

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

March 7, 2019, 10:00 a.m. to 11:57 a.m.
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
City of Blythe Council Chambers
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Roll Call (Board members only) and Introductions

Nancy Wright, Buford Crites, Jayne Powell, and Peter Satin were present. Tom Davis and Ed Muzik were absent. The Board Clerk stated that a quorum was present.

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Nancy Wright at 10:00 a.m. on March 7, 2019 in Blythe, California. She thanked the City of Blythe Mayor Dale Reynolds and Councilman Joe Deconick for use of their facility.

State and Regional Board Staff Present:

Paula Rasmussen, Frank Gonzalez, Abdi Haile, Katharine Buddingh, Kai Dunn, Nadim Shukry-Zeywar, Doug Wylie, Mary Castaneda, Terry Barnes, Dan Mefford, Adriana Godinez, Jose Valle-DeLeon, Jennie Snyder, Francisco Costa, Logan Raub, Johnny Gonzales, and Emel Wadhwani.

Others Present

Rogelio Martinez, Borrego Springs Water District
Joseph G. Cornejo, Borrego Springs Water District
Lorrie Cooper, Palm Springs
Joey DeConinck, Blythe Council Member
Debra Keenan, Stroschein Family Farms
Victor Lujan, Palo Verde Irrigation District
Mark Stover, BUC
Anthony Duttie, BUC
Ron Baker, Baker Farms
Phil Baker, Baker Farms
Juana Iroz, Iroz Farm
Charles Van Dyke, Van Dyke Farms
Dan Robinson, Robinson Farms
Ryan Seiler, Jack Seiler Farms
Rigo Perez, Fondomonte Arizona LLC
David Baker, California Department of Fish & Wildlife
Nisha Noroian, Nisha Norian Farms
Zoe Rodriguez, Coachella Valley Water District
Steve Bigley, Coachella Valley Water District
Tim Cox, Public
Felix De Leon, City of El Centro
David Garcia, City of El Centro
Abraham Campos, City of El Centro
Aaron Quist, Stanworth Consultants
Jose Orozco, Fondomonte Arizona, LLC
Rick Bryce, Bryce Farms
Steve Charlton, Imperial Irrigation District

Shirley Nash, Palo Verde Irrigation District
Michael Rethwisch, University of California Cooperative Extension
Ned Hyduke, Palo Verde Irrigation District
Jr. Echard, Palo Verde Irrigation Distirct

Public Forum

There were no speakers during the public forum at this meeting.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes
Minutes of December 13, 2018 Workshop
Minutes of January 10, 2019 Board Meeting

Motion: Buford Crites moved, Jayne Powell seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt minutes of December 13, 2018 and January 10, 2018.

Uncontested Items

2. R7-2019-0002 – Consideration of adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements (NPDES) for City of El Centro, El Centro Wastewater Treatment Plant El Centro, Imperial County [*Kai Dunn, Sr. WRCE*]

Motion: Buford Crites moved, Jayne Powell seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Order R7-2019-0002 with Errata.

3. R7-2019-0015 – Consideration of adoption of Waste Discharge Requirements for Borrego Water District, Owner/Operator Rams Hill Wastewater Treatment Facility Borrego Springs, San Diego County [*Adriana Godinez, WRCE*]

Motion: Jayne Powell moved, Buford Crites seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously to adopt Order R7-2019-0015.

Workshop

4. Palo Verde Irrigated Agricultural Lands Workshop [*Francisco Costa, ES*]

The Board held a public workshop discussing the draft General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges of Wastes from Irrigated Agricultural Lands for Dischargers that are Members of a Coalition Group in Palo Verde Valley and Palo Verde Mesa (Agricultural General Order).

Johnny Gonzales, the statewide coordinator of the State Water Board's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program, gave a presentation on the program from a statewide perspective, including explaining why the program developed and how it has been implemented across the state.

Emel Wadhani, Assistant Chief Counsel for the Regional Board Branch of the State Water Board, provided an overview of Nonpoint Source Policy requirements for irrigated agriculture and described the statewide precedential requirements from State Water Board Order WQ 2018-0002, In the Matter of Review of Waste Discharge Requirements General Order No. R5-2012-0116 for Growers Within the Eastern San Joaquin River Watershed that are Members of the Third-Party Group (Eastern San Joaquin Order).

Francisco Costa, Regional Water Board staff, gave an overview of the expired Palo Verde Agricultural Conditional Waiver as well as the proposed Agricultural General Order. He provided

details about requirements for the coalition and coalition members, and also described the difference between the proposed order and the expired waiver. Stakeholders were given an opportunity to present their comments and concerns during the workshop. (There was no voting or Board action taken during the workshop.)

Speaker Cards: Joey DeConinck, Blythe Council Member
Aaron Quist, CPAG/SS
Ned Hyduke, Palo Verde Irrigation District General Manager
Michael Rethwisch, University of California Cooperative Extension
Anthony Duttler, BUC

Informational Items

5. Colorado River Basin Water Board Executive Officer's Report [Paula Rasmussen]

Paula Rasmussen stated that the State Water Board entered into a contract with a broadcast company for all the Water Boards to use for future Board meetings and workshops. She mentioned that the webcasts would now be available for livestreaming as the meetings take place, similar to what State Water Board had already been doing for its Board meetings. She introduced AGP Video as the contracted vendor and thanked them for making the transition to webcasting a smooth process.

Ms. Rasmussen mentioned that the final Stipulated Settlement Agreement and Order for the Seeley County Water District Wastewater Treatment Plant was signed using her delegated authority. The changes discussed at the January 2019 Board meeting were made to the document, including the incorporation of an additional \$3,000 penalty for a total of \$297,000 in mandatory minimum penalties.

She also mentioned that the State Water Board would be conducting a workshop on March 19, 2019 in the region regarding the status of the Salton Sea Management Program, and that there would be an information item discussing border issues and activities, including a presentation from Regional Water Board staff.

Ms. Rasmussen also noted that on March 27, 2019 there would be a meeting with California-Mexico Border Relations Council in San Diego regarding border activities. She stated that Regional Water Board staff would also be providing a presentation at that meeting.

Lastly, she stated that the two vacant Scientific Aid positions in the office have been filled. She added the State Water Board has established a new paid internship program available to graduate and undergraduate students. The program will give students the opportunity to receive on the job training and allow the Water Boards to have greater engagement in workforce development. The region is currently in the process of recruiting one of these internship positions for the Regional Water Board.

6. Colorado River Basin Water Board Member Comments

Board member Jayne Powell inquired about the new internship program and the unit to which the new intern will be assigned. Ms. Rasmussen informed Ms. Powell that the new intern would be assigned to the Cleanup Program.

Vice Chair Buford Crites echoed concerns raised by a workshop commenter regarding how pollutants from outside irrigated agricultural lands would be evaluated in the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program. Emel Wadhvani clarified that the program is focused on controlling the contribution of pollutants from the permitted discharge, not from other sources of pollutants.

7. Colorado River Basin Water Board Chair's Report

Chair Nancy Wright stated that the Agricultural General Order was scheduled for adoption at the next Board meeting in April in Palm Desert, but that the Board would consider changing the adoption to the May Board meeting, since that meeting would be held in Blythe.

8. Closed Session

There was no closed session held.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.