

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

**Official Minutes**  
**Board of Directors Regular Meeting**  
**April 6, 2026**

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

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

The San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors meeting was called to order by President Robert Ybarra at 1:30 p.m., Monday, April 6, 2026, at the office of the Agency. Secretary Wargo provided the invocation and Director Ball led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Prior to roll call, Counsel Stewart conducted the required Brown Act verification for Director Valdivia who appeared remotely from the following location: KM 20, Boulevard Kukulcan, Zona Hotelera, 77500 Cancun, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

**2. Roll Call**

President Ybarra requested a roll call.

**Board Present:**

Robert Ybarra, President  
Larry Smith, Vice-President  
Sarah Wargo, Secretary  
Blair M Ball, Director  
Mickey Valdivia, Director – via teleconference

**Absent:**

James Tickemyer, Treasurer  
Chander Letulle, Director

**Staff Present:**

Lance Eckhart, General Manager  
Thomas Todd, Jr., Chief Financial Officer  
Jennifer Ustation, 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**

General Manager Eckhart announced that, due to an anticipated closed session call and the presence of guests from South Mesa Water Company, the meeting

would proceed with Item 7.A, Gap Funding Check Presentation, before returning to the regular order of business. The agenda was adjusted accordingly.

**4. Public Comment**

No public comment received.

**7. Informational Presentations and Updates:**

**A. Gap Funding Check Presentation**

South Mesa Water Company Board President Dave Dutchover thanked the Board for the Agency's Gap Funding Program, noting that the approved funding helped secure state grant funds, install approximately 50,000 feet of pipeline, and improve system reliability. They also presented the Agency with a reimbursement check of approximately \$4.4 million and advised that an additional payment is expected once remaining state funds are received. Board members expressed appreciation for the partnership, highlighting the program's continued success, the benefit of bringing State Water Project water into Calimesa, and the value of regional collaboration to strengthen local water systems.

**5. Consent Calendar**

- A. Approve Minutes of the March 2, 2026, Regular Meeting of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors
- B. Approve Minutes of the March 11, 2026, Special Meeting of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors
- C. Approve Minutes of the March 16, 2026, Pass Water Agency Foundation and Regular Meeting of the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors
- D. Approve Finance & Budget Committee Meeting report for March 26, 2026

Director Ball requested Items 5.C and 5.D be pulled for discussion.

On a motion by Vice President Smith, seconded by President Ybarra, the board approved Items 5.A and 5.B on the Consent Calendar.

Approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Valdivia, Wargo, Smith, Ball, Ybarra

Noes: None

Absent: Tickemyer, Letulle

**Motion passed 5-0.**

**Items pulled for Discussion**

Director Ball requested a correction to the March 16, 2026, minutes noting the comment under Item 11, Topics for Future Agendas, should be attributed to Vice President Smith rather than himself. Correction noted.

Director Ball requested clarification regarding the Finance and Budget Committee discussion related to Board use of legal counsel, and whether any resulting action would come before the full Board. Staff and counsel confirmed any formal action would return to the full Board for consideration.

On a motion by Director Ball, seconded by Vice President Smith, the board approved items 5.C and 5.D.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Valdivia, Wargo, Smith, Ball, Ybarra

Noes: None

Absent: Tickemyer, Letulle

**Motion passed 5-0.**

## **6. Reports**

### **A. General Manager's Report**

General Manager, Lance Eckhart reported on the following:

1. Assemblymember Greg Wallis' letter of congratulations to CFO Jennifer Ustation
2. 3,000 Acre-foot Water transfer with Napa
3. Procurement Policy Notification: Weka Change Orders No. 5 & 6
4. Letter from United Water Conservation District thanking SGPWA for support in recent litigation efforts involving water rights principles

The Board recessed into Closed Session to discuss Item 11.A.

## **11. Closed Session Agenda**

### **A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (Gov. Code § 54956.9)**

Significant Exposure to Litigation: Three Potential Cases

## **12. Reconvene**

### **A. Report out of Closed Session**

President Ybarra reconvened the meeting into open session at 2:42 p.m. Counsel Stewart announced there was no reportable action.

## **6. Reports, cont.**

### **A. General Manager's Report**

General Manager, Lance Eckhart reported on the following:

3. Completion of the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District Heli-Hydrant Connection
4. Draft Water Rights for Sites Reservoir Project have been issued
5. Water Operator hired

### **B. Legal Counsel's Report**

Counsel, Stewart provided an update on the following:

1. Brown Act Refresher scheduled for April 20, 2026, Board meeting

## **7. Informational Presentations and Updates:**

### **B. State Water Project Fundamentals: Article 21**

Director of Water Resources Emmett Campbell presented on Article 21 water, explaining it is surplus State Water Project water available on a short-term, first-come, first-served basis and must be used immediately. He noted the Agency

received more than 5,000 acre-feet in 2023, and the Board discussed its value for recharge, operational flexibility, and long-term water supply planning.

### **B. Small Water Systems Assistance Program**

Operations Manager Matt Howard provided an update on the Agency's Small Water Systems Assistance Program, highlighting continued support for smaller local systems through technical assistance, planning documents, workshops, and grant application support. He noted the program has helped participating agencies improve readiness for outside funding and will continue focusing on training and targeted assistance based on system needs.

## **8. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action:**

### **A. Authorize the General Manager to Execute the First Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Feasibility of Expanding an Existing Water Bank within the Area Overlying the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin Between the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency and Antelope Valley – East Kern Water Agency**

Director of Water Resources Emmett Campbell presented the proposed First Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding with Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency related to future water banking feasibility. He explained the amendment establishes a framework for evaluating potential property opportunities and bringing any future agreements back to the Board.

On a motion by Director Ball, seconded by Secretary Wargo, the board approved and authorized the General Manager to execute the First Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Feasibility of Expanding an existing Water Bank with the area overlying the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin between the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency and Antelope-Valley – East Kern Water Agency.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Valdivia, Wargo, Smith, Ball, Ybarra

Noes: None

Absent: Tickemyer, Letulle

**Motion passed 5-0.**

## **9. Reports - Directors and Committee Report**

The following meetings were reported on:

- March 17, 2026, Cabazon Water District Board Meeting (Wargo)
- March 18, 2026, Riverside County Planning Commission Meeting (Wargo)
- March 18, 2026, High Valley Water District Board Meeting (Wargo)
- March 19, 2026, Banning Chamber of Commerce Annual Installation Dinner (Wargo, Ybarra)
- March 24, 2026, Banning City Council Meeting (Wargo, Ybarra)
- March 25, 2026, Board Workshop – Agency Act (Wargo)
- March 26 – 28, 2026, Water Education for Latino Leaders 2026 Annual Conference (Ybarra)
- March 30, 2026, Board Workshop – Media Training (Ball)

- April 1, 2026, Beaumont Basin Water Master Meeting (Wargo)

Vice President Smith reported that IERCD will be hosting a booth at the Bogart Trout Fishing Derby on Saturday, April 11, 2026.

**10. Topics for Future Agendas**

No topics were discussed.

**11. Closed Session Agenda, cont.**

A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION  
(Gov. Code § 54956.9)

Significant Exposure to Litigation: Three Potential Cases

**12. Reconvene**

A. Report out of Closed Session

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

**13. Announcements**

President Ybarra reviewed the following announcements:

A. Water Conservation & Education Committee Meeting, April 14, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

B. Regular Board Meeting, April 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

C. Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, April 23, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

**14. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, President Ybarra adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, April 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

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