



**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
SALTON SEA AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
February 15, 2024**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Salton Sea Authority (“Authority”) Board of Directors (“Board”) was called to order by Chairman Estrada, at 10:15 a.m., February 15, 2024, at Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building, and via Zoom Webinar.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Chairman Estrada**

**ROLL CALL**

**DIRECTORS PRESENT ON SITE**

Ryan E. Kelley, Director  
Gina Dockstader, Secretary  
V. Manuel Perez, Director  
Cástulo R. Estrada, Vice-President  
John Aguilar, Director  
Thomas Tortez, Director

**AGENCY**

Imperial County  
Imperial Irrigation District  
Riverside County  
Coachella Valley Water District  
Coachella Valley Water District  
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

**DIRECTORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM**

Ex-Officio Samantha Arthur  
Luis A. Plancarte, Director  
Alex Cárdenas, Director

**AGENCY**

California Natural Resources Agency  
Imperial County  
Imperial Irrigation District

**DIRECTORS ABSENT**

Altrena Santillanes, President  
Yxstian Gutierrez, Treasurer

**AGENCY**

Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians  
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)  
Bob Hargreaves, Best Best & Krieger, Legal Counsel (Via Zoom)

## **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT**

On Site: Phill Kiddoo, Great Basin Unified Air Pollution District, Adrinna Teran, Comite Civico del Valle, Inc.

Via Zoom: Norman Aiello – Gafcon, Alan Pace, SSAC, Miguel Hernandez, CNRA, Michael Cohen, Pacific Institute, Joanna Hoff, IID, Steven Garcia, DWR, Aydee Palomino, Alianza, Evon Willhoff, DWR and 20 others.

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No Comments

## **III. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

No Comments

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

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

1. Minutes of Salton Sea Authority Board Meeting January 18, 2024
2. Salton Sea Authority Warrant Register Ratification for January 31, 2024
3. Salton Sea Authority Internal Financial Report for December 2023

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

***Approved by the following vote:***

***AYES:*** Vice President Estrada, Secretary Dockstader, Director’s Cardenas, Plancarte, Torte, Aguilar and Perez.

***NOES:*** 0

***ABSENT:*** Directors Santillanes Kelley and Gutierrez

***ABSTAINED:*** 0

***MOTION PASSED:*** 7-0

### B. Monitoring and Public Health

- a. Monitoring, Mitigation and Enforcement at Owens Lake, CA - Phill Kiddoo, Air Pollution Control Officer - Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District gave a presentation on Owens Lake. Compared to the Salton Sea, Owens Lake is a 1/3 in size. They are using a variety of different mitigation options to achieve best available control measures (BACM)

23 staff members run this program, including air quality specialists, scientists, and air monitoring technicians. Directors Kelley, Dockstader, Perez, Aguilar, Estrada, Cardenas, Ex-Officio Samantha Arthur and Michael Cohen commented on the presentation.

- b. Update on research regarding microbial toxins at the Salton Sea – Dr. David Lo, Senior Associate Dean for Research at the University of California, Riverside School of Medicine, and a Distinguished Professor in the Division

of Biomedical Sciences gave a short presentation on the studies they have been doing on certain biological toxins that may be causing Asthma, nose bleeds and eczema. Directors Perez, Kelley, Estrada, Aguilar and Cardenas all agreed that the Authority needs to build a bridge to CNRA and health and human safety agencies to craft legislative language that addresses the preliminary findings shared.

- c. Review of current relevant legislation – Oracio Gonzalez, Ollin Strategies gave an update on Assembly Bill 1834, “An act relating to public health” – Garcia and Senate Bill 937, Pilot project relating to dust forecast, etc. – Padilla and the state budget. Directors Aguilar, Perez and Estrada feel that we need to give options to Secretary Crowfoot and get his feedback to ensure the minimum of the \$65.1MM budgeted comes our way. Ex-Officio Samantha Arthur provided details on the budget proposal: Of the \$65MM, \$60MM is for planning, permitting, and construction of new vegetation enhancements, aquatic projects. This is for the next set of projects that is in the cue for CNRA’s team to continue with existing projects and expand dust suppression and habitat footprint. 18 positions are budgeted for the next 2 years, of which 8 are for O&M of completed projects.
- d. Board directed staff to invite Secretary Crowfoot to discuss with Authority Board these issues and concerns.

- C. Desert Shores – Gafcon Update and Amended Scope of Work – Gafcon representatives, Staff. Mr. O’Dowd discussed the need to expand the scope of work due to the increased need for diligence prior to next steps, including detailed project budget, and bids for construction and design. Director Kelley commented and made a motion to accept the proposal changes.

***Motion made by Kelley, second by Aguilar to approve the revised scope of work.***

***Approved by the following vote:***

***AYES:*** Directors Estrada, Dockstader, Cardenas, Plancarte, Tortez, Aguilar Perez and Kelley.

***NOES:*** 0

***ABSENT:*** Directors Santillanes and Gutierrez

***ABSTAINED:*** 0

***MOTION PASSED:*** 8-0

#### D. Other Project Updates

- a. North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project, Mr. O’Dowd gave a brief update. The geological testing is completed and based on those findings DUDEK is working to revise the project budget.

## **V. REPORTS**

### A. Federal

1. Federal Activities – Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation – No Report
2. US Bureau of Reclamation – Jeremy Brooks - No Report

### B. State

1. State Advocacy Report – Oracio Gonzalez, Principal, Ollin Strategies, spoke during the IV.B discussions, and submitted a written report.
2. State of California – Mr. Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer, California Natural Resources Agency gave a brief update on upcoming community outreach meetings taking place in March.
3. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – Enrique Arroyo, District Superintendent, California State Parks gave a brief update. In 2024, the State Park has had 2-4K visitors. There is a Free access program for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students and families. There is also a Grant for a yearlong weekly visit for youths 7-18 years.

### C. Local

1. Salton Sea Action Committee – Alan Pace, SSAC President gave a brief update on in person and virtual tours. They have also been invited to be on the advisory committee at the Salton Sea Summit in October.

### D. Executive Director’s Report and Comments - G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority gave a brief update. At the Authority’s next meeting in March, he expects to have a Draft Budget and is hoping to include the review and finalization of the extension of the State’s Public Relations Position in April.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting Adjourned 12:07 p.m.

### **NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:**

The Salton Sea Authority board is scheduled to meet on:

Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 10:00a.m.

Imperial County BOS Chamber

940 W. Main Street

El Centro, CA 92243

(442) 265-1020

*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.*