



**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS  
SALTON SEA AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
November 14, 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 Dockstader, at 10:05 a.m., November 14, 2024 at the Imperial County BOS Chamber and via Zoom Webinar.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Led By

**ROLL CALL**

**DIRECTORS PRESENT ON SITE**

Gina Dockstader, Secretary  
Luis A. Plancarte, Director  
John Aguilar, Director  
Alex Cárdenas, Director

**AGENCY**

Imperial Irrigation District  
Imperial County  
Coachella Valley Water District  
Imperial Irrigation District

**DIRECTORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM**

NONE

**AGENCY**

**DIRECTORS ABSENT**

Yxstian Gutierrez, Treasurer  
V. Manuel Perez, Director  
Altrena Santillanes, President  
Thomas Tortez, Director  
Cástulo R. Estrada, Vice-President  
Ryan E. Kelley, Director  
Ex-Officio Samantha Arthur

**AGENCY**

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

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT**

On Site: Eric Reyes, Los Amigos de la Comunidad, Felix Vega, ICPHD, Lee Hernandez, IID, Miguel Hernandez, CNRA, Evon Willhoff, DWR, Vickie Doyle, IID, Tara Mulally, CV Strategies.

Via Zoom: Pat Cooper, Riverside County, Will Porter, UCR, Taylour Unzicker, CA State Parks, Michal Cohen, Pacific Institute, Shanon Ayala, Davis Farr, Paul Najjar, Gafcon,

Isamay Jannett Pasillas, Aydee Palomino, Alianza, Mario Llanos, Pat Cooper, Deputy Chief of Staff, Supervisor Perez and 14 others.

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Eric Reyes commented on a previously scheduled presentation on SCIA which was postponed due to existing litigation.

## **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 September 12, 2024
  2. Salton Sea Authority Warrant Register Ratification
    - a. September 30, 2024
    - b. October 31, 2024
  3. Salton Sea Authority Internal Financial Report for September 30, 2024
  4. Approve 2025 Meetings Schedule and Calendar

*On motion by Aguilar second by Cardenas, the Board approved the Consent Calendar to be received and filed.*

*Approved by the following vote:*

**AYES: 6**

**NOES: 0**

**ABSTAINED: 0**

**MOTION PASSED: Unanimous**

- B. Salton Sea Authority 2024 Annual Report and Audit presentation – Shannon Ayala, Davis Farr (receive and file) gave a brief update on the Audit, indicating an unmodified (clean) opinion on the books and records of the Authority.

*On motion by Cardenas second by Plancarte, the Board receive, accept, and file the Salton Sea Authority 2024 Annual Report and Audit to be received and filed.*

*Approved<sup>1</sup> by the following vote:*

**AYES: 6**

**NOES: 0**

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<sup>1</sup> Consistent with the Salton Sea Authority bylaws, there being at least three of the five member agencies represented, when the second director of the same agency is absent a single director shall carry the vote of both directors.

***ABSTAINED: 0***

***MOTION PASSED: Unanimous***

C. Health & Safety Update

1. Salton Sea Summit Update - Dr. Will Porter of UCR provided a brief update and PPT presentation on the work of the Salton Sea Task Force. President Dockstader inquired about how grant funding was directed, and Dr. Porter advised it is driven by researcher subject matter interest. The Summit was well attended, more so on Friday than Saturday, but overall, it was a very productive event.
2. Pacific Institute Scope outlined in MIP - Michael Cohen provided a presentation on a DRAFT Salton Sea Air Quality Assessment. Still work in progress, expected to be finalized March of 2025. Dockstader observed that pediatric asthma readings are higher in Sacramento than in Imperial County. Cohen also discussed the Salton Sea Zortero Library currently funded by the Bureau of Reclamation, managed by Pacific Institute, and is publicly accessible
3. Status of 2025 update to MIP, Miguel Hernandez (CNRA) gave a brief update. An upcoming MIP meeting is scheduled for November 19 to review the voluntary forms submitted. Evon Willhoff briefly discussed air quality, noting that the vegetation enhancement sites now have 21 air quality monitoring stations around the Sea. Also noted DWR has secured funding to translate data collected and offered to present that website and data findings to the board when completed. Director Cardenas asked to compare SSMP monitoring vs Owens Lake. Ms. Wilhoff said site access limits monitoring activity. President Dockstader noted that a site access agreement in form acceptable to IID already existed which would allow for greater monitoring, and Ms. Wilhoff will inquire further.
4. Development of framework to address health related issues and concerns- Executive O'Dowd commented briefly that if people were better informed of the vast work taking place in this area of concern it would improve the overall sense of progress. The Board indicated that staff should continue to pursue such a framework to enhance public understanding of the work taking place to ensure public safety. Eric Reyes commented that there is still so much to do in this important area of concern.

D. Outreach, Education & Advocacy strategic planning update (CV Strategies), Tara Mulally gave an update on the work of the outreach and engagement effort under way, including meetings which took place with Torres Martinez Tribe and CVWD, gaining a better understanding of their priorities and resources for outreach, engagement, and advocacy. Finalizing the member meetings and pursuing stakeholder conversations will be the next step, followed by a presentation to the board of “key messages” to direct our collective and collaborative outreach and advocacy.

E. SB 583 / Proposition 4 update and strategy, Mr. O'Dowd gave a brief update, Prop 4 was approved, which includes \$10MM for both the Authority and the State. Prior to January, 2027 (and likely much sooner), an executive manager will be appointed by

Secretary of Natural Resources Agency. The board will be fully constituted by January, 2026, and a permanent executive manager will be selected by the new board on January, 2027. It is important that the State and the Authority work collaboratively in the formation of the conservancy and the allocation of the funds jointly assigned under Prop 4.

F. USACE Feasibility Study Update, Executive O’Dowd gave a brief status report, noting that the Army Corp will be giving a more formal update at the January 16 Board meeting.

G. Project Updates

1. North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project, Executive O’Dowd noted the Authority and Riverside County held 2 community engagement meetings to discuss the changes to the North Lake Demonstration Project.

2. Desert Shores

a. Review and Approve contract *for Geotechnical, Geologic, and Hydrogeologic Services*, Paul Najjar of Gafcon gave a brief update on the RFP/RFQ process. On September 11, the RFP was posted and distributed to local and national firms, September 24, 6 bidders participated in a site walk, Tom Sephton was also present. They had a selection committee that consisted of the:

- State
- Imperial County
- Local Community
- The Authority
- Gafcon

There were two highly qualified firms, one national, Tetra Tech and one local, Nicklaus Engineering, Inc. Each background was considered and scored. Nicklaus Engineering was chosen, they are a well known and local and highly qualified firm, with offices in El Centro, Yuma and San Diego. Tom Sephton commented.

b. ***On motion by Cardenas second by Plancarte, the Board approved the contract for Geotechnical, Geologic, and Hydrogeologic Services to be received and filed.***

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

***AYES: 6***

***NOES: 0***

***ABSTAINED: 0***

***MOTION PASSED: Unanimous***

3. Bombay Beach – No Report

## **V. REPORTS**

### A. Federal

1. Federal Activities – Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation provided a brief update and written comments.
2. US Bureau of Reclamation – No Report

### B. State

1. State Advocacy Report – No report.
2. State of California – Mr. Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer, California Natural Resources Agency provided a brief update on projects and activities.
3. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – Taylour Unzicker, State Park Interpreter III stated there were 1100 visitors and 236 campers in October. Mount San Antonio Collage and San Diego University were also visited. President Dockstader asked whether a comparison of visitors throughout the years was available. Ms. Unzicker said the information should be available and that she would research.

### C. Local

1. Salton Sea Action Committee – No Report

### D. Executive Director’s Report and Comments - G. Patrick O’Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority, noted his updates and comments were generally included in earlier agenda items.

## **VI. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

State Park Visitor Center to do a visitor comparison throughout the years.

Army Corp of Engineers to give an update on the Feasibility Study.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

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

The Salton Sea Authority board is scheduled to meet on:

Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 10:00a.m.  
Coachella Valley Water District  
Steve Robbins Administrative Building  
75515 Hovley Lane East  
Palm Desert, CA 92260  
(760) 398-2651

*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 front desk at 82500 Highway 111, Suite 4 Indio, CA 92201.*