effective July 1, 2025.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Secretary Walton, the board approved the Sixth Amendment to the Employment Agreement between the San Geronio Pass Water Agency and Lance Eckhart, General Manager/Chief Hydrogeologist with the Amendment to Section 5.G increasing PTO to 15 days per year with no accrual, effective July 1, 2025.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Wargo, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

Motion passed 7-0.

14. Announcements

President Valdivia reviewed the following announcements:

- A. ACWA Spring Conference, May 13 – 15, 2025
- B. Regular Board Meeting, May 19, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
- C. Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, May 21, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.
- D. Office closed May 26, 2025 in observance of Memorial Day

15. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, President Valdivia adjourned the meeting at 3:56 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, May 19, at 6:00 p.m.

Maricela V. Cabral, CMC, CPMC
Deputy Secretary of the Board