



**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**  
**SALTON SEA AUTHORITY**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**July 20, 2023**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Salton Sea Authority (“Authority”) Board of Directors (“Board”) was called to order by Altrena Santillanes, President, at 10:04 a.m., July 20, 2023, at the County of Imperial Board of Supervisors Chamber, and via Zoom Webinar.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Led by Secretary Dockstader

**ROLL CALL:**

**DIRECTORS PRESENT ON SITE**

Altrena Santillanes, President  
Gina Dockstader, Secretary  
Thomas Tortez, Director  
Luis A. Plancarte, Director  
V. Manuel Perez, Director  
Ex-Officio Samantha Arthur

**AGENCY**

Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians  
Imperial Irrigation District  
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians  
Imperial County  
Riverside County  
CNRA

**DIRECTORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM**

Alex Cárdenas, Director  
John Aguilar, Director

**AGENCY**

Imperial Irrigation District  
Coachella Valley Water District

**DIRECTORS ABSENT**

Cástulo R. Estrada, Vice-President  
Ryan E. Kelley, Director  
Yxstian Gutierrez, Treasurer

**AGENCY**

Coachella Valley Water District  
Imperial County  
Riverside County

**SALTON SEA AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT**

G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM (in person)  
Carlos Campos, Best Best & Krieger, Legal Counsel (in person)

## **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT**

On Site: Eric M. Reyes, Los Amigos de la Comunidad, Miguel Hernandez, CNRA and Miguel Hernandez, CNRA.

Via Zoom: Krystal Otworth, Drew Feldman, Victoria Llort, Tomas Oliva, William Patterson, Jaysel Mendoza, Jasmyn Phillips, Vickie Doyle, Christopher Green, Michael Cohen, Shana Rapoport, Jim Barrett, Tom Sephton, Stephanie Holstege , Cynthia Medina, Syrus Devers, and 7 others

### **II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Eric Reyes, Los Amigos de la Comunidad, commented on CARB and AB 617.

### **III. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Director Perez commented on environmental issues and advancing the effort around dust suppression and mitigation, including increased emphasis on air monitors around the Salton Sea. He highlighted work being done in collaboration with Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) (collectively, AMD), including pesticide regulations. Director Perez advised that he joined CARB Board recently and would like to see CARB and AMB get more involved in the Salton Sea. He asked Director O’Dowd to work with State Partners to schedule an update on these efforts, including a discussion on CARB and AMD at the next Board meeting in September. In that regard, Mr. O’Dowd indicated an intent to provide the board with an update on the Monitoring Implementation Plan at our next board meeting.

Mr. O’Dowd reminded the Board that the EIS comments are due on 8/15. Director Cardenas asked that the that the EIS comments are due August 15 be circulated among all board members for feedback.

Director Aguilar asked if there is an opportunity to comment after comments are submitted. Ms. Moore advised that this is simply setting the stage for 2026, and future opportunities to comment will be available.

### **III. SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

No Presentations.

### **IV. ITEMS FOR BOARD DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

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

1. Minutes of Salton Sea Authority Board Meeting June 22, 2023
2. Salton Sea Authority Warrant Register Ratification for April 30, 2023
3. Salton Sea Authority Internal Financial Report for: 7/01/2022 – 05/31/2023

***Motion made by Plancarte, second by Perez, the Board approved the Consent Calendar to be received and filed.***

***Unanimously approved by the following vote:***

***AYES:*** President Santillanes, Secretary Dockstader, Directors Plancarte, Aguilar, Cardenas and Perez

***NOES:*** 0

***ABSENT:*** , Directors Tortez, Kelley, Gutierrez and Estrada

***ABSTAINED:*** 0

***MOTION PASSED:*** 6-0

- B. Colorado River Commitments Agreement / SEIS / EIS – Discussion regarding assessment of impacts to the Salton Sea and region, and plan for mitigation.

Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation gave an update on the process of the SEIS. Director Perez shared that we (the Authority, its member agencies, and local stakeholders) should pride ourselves for working as one, and stressed the importance of putting a plan together that allows us to hold responsible parties accountable on the Colorado River issue, including timelines, goals and potential resources.

- C. SB 583 (Padilla) – Update on bill language and legislative process. Evaluate current bill position – “Oppose Unless Amended”.

Oracio Gonzalez, Principal, Ollin Strategies gave an update on the status of SB 583. Director Perez, Cardenas, Aguilar and Tortez commented. The board took a vote to Oppose unless Amended. President Santillanes asked who was taking the lead to set up the stakeholders meeting. Mr. Gonzalez last heard that it was going to be scheduled in August, and would follow up with the State to confirm.

***Motion made by Tortez to Oppose unless Amended motion, second by Perez.***

***Unanimously approved by the following vote:***

***AYES:*** President Santillanes, Directors Plancarte, Tortez and Perez

***NOES:*** Director Aguilar

***ABSENT:*** Directors Estrada, Gutierrez and Kelley

***ABSTAINED:*** Secretary Dockstader, Director Cardenas

***MOTION PASSED:*** 4-0

- D. Projects Update - G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority  
North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project

Current focus has been to secure drain water from Coachella Valley agriculture for use as a primary water supply. The Authority received a letter from several environmental groups expressing concerns to that approach and offered alternative suggestions.

The Authority will collaborate with the State partner to see how we can work together on this.

#### Desert Shores

The Authority met with Geologic and Imperial County last week at Desert Shores, they are a firm that is engaged with Imperial County. They need to do geotechnical work to complete their CEQA. Data from old CVWD wells are either not available or not useful, requiring a higher level of technical analysis for the project including drilling activity which will increase the project scope by several hundred thousand dollars. We are working with the Bureau now to secure authorization to initiate those tests and complete the CEQA, which will further inform the project cost. We expect to meet with BOR and County reps next month. The Authority is negotiating a contract with a project management firm for Design Build services which would move forward once the CEQA is completed.

#### E. Ratification of Board of Directors Committee Assignments

- **Executive: Chair – President Altrena Santillanes, Vice-President Castulo Estrada**
- **Finance: Chair – Treasurer Alex Cardenas, members Director Jeff Hewitt and Director Anthony Bianco.**
- **Personnel: Chair – Vice-President Altrena Santillanes, members Luis A. Plancarte and Director Cástulo Estrada.**
- **Projects Committee: Chair – Director Ryan Kelley, members Director Altrena Santillanes, Director Alex Cardenas, and Ex-Officio member CNRA Assistant Secretary Samantha Arthur**

*Motion made by Plancarte and second by Perez, the Board approved the Consent Calendar to be received and filed.*

*Unanimously approved by the following vote:*

*AYES: President Santillanes, Secretary Dockstader, Directors Plancarte, Aguilar, Cardenas and Perez*

*NOES: 0*

*ABSENT: Treasurer Gutierrez and Director Kelley*

*ABSTAINED: 0*

*MOTION PASSED: 6-0*

## V. REPORTS

### A. Federal

1. Federal Activities – Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation, gave her report at the start of the meeting discussing the SEIS/EIS. A written report was also provided.
2. US Bureau of Reclamation – Jeremy Brooks, Salton Sea Program Manager  
No Report.

B. State

1. State Advocacy Report – Oracio Gonzalez, Principal, Ollin Strategies gave an update on the SB583. A written report was also provided.
2. State of California – Mr. Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer, California Natural Resources Agency gave an update on the SSMP and Outreach efforts.
3. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – Andrew Ahlberg, Interim District Superintendent. No report

C. Local

1. Salton Sea Action Committee – Juan DeLara, SSAC gave an update from the Bombay Beach Community Center. Several local residents from Bombay Beach

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

spoke as well.

- A. Executive Director’s Report and Comments: G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority gave an update on the Public Relations Officer position. This process started over a year ago and have interviewed half a dozen candidates and hope to have important news at our September meeting in that regard.

Board President Santillanes adjourned the meeting at 11:32 a.m.

**NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:**

The Salton Sea Authority board is scheduled to meet

on: Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Imperial County

Board of Supervisors Chamber

940 W. Main Street

El Centro, CA 92243

(442) 265-1020