

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
SALTON SEA AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
July 17, 2025

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., July 17, 2025 at the Coachella Valley Water District and via Zoom Webinar.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Led by Ex-Officio, Joe Shea

ROLL CALL

DIRECTORS PRESENT ON SITE

Gina Dockstader, President
Joseph Mirelez, Treasurer

Ryan E. Kelley, Director
Cástulo R. Estrada, Vice-President
Ex-Officio Joe Shea

AGENCY

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

DIRECTORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM

None

AGENCY

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Yxstian Gutierrez, Director
V. Manuel Perez, Director
Alex Cárdenas, Director
Director Singh, Secretary
John Aguilar, Director

AGENCY

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

President Dockstader asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

On Site: Tara Mulally, CV Strategies, Trina Hamby, Imperial County, EHD, Pat Cooper, Riverside County, Enrique Arroyo, Ocotillo Wells District Superintendent, Carlos Campos, BB&K, Juliana Taboada, Alianza, Diego Centeno, Brown University, Cassandra D., California Water Board, Michael Placencia, California Water Board, Emma, California Water Board, John Coleman, BBI Group.

Zoom: Stephanie Holstege, SWRCB, Lisa Moore, Cultivating, Nick Romo, Cruz Strategies, Martha Guzman, Camila Bautista, Audubon, Leah Mathews, CARB,

Tom Sephton, EcoMedia, Mario Llanos, CNRA, Vickie Doyle, IID, Ryan Sinclair, Loma Linda University, Evon Willhoff, DWR, Michael Cohen, Pacific Institute,

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No Public Comments

III. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION

- A CONSENT CALENDAR – Approve, Receive, and File
1. Minutes of Salton Sea Authority Special Board Meeting 06/20/2025
 2. Salton Sea Authority Warrant Register Ratification – June 1, 2025-June 30, 2025
 3. Salton Sea Authority Internal Financial Report – July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

On motion by Mirelez second by, Kelley the Board approved the Consent Calendar per staff recommendation.

Approved by the following vote:

AYES: 6

NOES: 0

ABSTAINED:

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

- B “Framework of Assurance” – Continued discussion and possible Board direction

1. Community Based Science, Juliana Taboada – AlianzaCV, gave a brief presentation. Juliana is the coordinator of the Environmental Justice Campaign at Alianza a non-profit organization. They have identified 3 areas as a way for them to be able to work towards a thriving Salton Sea Region. Right now, they have identified hydrogen sulfide, a toxic gas presenting the following hazards:

- Health hazards
- Respiratory irritation
- Eye irritation
- Headaches

Their goal is to help local stakeholders understand what is going on with water quality and how it is affecting the air quality and smell.

2. Hydrogen Sulfide Study, Diego Centeno, gave a brief presentation. Mr Centeno is a resident of North Shore and a PhD student at UCLA in Civil Environmental Engineering. Centeno spoke about the monitors and water sampling they are doing continuously in the Coachella and Imperial Valley's. Wind speeds in different directions affects hydrogen sulfide concentrations, detected at magnitudes above CARB threshold (30 parts per billion) sometimes reaching over 180 parts per billion. A project at Lake Elsinore where they plan to oxygenate the bottom of the lake to increase dissolved oxygen, this will prevent sulfate reduction and production of H₂S, was also discussed.

The public Joe Shea and Directors' Kelley, Mirelez and Dockstader commented throughout the presentation.

3. Discussion
 - a. Existing Agencies and Assessment Protocols
 - b. Potential Data Gaps
 - c. Framework Task Force

GM O'Dowd

After further discussion between the board and GM O'Dowd, Director Kelley and Estrada would like to move this item to September 18 meeting.

On motion by Kelley second by, Mirelez the Board directed GM O'Dowd to provide the board a plan for the creation of framework task force at the September 18 meeting.

Approved by the following vote:

AYES: 8

NOES: 0

ABSTAINED:

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

- C Feasibility Study update – G. Patrick O'Dowd, Executive Director, gave a brief update. A hydrologic model developed for the Sea will inform and affect everything over time. The Army Corp is working to put a team together that should be finalized by the end of this month.
- D Strategic Planning – Tara Mulally, CV Strategies, gave a brief update on the Strategic Plan and Purpose.
- E State and Federal Advocacy – Letters of Support
 1. Federal Funding for Feasibility Study – Lisa Moore gave a brief update. Discussed the Corp feasibility study and what we have historically done to help the Corp to continue its work in getting the letters of support out.

Director Kelley commented on an announcement he rec'd that the BLM has a competitive lease for geothermal rights at the Salton Sea. Most of this land is in the Salton Sea, known as the geothermal resource area but it is underwater. He will send the announcement to Patrick to share with Lisa.
 2. State of California Proposition 4 Funding – Cruz Strategies, Nick Romo gave a brief update. Legislation wrapped up with a month's recess and are due back August 18. Cruz Strategies is working hard and discussing our request for Proposition 4 and request for \$5MM of the \$10MM available in the climate bond for the Authority and the conservancy.
- F Consider Appointments to Ad Hoc Committees for FY 2025-2026. GM O'Dowd presented the committees and recommended approval of the committee assignments. There was no further discussion from the board.

On motion by Mirelez second by, Dockstader the Board approved the Appointments to Ad Hoc Committees for FY 2025-2026

Approved by the following vote:

AYES: 8

NOES: 0

ABSTAINED:

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

G Project Updates

1. North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project - GM O'Dowd stated that the County and the Authority are working to get a project in the ground, there is a lot of work on answering technical questions but are very close to understanding what is feasible and achievable given the technical and financial hurdles the project has faced.

Shea followed by saying that with the money that they have, they are working hard to build out a concept for the Pilot Project, working with the County and the Authority, leadership and consultants on the water budget to implement the project as designed and also thinking about work to demonstrate momentum around current budget that we have that is not enough to achieve full project, but to phase it and make sure we are showing forward progress. He also wanted to remind everyone that the SCH project started out much smaller and over the course of being able to demonstrate forward progress momentum and effectively deploying dollars to achieve big milestones, they were able to down more resources and were able to build it out. There are plenty of challenges with advancing this project, we are addressing the geo-tech, construction of the berm, seepage and connecting infrastructure. Patrick commented and said they should have more clarity in September.

2. Desert Shores, O'Dowd gave a brief update. Nicklaus should have their engineering work completed by the end of the 3rd Qtr. We did get approval to advance modification to the grant, though the Bureau has some staffing issues in implementing the extension, there may be a delay that may have an impact on this project. We are working very closely with our core partners on the local, regional and federal levels to make sure the importance of this project is highlighted and unduly delayed.
3. Bombay Beach, O'Dowd stated that this project has been transferred to the state SSMP and will be part of the state's discussion. Joe Shea stated that they are working on a public update of some sort – or an event that's happening at Bombay or potentially doing our own thing now that they are far enough along in design. He also wanted to point out what the Salton Sea would look like in the coming years and to point out the good work CVAG has been doing with the CV Link to the Sea and the broader North Lake Wetlands. All these projects are going to be game changers for the way that region will look like.

V. REPORTS

A. Federal

1. Federal Activities – Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation, Lisa spoke during the State and Federal Advocacy – Letters of support, she also mentioned that there was an additional \$4MM that was secured through the Bureau of Reclamation.
2. US Bureau of Reclamation - Unassigned

B. State

H State Advocacy – Nick Romo, Cruz Strategies, no further updates he spoke during State and Federal Advocacy – Letters of Support

1. State of California – Mr. Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer, California Natural Resources Agency, gave a brief update on their active projects.

- ceremony for the SCH expansion pond, watering 2k acres,
- expansion at center and west ponds, more detail to come.
- Vegetation enhancements at Bombay Beach, working on irrigation infrastructure.
- Outreach and Engagement

2. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – Enrique Arroyo, State Park , Ocotillo Wells District Superintendent gave a brief update. In the next few months they will be starting a Salton Sea State recreation general plan to help them to identify development and redevelopment of future operation of the State recreation area. They have also had conversations with CVAG on how CV Link will be entering the park.

C. Local

1. Salton Sea Action Committee – Alan Pace, SSAC President – No Report

D. Executive Director's Report and Comments - G. Patrick O'Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority, spoke of his father, George O'Dowd who was a public servant, and would have been 114 years old that day. The work we do is not for ourselves it's for future generations.

VI. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Framework Task Force

VII. ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

The Salton Sea Authority board is scheduled to meet on:
Thursday, September 18, at 10:00 a.m.
at
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 located at 82500 Highway 111, Suite 4 Indio, CA 92201.