

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

Official Minutes
Board of Directors Regular Meeting
December 1, 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 President Mickey Valdivia at 1:30 p.m., Monday, December 1, 2025, at the office of the Agency. Director Tickemyer provided the invocation, and Director Wargo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

President Valdivia requested a roll call.

Board Present:

Mickey Valdivia, President
Robert Ybarra, Treasurer
Larry Smith, Director
James Tickemyer, Director
Sarah Wargo, Director
Blair M Ball, Director – arrived at 1:48 pm.

Board Absent:

Chander Letulle, Vice-President

Staff Present:

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

No public comment received.

5. Consent Calendar

- A. Approve Minutes of the November 17, 2025, Regular Meeting of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors

- B. Approve Finance and Budget Committee Meeting Report, for November 20, 2025

On a motion by President Valdivia, seconded by Treasurer Ybarra, the board approved the Consent Calendar as presented.

Approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Smith, Tickemyer, Wargo, Ybarra, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: Letulle, Ball

Motion passed 5-0.

6. Reports

A. General Manager's Report

General Manager Lance Eckhart had no report.

B. Legal Counsel's Report

Counsel Stewart reported the draft amicus brief previously authorized by the Board, filed jointly by ACWA and participating agencies, had been received earlier than expected. After review by Agency staff and legal counsel, authorization was given to submit the brief on behalf of SGPWA. The matter concerns the United Water Conservation District appeal pending before the California Supreme Court. Further updates will be provided when available.

7. Informational Presentations and Updates:

A. Cabazon Area Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD), presentation by Scott Bruckner, Riverside County TLM Agency

Scott Bruckner provided an overview of the County's newly established Cabazon Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD), explaining its purpose and statutory authority under Government Code, as well as the types of public infrastructure eligible for investment, including water and wastewater systems, transportation and flood control improvements, parks, and fire suppression facilities. He described the EIFD's funding mechanism, emphasizing that it relies solely on property tax increment financing and does not impose new taxes or increase existing property tax rates. Revenue projections estimate approximately \$249 million over the 45-year term, with planned allocations of 30 percent each for water/wastewater, flood control, and transportation, and 10 percent for fire suppression. Mr. Bruckner also summarized the extensive community outreach conducted during formation, noted that the EIFD was formally established on October 7, 2025, and stated that the first revenues are anticipated in January 2027. He further highlighted the EIFD's alignment with ongoing planning efforts, including the Cabazon Community Plan and regional infrastructure studies. Board members discussed the EIFD's broader applicability, potential benefits for Cabazon and High Valleys communities, opportunities for other jurisdictions such as the City of Banning to form or join EIFDs, and the expected limitations of revenue generation in the early years.

Public comments were received from:

- Councilwoman Colleen Wallace (City of Banning) – asked how residents would be notified of EIFD implications.
- Michael Pollack (General Manager, Cabazon Water District) – inquired about pipeline funding eligibility for upcoming projects.

Mr. Bruckner addressed all questions and reiterated that property tax rates would not increase as a result of EIFD formation.

B. San Geronio Pass Water Agency: Regional Outlook, presentation by Justin Niakamal, Beacon Economics

Justin Niakamal, of Beacon Economics presented the findings of the Agency's long-range population forecasting project, highlighting the region's strong growth relative to both the state and the nation. He noted substantial increases in housing stock, particularly in Beaumont and Calimesa, and emphasized the continued affordability of the Pass area for new residential development. Justin also outlined key employment trends, with job growth concentrated in logistics, government, education, and healthcare. He discussed broader demographic patterns, including declining mobility, an aging population, and the long-term effects of reduced housing turnover. Finally, he underscored the critical relationship between water availability and economic expansion, citing Beaumont's past development as a clear example of how imported water supplies have enabled sustained regional growth.

General Manager Eckhart noted that the analysis highlights expected demand for imported water on the eastern side of the Agency's service area and reinforces the importance of backbone pipeline planning.

C. 2025 Retrospective

General Manager Eckhart presented a condensed summary of the Agency's 2025 accomplishments, highlighting the delivery of 19,000 acre-feet of water, strong recharge operations, and the acquisition of 3,000 acre-feet from Yuba City along with 5,000 acre-feet of surplus water from San Bernardino Valley MWD. He noted the extension of the Ventura SWP contract through 2042, continued progress on groundwater sustainability planning, and the purchase of the property adjacent to the Agency headquarters. Major initiatives advanced during the year included backbone pipeline planning, Sites Reservoir participation, and regional water banking efforts. He also reported significant progress on ARPA-funded projects, including the County Line Road Recharge Basin and multiple heli-hydrants, as well as expanded education and conservation partnerships with IERCD and the Master Gardeners program. Additional achievements included new MOUs supporting water trading, banking, and system interconnections, along with strengthened community engagement through ribbon cuttings, workshops, and public events. Board members expressed their appreciation for staff's work and acknowledged the importance of regional partnerships in advancing shared water objectives.

The Board recessed briefly before President Valdivia reconvened the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

D. Greenspot PS Buyback and Facilities Transfer

Emmett Campbell, Director of Water Resources provided an overview of the historical agreements governing the East Branch Extension (EBX) and the conditions requiring the transfer of EBX facilities—specifically Reaches 2A, 2B, and 2C, back to San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District following completion of EBX Phase II.

Mr. Campbell touched on the following key points during his update: DWR no longer requires the facilities for State Water Project conveyance and has designated them as surplus; however, SGPWA retains its contractual capacity rights and the continued ability to wheel water through the facilities when necessary. He explained that upcoming amendments will clarify ownership, operational responsibilities, maintenance obligations, and power supply arrangements associated with the transfer. Mr. Campbell also noted that additional agreements related to this transition will be brought before the Board in early 2026.

8. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action:

A. Approve and Authorize the General Manager to Execute a Funding Agreement with Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) Concerning a Feasibility Study on Potentially Expanding AVEK Water Banking Operation within the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin, and Authorize a Budget Adjustment to accommodate the work

General Manager Eckhart and Director of Water Resources Campbell presented the proposed water banking feasibility partnership with AVEK, highlighting the operational benefits of storing State Water Project supplies upstream of local conveyance bottlenecks.

On a motion by Director Smith, seconded by Director Tickemyer, the board approved and authorized the General Manager to execute a Funding Agreement with Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) Concerning a Feasibility Study on potentially expanding AVEK Water Banking Operation within the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin, and authorized a Budget Amendment to accommodate the work.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Smith, Tickemyer, Wargo, Ybarra, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: Letulle

Motion passed 6-0.

9. Reports - Directors and Committee Report

The following meetings were reported on:

- November 13, 2025, Inspection Trip of the State Water Project and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Valdivia)
- November 18, 2025, Cabazon Water District Board meeting (Wargo)

- November 19, 2025, High Valleys Water District Board meeting (Wargo)
- November 20, 2025, County Supervisor Telephonic Town Hall meeting (Wargo)
- November 25, 2025, Banning City Council meeting (Wargo)

Directors Smith, Tickemyer, Ybarra and Ball had no report.

President Valdivia thanked staff for their continued engagement at community events.

10. Topics for Future Agendas

President Valdivia requested a future informational item on the history and current cost of State Water Project Table A water, including past rate progression and cost drivers.

11. Closed Session

A. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR

Property: APN (water rights); Agency Negotiator: Lance Eckhart; Negotiating Parties: Property Owner; Under Negotiation: Price

12. Reconvene

A. Report out of Closed Session

President Valdivia reconvened the meeting into open session. Counsel Stewart announced there was no reportable action.

13. Announcements

President Valdivia reviewed the following announcements:

- A. Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Fall Conference, December 2-4, 2025
- B. Water Conservation & Education Committee Meeting, December 9, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.
- C. Regular Board Meeting, December 15, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.
- D. Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, December 18, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, President Valdivia adjourned the meeting at 4:46 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, December 15, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.