



Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, February 25, 2021
10:00 a.m.

Via Zoom Webinar



AGENDA: BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
DATE: Thursday, February 25, 2021
10:00 a.m.
LOCATION: Via Zoom Webinar

In the interest of public health, and in cooperation with government COVID-19 meeting recommendations, this meeting will be conducted via Zoom Webinar. The public will be able to view the meeting live at 10:00 a.m. February 25. Please see the meeting login information at <https://saltonsea.com/events/ssa-board-of-directors-meeting-2021-2/>.

I. CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

A copy of the complete agenda packet is available for viewing or download at: <https://saltonsea.com/events/ssa-board-of-directors-meeting-2021-2/>

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

This Public Comments time is reserved for matters not already on the agenda. The law prohibits members of the Board from taking action on matters not on the agenda.

Citizens are invited to speak on any item listed in the agenda upon presentation of that item. Any member of the public may address and ask questions of the Board relating to any matter within the Authority's jurisdiction.

Remarks shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes.

Please email your public comment to info@saltonsea.com by Wednesday morning, February 24; include in your subject line "Public Comment, 2/25/21 SSA board meeting." Comments may also be hand-delivered, in an envelope addressed to "Board Secretary, Salton Sea Authority" to 82995 Highway 111, Suite 200, Indio, California, and may be left with the attending security officer.

Comments must include your name, address (addresses will be redacted), and whether it is for general public comment or a specific agenda item (number and topic). Anonymous comments will not be read.

III. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Welcome new SSA Director Norma S. Galindo - Division 5, Imperial Irrigation District, appointed to the SSA Board, effective Tuesday, February 2, 2021.

This is a time set aside for members of the Board to share their thoughts and concerns regarding general Authority matters not on the agenda, ask questions of staff, and request that items be added to a future agenda.

The Brown Act expressly prohibits lengthy Board Member discussion of matters not on the agenda. The Board may at its discretion (by 4/5 vote) add items to the agenda deemed to be an emergency in order to engage in public discourse.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. CONSENT CALENDAR – Approve, Receive, and File

1. Minutes of SSA Board Meeting January 28, 2021
2. Warrant Register Ratification for January 2021
3. Internal Financial Report for: 7/01/2020 – 12/31/2020

V. PRESENTATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS

A. Resolution honoring the life and service of Kevin E. Kelley

VI. DISCUSSION ITEM

A. USDA NRCS Watershed Protection and Flood Control Act - Salton Sea History, Status, and Next Steps. Seeking board direction on Watershed Plan preparation – (Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation)

B. Strategic Priorities and values – board direction for 2021-2022 budget – (G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM, SSA)

VII. REPORTS

A. Federal

1. Federal Activities – (Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation; Lowry Crook, Best Best & Krieger)
2. US Bureau of Reclamation – (Genevieve Johnson, Program Manager for the Salton Sea)

B. State

1. State Advocacy Report – (Oracio Gonzalez, Principal, Ollin Strategies)
2. State of California – (California Natural Resources Agency Representative)
3. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – (see attached comment by Steve Quartieri, District Superintendent, California State Parks)

C. Local

1. Salton Sea Action Committee – (Juan M. DeLara, President)

D. General Manager’s Report and Comments – (G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority)

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

SSA board meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice.

Thursday, March 25, 2021, 10:00 a.m. via Zoom

Any public record, relating to an open session agenda item, that is distributed within 72 hours prior to the meeting is available for public inspection in the lobby at the front desk of the County Law Building located at 82995 Highway 111, Indio, CA 92201.

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

SALTON SEA AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 28, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Salton Sea Authority (“Authority” or “SSA”) Board of Directors (“Board”) was called to order by Alex Cardenas, President, at 10:05 a.m., January 28, 2021 via Zoom webinar.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE led by Executive Director G. Patrick O’Dowd

ROLL CALL:

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Alex Cárdenas, President
V. Manuel Perez, Vice-President
Altrena Santillanes, Treasurer
Luis A. Plancarte, Secretary
James C. Hanks, Director
Thomas Tortez, Director
Cástulo R. Estrada, Director*
Antonio Bianco, Director
Arturo Delgado, Ex-Officio Member

AGENCY

Imperial Irrigation District
Riverside County
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Imperial County
Imperial Irrigation District
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Coachella Valley Water District
Coachella Valley Water District
California Natural Resources Agency

* *Director Estrada arrived after roll call and before public comments.*

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Ryan E. Kelley, Director	Imperial County
Jeff Hewitt, Director	Riverside County

*A quorum was declared, and the meeting proceeded.
(In keeping with the Salton Sea Authority Bylaws, a single director carries the vote of both directors when the second director of the same agency is absent.)*

SALTON SEA AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT

G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM
Bob Hargreaves, Best Best & Krieger, Legal Counsel

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

There were 42 members of the public present via Zoom and 11 participants in addition to the board members.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Written comment:

- Mr. Nikola Lakic, Geothermal Worldwide, responded - to a comment made last meeting - that his proposal could not be combined with another. He called on the board to stop their current course of action and suggested redirected activities and an in-depth review of his proposal.

Verbal comments:

- Luis Olmedo, Comité Cívico del Valle, informed the Board of the availability of 60 air quality monitors that are monitoring PM10s and PM2.5s over the entire basin and called for the completion of the Red Hill Bay habitat project.
- Kerry Morrison, EcoMedia Compass, asked for the Red Hill Bay project to be completed and water to be added to the Salton Sea.

III. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- A. Director Hanks commented on the need to focus on the agreed-upon Perimeter Lake concept and the need for a project manager and a process to make sure that all projects have site control, water rights, etc., and are compatible with the agreed-upon Perimeter Lake and the other Salton Sea Perimeter Lake projects.
- B. Vice President Perez reported on AB 617 air quality conversations taking place in the eastern Coachella Valley and California; that Riverside County had hired Webb and Associates to work on the conceptual proposal of the North Lake Demonstration Project; and expressed his sympathy to Supervisor Ryan Kelley, his family, and the entire Imperial County region on the passing of Mr. Kevin Kelley, noting many of his accomplishments.

At the Chairman’s request, Director Perez led a moment of silence honoring Mr. Kevin Kelley.

- C. President Cardenas thanked Assistant Secretary Delgado, CNRA Salton Sea Policy, for the Species Conservation Habitat (SCH) press release. And wants to discuss, in the future, the SSA’s role in supplementing SCH efforts.

He’s excited about upcoming capital projects, seeking development of a financeable project within the SSMP guidelines, and is looking forward to Mr. O’Dowd’s leadership. Capital for projects must include operations & management.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. **CONSENT CALENDAR** – Receive, Approve, and File

1. Minutes of SSA Board Meeting December 17, 2020
2. Warrant Register Ratification for December 2020
3. Internal Financial Report for: 7/01/2020 – 11/30/2020

On motion by Vice President Perez, seconded by Secretary Plancarte, the Board approved the Consent Calendar to be received, approved, and filed.

Approved by the following vote:

AYES: Directors Cárdenas, Hanks, Perez*, Torte, Santillanes, Plancarte, Estrada*

NOES: None

ABSENT: Directors Kelley and Hewitt**

RECUSED: Director Bianco recused himself, as the items being approved preceded his seating on the Board.

MOTION PASSED: 9-0

**In keeping with the Salton Sea Authority Bylaws, a single Director carries the vote of both Directors of the agency when the second Director of the same agency is absent.*

V. REPORTS

A. **FEDERAL**

1. **Federal Activities**

Lisa Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation, spoke of introducing the Salton Sea to a new cast of decision makers. The federal advocacy team asks that the SSA board put a finer point on what SSA's priorities are for things like the Perimeter Lake and the New River so as these opportunities come up legislatively, they have clear guidance from the directors as to which priorities they'd like the federal folks to be pursuing.

Lowry Crook, of Best Best & Krieger, spoke of options on the ACOE study authorization and on the requirements if the SSA were to partner with the Army Corp of Engineers on a study versus if the SSA does it for themselves, they could start as soon as they have funding in place.

2. **US Bureau of Reclamation**

Genevieve Johnson, Program Manager for the Salton Sea, was not able to be present to report, but Executive Director O'Dowd reported that she said that she has access to some small amounts of funding that may be available to supplement a project or two.

B. **STATE**

1. **State Advocacy Report**

Oracio Gonzalez, Principal, Ollin Strategies, reported on Sacramento conversations around the Lithium Blue Ribbon Commission and about a potential resiliency bond. A flood of bond proposals was introduced in the last few days, so there will be some uncertainty about which bonds are allowed to move forward. They are staying very close to that conversation with the goal that whatever moves forward reflects the goals and needs of the Salton Sea Authority.

2. State of California

Gail Sevrens, Salton Sea Program Manager, California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, was having audio issues, so Executive Director O’Dowd reported that she had planned to give an update on the Species Conservation Habitat (SCH) and the groundbreaking for that project. Mr. Delgado was available to answer any questions; there were none.

3. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities

Steve Quartieri, District Superintendent of the Salton Sea State Recreation Area, California State Parks, was not present to give a report.

C. LOCAL

1. North Lake Demonstration Project overview: Overview of County recommended plan, project budget, timing, other issues

Mr. O’Dowd reported this item had been agendized in hopes that the agreement with the state would be signed in time to report at this meeting. (It was not.) Mr. O’Dowd recommended that this item be pulled and revisited next month at which time he hopes a meaningful and substantive report can be given.

2. Desert Shores: Overview of possible project concepts and timing

Ms. Katie Burnworth, APC Special Projects Coordinator, ICAPCD, gave a brief update on the Desert Shores project. A community-based project for some time, in 2020 the Imperial County entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the CNRA to move forward on this project. Their primary focus at this time is narrowing down the scope of work and the conceptual design. They hope to work together with the SSA team and the Imperial County team.

Director Hanks commented that the water districts need to know the elevation of projects; there’s a certain level they can’t be built below – per repository agreement with the Feds and to make sure that assets are neither stranded nor flooded.

Ms. Burnworth asked if Director Hanks could send her that agreement so all would have it as a guideline.

Director Hanks further commented that there are landowner responsibilities, then Colorado River JPA and then State obligations that must be considered.

Mr. Olmedo asked the IID isn’t putting these things on their website – why the lack of transparency?

Director Hanks responded that the JPA info is on the QSA website. It's not private or public or IID funds – they are QSA JPA funds. Nothing is hidden, but everything requires research.

Kerry Morrison reaffirmed that site control at Desert Shores could be granted for a project that meets the residents' needs, desires, and input.

Ron Spears asked Assistant Secretary Delgado regarding a discussion he had with Supervisor Kelley regarding using Salton Sea water to fill the channels at Desert Shores, also would like to explore opportunities with CVWD for more potable water.

Director Estrada, of CVWD, responded that there has already been some discussion in this regard, and Mr. Delgado responded that a planning meeting was being schedule the next week, and monthly planning meetings with water and local teams were intended so they could start developing designs and future plans. Additionally, there are some site control issues in that vicinity.

Tom Sephton reported that there are still juvenile fish at the Salton Sea and the Sea is still designated Rec-1 quality water, safe for human contact, and told of Desert Shores' planned elevation and confirmed its compatibility with perimeter lake or other project.

President Cardenas, as president of SSA board and as an IID Director, said he is committed to transparency and accountability regarding any documents or info.

3. Salton Sea Action Committee:

Juan DeLara, SSAC President, was unable to be present to give his report.

D. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT AND COMMENTS

G. Patrick O'Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority opened with memories of Kevin Kelley: his passion for the community, for Colorado River water, his skill of dealing with people and issues and getting things done.

He read aloud to the board the executive summary of his report that was posted on the website the morning of the Board meeting and encouraged them to read the rest of it.

Mr. Olmedo public comment: asked about lack of (QSA) JPA and IID info on delays and use of funds at Red Hill Bay.

SSA's Executive Director responded, as part of his report, that there is no specific charge from the Board for the SSA to be involved in Red Hill Bay.

Director Hanks, as an IID Director, offered to get together with Mr. Olmedo to discuss, as those issues are something outside the Salton Sea Authority. SSA Board President Cardenas (as an IID director) offered to join Director Hanks in meeting with Mr. Olmedo.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Board President Cardenas thanked all for their attendance and participation, and adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

The regularly scheduled meeting will be held

Thursday, February 25, 2021

10:00 a.m. Via Zoom webinar

or at

Coachella Valley Water District

Steve Robbins Administration Building

75515 Hovley Lane East

Palm Desert, CA 92260

(760) 398-2651

DRAFT

Checking Account Activity

January 1, 2021 through January 31, 2021



Warrant Date	Warrant Number	Vendor Name	Amount
		Beginning Cash	\$ 282,797.01
01/25/2021	1187	Altec	(675.11)
01/25/2021	1188	Best, Best & Krieger	(6,056.40)
01/25/2021	1189	Cultivating Conservation	(7,000.00)
01/25/2021	1190	Davis Farr LLP	(1,000.00)
01/25/2021	1191	Eide Bailly LLP	(4,382.50)
01/25/2021	1192	Higher Ground International	(375.00)
01/25/2021	1193	OfficeTeam	(14,815.02)
01/25/2021	1194	Ollin Strategies	(5,000.00)
01/25/2021	1195	Printer Copier Guys	(1,004.85)
01/25/2021	1196	SystemGo IT LLC	(2,090.50)
01/25/2021	EFT	Rabobank Visa Payment	(539.08)
01/25/2021	EFT	Verizon Wireless	(260.95)
01/25/2021	EFT	Pitney Bowes	(77.46)
		Net Activity	(43,276.87)
		Ending Cash	\$ 239,520.14



**Salton Sea Authority
Profit & Loss Budget to Actual
(Unaudited)**

Year to Date through December 31, 2020

	General Fund	NSBYC Grant	TOTAL	FY 20-21 Budget	% of Budget	\$ Variance
1 INCOME						
2 Local Government/Member Assessments	\$ 549,000	\$ -	\$ 549,000	\$ 549,000	100%	\$ -
3 Grant Funding	-	72,620	72,620	79,600	91%	(6,980)
4 State of California Grants (Prop 68)	-	-	-	750,000	0%	(750,000)
5 Pooled Cash Allocated Interest	63	-	63	1,500	4%	(1,437)
6 Miscellaneous Revenue	84	-	84	700	12%	(616)
7 TOTAL INCOME	549,147	72,620	621,767	1,380,800	45%	(759,033)
8 EXPENSE						
9 SSA Administration						
10 Salaries						
11 GM / Executive Director	124,298	-	124,298	156,100	80%	(31,802)
12 Grant Support	44,351	1,825	46,175	95,500	48%	(49,325)
13 Executive Director Support	21,585	-	21,585	27,300	79%	(5,715)
14 Admin Support A	24,585	-	24,585	48,700	50%	(24,115)
15 Admin Support B	19,790	38	19,828	39,100	51%	(19,272)
16 Total Salaries	234,609	1,862	236,472	366,700	64%	(130,228)
17 Employee Benefits						
18 Employee Benefits - GM / Exec. Dir.	29,815	-	29,815	62,000	48%	(32,185)
19 Employee Benefits - Other SSA Staff	27,428	25	27,452	51,200	54%	(23,748)
20 Total Employee Benefits	57,243	25	57,267	113,200	51%	(55,933)
21 Audit/Accounting	32,397	2,831	35,229	96,700	36%	(61,471)
22 Contract Attorney	60,419	-	60,419	75,000	81%	(14,581)
23 Equipment Maintenance	5,025	-	5,025	8,400	60%	(3,375)
24 Capital Equipment	557	-	557	2,500	22%	(1,943)
25 Insurance	6,140	-	6,140	8,900	69%	(2,760)
26 Office Expense/Operating Supplies	1,609	-	1,609	3,000	54%	(1,391)
27 Office Expense/Online Services	1,691	-	1,691	1,400	121%	291
28 Postage, Mail	1,099	-	1,099	1,800	61%	(701)
29 Printing Services	-	-	-	4,000	0%	(4,000)
30 Dues, Subscriptions	6,223	-	6,223	10,000	62%	(3,777)
31 Communications	2,774	-	2,774	5,000	55%	(2,226)
32 Travel/Mileage	6,628	-	6,628	56,000	12%	(49,372)
33 Technical Support - Consultant	-	-	-	40,000	0%	(40,000)
34 Technical Support - Engineering	-	-	-	60,000	0%	(60,000)
35 Technical Support - General	-	-	-	40,000	0%	(40,000)
36 Contract Services / Website	-	-	-	5,000	0%	(5,000)
37 Technical Support - Environmental	-	-	-	60,000	0%	(60,000)
38 Technical Support - Fiscal	-	-	-	50,000	0%	(50,000)
39 Communications & Outreach	10,625	-	10,625	40,000	27%	(29,375)
40 Utilities	-	-	-	3,000	0%	(3,000)
41 Grants & Advocacy	94,406	-	94,406	150,000	63%	(55,594)
42 Project Management	-	-	-	60,000	0%	(60,000)
43 Contingency	-	-	-	33,400	0%	(33,400)
45 Total SSA Administration	521,445	4,718	526,164	1,294,000	41%	(767,836)

*No assurance is provided on these financial statements. The financial statements do not include a statement of cash flows. Substantially all disclosures required by accounting principles generally accepted in the U.S. are not included.



Salton Sea Authority
Profit & Loss Budget to Actual
(Unaudited)

Year to Date through December 31, 2020

	General Fund	NSBYC Grant	TOTAL	FY 20-21 Budget	% of Budget	\$ Variance
46	North Shore Grant					
47	-	19,363	19,363	-	0%	19,363
48	-	48,542	48,542	-	0%	48,542
49	-	67,904	67,904	-	0%	67,904
50	521,445	72,623	594,068	1,294,000	46%	(699,932)
51	\$ 27,702	\$ (3)	\$ 27,699	\$ 86,800	32%	\$ (59,101)

*No assurance is provided on these financial statements. The financial statements do not include a statement of cash flows. Substantially all disclosures required by accounting principles generally accepted in the U.S. are not included.



Salton Sea Authority
Balance Sheets
(Unaudited)

As of December 31, 2020

	General Fund	702 Fish Clean Up Trust	NSBYC Grant	TOTAL
1 ASSETS				
2 Checking/Savings				
3 Cash - PW Checking	\$ 258,030	\$ 20,991	\$ 3,775	\$ 282,797
4 Cash - RivCo Fund	22,410	-	(4,830)	17,580
5 RivCo investment fund	5,118	-	-	5,118
6 Cash - Petty Cash	153	-	-	153
7 Total Checking/Savings	285,711	20,991	(1,055)	305,648
8 Other Current Assets				
9 Due from Grant Funds	2,270	-	-	2,270
10 Prepaid Items	12,217	-	-	12,217
11 Grant Receivable	-	-	50,232	50,232
12 Total Other Current Assets	14,487	-	50,232	64,718
13 TOTAL ASSETS	300,198	20,991	49,177	370,366
14 LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
15 Liabilities				
16 Current Liabilities				
17 Accounts Payable	19,132	-	918	20,050
18 Credit Cards				
19 Credit Card Payable (Visa)	-	-	-	-
20 Credit Card Payable (AE)	-	-	-	-
21 Total Credit Cards	-	-	-	-
22 Other Current Liabilities				
23 Due to Other Funds	-	-	2,270	2,270
24 Accrued Payroll	12,323	-	-	12,323
25 Due to EDA for NSBYC Grant	-	-	47,135	47,135
26 Accrued Vacation	15,725	-	-	15,725
27 Total Other Current Liabilities	28,049	-	49,405	77,453
28 Total Liabilities	47,181	-	50,323	97,504
29 Fund Balance	253,017	20,991	(1,146)	272,862
30 TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE	\$ 300,198	\$ 20,991	\$ 49,177	\$ 370,366

*No assurance is provided on these financial statements. The financial statements do not include a statement of cash flows. Substantially all disclosures required by accounting principles generally accepted in the U.S. are not included.

Date: February 25, 2021
To: Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors Meeting
From: Steve Quartieri, District Superintendent
RE: Salton Sea State Recreation Report

- Current SVRA operations include:
 - Day Use – Fully Open
 - Campgrounds – Open (reopened on January 29, 2021)
 - Visitor Center – Remains Closed
 - Interpretive Programming – None Scheduled
- Despite the COVID restrictions, visitation continues to be strong at SSSRA.
 - Dec 2020
 - 3,314 day use visitors, which is consistent with 2019 day-use visitation
 - Camping was closed in December due to Stay at Home Order
 - Jan 2021
 - 4,457 day use visitors, which is a 20% increase over 2020
 - 108 camping visitors occupied 27 sites during the two nights we were open
 - Feb 2021 (thru Feb 18th)
 - 2,793 day use visitors, which is a 25% increase over 2020
 - 1,144 camping visitors occupied 286 sites, which is down from prior year due to the lingering effect from the Dec/Jan camping closure
- We are excited to be working with the Sea and Desert Interpretive Association on a Prop 68 grant to remove the non-native tamarisk trees/shrubs surrounding Varner Harbor. This project will improve habitat quality and includes revegetation with native species.
- Our Maintenance Team continues to make infrastructural improvements in the State Recreation Area. They include a waterline replacement project and sewer system improvements.
- Lastly, she is still here! Our now-famous female Garganey duck was re-found last week after being MIA for a month! 😊. Apparently, the ducks are getting the word about how great Salton Sea is as a winter destination. This week, a different species of interest was identified at Salt Creek.... A female long-tailed duck. This species nests in the Arctic and generally winters along northern coasts of North America. So grab those binoculars and let's go on a birding adventure to Salton Sea!
- Thank you for the opportunity to share our reports with the Board, and I wish you a Safe Season.