



OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
SALTON SEA AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
April 18, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Salton Sea Authority (“Authority”) Board of Directors (“Board”) was called to order by Chair Santillanes, at 10:05 a.m., April 18, 2024, at the North Shore Fire Station 41 and via Zoom Webinar.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Madam Chair Santillanes

ROLL CALL

DIRECTORS PRESENT ON SITE

Altrena Santillanes, President
Gina Dockstader, Secretary
V. Manuel Perez, Director
Cástulo R. Estrada, Vice-President

AGENCY

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

DIRECTORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM

Luis A. Plancarte, Director
Alex Cárdenas, Director

AGENCY

Imperial County
Imperial Irrigation District

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Thomas Tortez, Director
Ryan E. Kelley, Director
Yxstian Gutierrez, Treasurer
John Aguilar, Director
Ex-Officio Samantha Arthur

AGENCY

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

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: Enrique Arroyo, District Superintendent, California State Parks and Cassandra Van Dyne, new State Park Interpreter. Mark McElrath, Miguel Hernandez, CNRA and Trina Hamby, Imperial County Environmental Consumer Protection Manager.

Via Zoom: Christian Torres, Comite Civico, Jim Barrett, CVWD Chuck Tobin, Burrtec, Geoff Holbrook, IID General Counsel, plus 24 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 March 21, 2024
 2. Salton Sea Authority Warrant Register Ratification for March 31, 2024
 3. Salton Sea Authority Internal Financial Report for February 29, 2024

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

Approved by the following vote:

AYES: President Santillanes, Vice President Estrada, Secretary Dockstader, Director's Cardenas, Plancarte and Perez.

NOES: 0

ABSENT: Directors Tortez, Aguilar, Kelley and Gutierrez

ABSTAINED: 0

MOTION PASSED: 6-0

- B. Review and Approve Salton Sea Authority 2024/2025 Budget

Motion to Approve the 2024/2025 Operating Budget and Invoice Member agencies for Annual Member Contributions made by Cardenas, second by Perez, the Board approved the 2024/2025 Budget received and filed.

Approved by the following vote:

AYES: President Santillanes, Vice President Estrada, Secretary Dockstader, Director's Cardenas, Plancarte and Perez.

NOES: 0

ABSENT: Directors Tortez, Aguilar, Kelley and Gutierrez

ABSTAINED: 0

MOTION PASSED: 6-0

- C. Outreach & Education – Contract implementation and extension update, Executive Director O’Dowd gave a brief update, noting that the contract is set to expire on 6/30, a request for extension to CNRA was issued but no extension has yet been granted. Directors Perez, Estrada and Dockstader commented.
- D. Review and approve certain agreement necessary to effectuate CADIZ donation to the Salton Sea Authority. Susan Kennedy gave a brief overview of the Joinder Agreement and explained the role of the Ex-Officio position. Director Cardenas would like a better understanding and asked that this be tabled until the May 16 Authority Board meeting.
1. Approve Joinder Agreement with San Bernardino County, Fenner Gap Mutual Water Company and Santa Margarita Water District to authorize the joinder of Salton Sea Authority for ex officio, non-voting, membership in the Fenner Valley Water Authority through a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement, effective on the last date executed by the parties.
 2. Approve the appointment of _____ as the Salton Sea Authority Director and _____ as the Salton Sea Authority Alternate Director for the Board of Directors of the Fenner Valley Water Authority for an initial two-year term, effective retroactively as of April 1, 2024, through April 1, 2026.

Motion made by Perez, second by Cardenas, to table the Joinder agreement and Ex-Officio position.

Approved by the following vote:

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

NOES: 0

ABSENT: Directors Tortez, Aguilar, Kelley and Gutierrez

ABSTAINED: 0

MOTION PASSED: 6-0

E. Legislative Updates.

AB674 – Padilla, Executive Director O’Dowd gave a brief update.

1. Budget

a. Desert Shores Specific Request

Secretary Dockstader provided comments on letter to Garcia, clarifying that the source water that is degrading is not from the Colorado River but directly from the Sea itself.

b. Update and Direction regarding potential funding gaps and Bond status. Executive Director O’Dowd gave a brief update.

F. Project Updates

1. North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project

Executive Director O’Dowd gave a brief update. Geotechnical work is underway, soils are different compared with SCH. Dudek is looking at cost estimate of project based on new geotechnical data. A meeting is scheduled with Secretary Crowfoot next month to discuss project, cost, direction, and schedule.

2. Desert Shores

Executive Director O’Dowd gave a brief update. Gafcon’s feasibility analysis is ongoing per contract. Site control issues identified as a critical item. Salton Community Services District owns a 50-foot bottom of most of the channels and easements exist on 35 feet in either direction. A 3rd Community meeting is scheduled for the 30th. Continued dialogue with the Bureau of Reclamation on securing additional funding to deliver a completed project to the community and region.

Tom Sephton commented on the Gafcon performance and estimates of seepage loss. Also suggested interim measures to evaluate such losses and cost associated therewith.

3. Bombay Beach – No report

V. REPORTS

A. Federal

1. Federal Activities – Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation noted we were successful in removing the \$3 million funding limitation in the FY 2024 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, provided a brief update on efforts to increase funding for the preferred “course of action”, known as COA2. When completed, this study will allow access to significant federal funding through the Army Corp of Engineers.

2. US Bureau of Reclamation – Jeremy Brooks – No Report

B. State

1. State Advocacy Report – Oracio Gonzalez, Principal, Ollin Strategies gave a brief update on several bills. (He was concurrently attending the Budget Sub-Committee hearing in Sacramento on the Governor’s proposed Salton Sea investments.)

2. State of California – Mr. Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer, California Natural Resources Agency, gave a brief update on multiple site tours. They are working on an educational video for SCH with drone videos, hope to share soon. Also mentioned that local presentations of the SSMP annual report are being held May 8-10.

3. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – Enrique Arroyo, District Superintendent, California State Parks introduced Cassandra Van Dyne, the new State Park Interpreter. Ms. Van Dyne gave a brief update. There were 1,133 vehicles that came through the park, 497 campers and 3,404 that came to visit the visitors center.

C. Local

1. Salton Sea Action Committee – Alan Pace, SSAC President, gave a brief update, discussed an upcoming bus tour on May 15th.

- D. Executive Director’s Report and Comments - G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority gave a brief update and advised the board that Tina Shields of IID will be giving a presentation on Human Health and Safety at our May Board meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

The Salton Sea Authority board is scheduled to meet on:

Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 10:00a.m.
Imperial County BOS Chamber
940 W. Main Street
El Centro, CA 92243
(760) 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 at the office of the Salton Sea Authority located at 82500 Highway 111, Suite 4 Indio, CA 92201.