



**SAWPA COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 6, 2021**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Jasmin A. Hall, Chair, Inland Empire Utilities Agency
Bruce Whitaker, Vice Chair, Orange County Water District
Brenda Dennstedt, Secretary-Treasurer, Western Municipal Water District
David J. Slawson, Eastern Municipal Water District
June D. Hayes, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

ALTERNATE COMMISSIONERS PRESENT; NON-VOTING

T. Milford Harrison, Alternate, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
Kelly E. Rowe, Alternate, Orange County Water District
Mike Gardner, Alternate, Western Municipal Water District

STAFF PRESENT

Jeff Mosher, Karen Williams, Mark Norton, Dean Unger, David Ruhl, Carlos Quintero, Marie Jauregui, Sara Villa, Alison Lewis, Haley Mullan

OTHERS PRESENT

Andrew D. Turner, Lagerlof, LLP; Nick Kanetis, Eastern Municipal Water District; Craig Proctor, Inland Empire Utilities Agency; Greg Woodside, Orange County Water District; Gil Botello, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; Craig Miller, Western Municipal Water District; Derek Kawaii, Western Municipal Water District; Mallory Gandara, Western Municipal Water District; Ryan Shaw, Western Municipal Water District

The Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Chair Hall on behalf of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, 11615 Sterling Avenue, Riverside, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to the provisions of Executive Order N-29-20, this meeting was conducted virtually, and all votes were taken by oral roll call.

2. ROLL CALL

An oral roll call was duly noted and recorded by the Clerk of the Board.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments; there were no public comments received via email.

4. ITEMS TO BE ADDED OR DELETED

There were no added or deleted items.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: MARCH 16, 2021

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

B. TREASURER'S REPORT – FEBRUARY 2021

Recommendation: Approve as posted.

MOVED, approve the Consent Calendar.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote (Unanimously)
Motion/Second:	Dennstedt/Whitaker
Ayes:	Dennstedt, Hall, Hayes, Slawson, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. FYE 2022 AND 2023 GENERAL FUND DRAFT BUDGET (CM#2021.22)

Karen Williams provided the PowerPoint presentation *FYE 2022 and 2023 General Fund Draft Budget* on pages 17–54 of the agenda packet. Ms. Williams advised these draft budgets were reviewed by the member agency financial staff and no comments or suggested changes were received. Commissioner Hayes referred to the General Fund Costs slide (page 27 on the agenda packet) and asked why FYE 2023 Education and Training, Operating Costs and Meeting and Travel have reduced from FYE 2021. Jeff Mosher noted that the details and assumptions for each of these line items were reviewed by Karen Williams, Rich Haller, and himself and projections were made for education, training, and conferences with input from each of the department heads. Commissioner Hayes asked if there are reserved funding in case additional education and training come up; Karen Williams noted that there is a contingency funding in each of the line items to allow for additional needs and there is an overall contingency fund that is budgeted under Other Administrative Expenses. Chair Hall referred to the Benefit Assumptions Used slide (page 38 on the agenda packet) and asked about the increase from FYE 2022 to FYE 2023 on the Unfunded Liability Payment. Karen Williams noted it is an estimate based on the PERS Actuarial Valuation and it could change based on the amortization schedule. SAWPA is currently on a 30-year amortization schedule and we can select a shorter schedule (i.e., 20 years or 15 years), which would result in higher payments over a shorter period-of-time. Commissioner Dennstedt questioned about SAWPA's percent unfunded pension liability with CalPERS. SAWPA's last actuarial valuation showed us funded at 77.7%. Commissioner Hayes referred to the Member Contributions slide (page 44 on the agenda packet) and asked why the numbers are so variable. Jeff Mosher noted the numbers reflect the budgeting based on the level of projects funded by the member agencies. A comprehensive budget presentation will be provided to the Commission at the April 20 meeting, with possible budget approval.

This item was for informational and discussion purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 6.A.

B. SAWPA PROPERTIES (CM#2021.23)

Carlos Quintero provided the PowerPoint presentation about the *SAWPA Properties* on pages 57–70 of the agenda packet. There are five (5) parcels owned within the SAWPA service area: 1) County Line Parcel, 2) Jurupa Property, 3) SAWPA Building, 4) Edison Easement Property, and 5) Colton Power Plant Property. Carlos Quintero provided a brief description of location and use for each property. Chair Hall referred to the Edison Easement Property slide

(page 69 on the agenda packet) and asked if it is an area where SAWPA shares an easement with Edison, who is responsible for the cleaning and vegetation maintenance. Carlos Quintero noted that SAWPA clears out the vegetation; he has reached out to Edison, and Edison states they do not own the property and therefore it is not their responsibility to maintain it. Commissioner Gardner suggested SAWPA notify Edison that SAWPA no longer intends to maintain the vegetation and Edison can possibly take over the property. Carlos Quintero noted he will contact Edison Real Estate. Chair Hall questioned if there have been any inquiries about any of the SAWPA properties. Carlos Quintero noted that SAWPA was looking into the option of a 10-year lease of the Jurupa Property with a local urban farming NGO. It is 1.13 acres, and it would be used for farming training programs and possibly subdivide the parcels into three (3) smaller parcels with an agreement in place to make sure maintenance is included. Chair Hall suggested following up with the community program to see if there is still interest in leasing the property to help benefit the community as well as SAWPA. Commissioner Dennstedt questioned what the requirements are for declaring surplus property, what is the legal aspect, and if we must go through government entities. Commissioner Slawson noted that EMWD leases out several lands and not a lot of money is received, though the property is maintained and is beneficial. Andrew Turner stated that the surplus property procedures only apply where there is going to be a sale not a lease. He requested to meet with Jeff Mosher and Carlos Quintero to further discuss the long-term goals for the Jurupa Property.

This item was for informational and discussion purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 6.B.

C. SANTA ANA RIVER WATERSHED WEATHER MODIFICATION FOR WATER SUPPLY ANALYSIS AND GRANT APPLICATION (CM#2021.24)

Mark Norton provided the PowerPoint presentation on the *Santa Ana Watershed Weather Modification Feasibility Study* on pages 74 – 97 of the agenda packet. Mark Norton advised that the Santa Ana Watershed Weather Modification Feasibility Study report was brought forward to SAWPA Commission on December 1, 2020. Mark Norton highlighted the value to SAWPA member agencies and noted the project's eligibility for Proposition 1 – Round 2 funding. The grant application would be for \$300k-\$600k in grant funds, less than 3% of available competitive Round 2 grant funding from Santa Ana Funding area allocation. The next steps are: 1) selection of specific ground seeding location, 2) CEQA Compliance – Mitigated Negative Declaration (estimated to take 6-12 months).

Commissioner Hayes questioned if there is a control that would demonstrate the results. That is, how can we demonstrate that the cloud seeding was responsible for any increase? Mark Norton noted yes, it has been implemented in many watersheds up and down the state, and San Luis Obispo just kicked off their program about a year ago. There was a Wyoming study over 10 years that had control and a very scientific analysis to really prove that it works. Commissioner Hayes questioned what humidity level is required. Mark Norton noted he would have to refer the question to the operator based on the types of clouds and parameters. Commissioner Whitaker suggested the three-year pilot study be conducted independently; the operator doing the cloud seeding should be different from the one reviewing the results after seeding. He thanked Mark Norton for his presentation at WACO on April 2 and stated that it is bringing many more supporters in other areas of the regions where they have had positive results from cloud seeding. We are such a low precipitation zone that in those short periods of the year, where we have clouds, and we have some precipitation potential that is where we need to reach and obtain the highest benefits. Commission Whitaker made a motion to approve staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Dennstedt raised concerns on the actual nexus of benefits to the Western customers and questioned if Metropolitan Water District (MWD) is contributing any money based on their support of the approach. Mark Norton noted that MWD stated that the three (3) year pilot scale project verification is exactly what they need to take to their Board to potentially fund in the future. Commissioner Dennstedt noted that if cloud seeding produces a gully washer and hits one of the burn scars, we could potentially face potential liability for any damages that may occur. She added that she is supportive of pursuing a grant if there are no member agency contributions expected at this time. Commissioner Rowe stated that MWD could be convinced with the support of our member agencies within SAWPA to help fund the program. Santa Barbara has been doing cloud seeding for about 50 years and have used control stations to identify the benefit of 15%, and San Gabriel Valley has been doing it for 25 years; and is very confident that the program works. He thanked Mark Norton for all his efforts in leading the program and present it at various locations, and he offered a recording available that was presented at WACO where it explains the extensive research that has been done and definitive proof that cloud seeding works. Commissioner Slawson noted that the technology is there and even if there is a minimal increase to our rainfall then it is going to be successful, and he questioned if there was any coordination with flood control agencies. Mark Norton noted that there was a Technical Advisory Committee and Jason Uhley of Riverside County Flood Control District was a regular participant and had provided suggestions on certain location that might be a problem for this type of program, particularly in the Homeland/Romoland due to not having the stormwater infrastructure.

Commissioner Hayes stated that she had heard of concerns and will support it if there is a control portion to the project and if it is not funded by the member agencies. Mark Norton noted that the grant requires a 50% local match. Commissioner Dennstedt questioned what is being asked in terms of member agency funding and where are we seeking additional funding partners. Mark Norton noted that SAWPA staff has not formally acted without Commission approval to confirm whether we will proceed with this program, once approved, the outreach will begin.

Commissioner Dennstedt made a substitute motion to fully support a grant application and recommends staff to seek other partners; and try to solicit support financially from other partners. Commissioner Hayes second the substitute motion. Chair Hall stated that Commissioner Whitaker's motion is in place but no second, though we must go through everyone's questions. Paul Jones noted that MWD has broadly supported this program and have funding available for local resources programs, but that local resources funding is based upon the cost for the local resources projects being more expensive than the net rate. The cost for the water that is projected to be provided through this program is substantially less than the imported water rate, and the likelihood of getting funding is going to be very low. Chair Hall noted that the cost to invest for this study is so small as a fraction of the cost of MWD water and she has participated in the seeding through several different organizations and knows the risks and benefits; and is very supportive because we need more rain and more changes to help with the desert areas. Commissioner Dennstedt re-instated her substitute motion (1) Authorize proceeding with the ground seeding site selection analysis and CEQA Development in FY 21-22; (2) Authorize staff to prepare a watershed wide SAWPA project application for Prop 1 Round 2 seeking 50% grant funding for a three-year pilot scale watershed weather modification program; and (3) Direct staff to perform outreach to seek additional funding partners. Wayne Miller questioned if there is a letter of commitment in place to submit with the grant proposal if there is a 50% match. Mark Norton noted that he would come back to the SAWPA Commission and let them know what was found from local agencies who are willing to contribute and ask for funding match and then submit the proposed project

for consideration. Commissioner Whitaker and T. Milford Harrison both expressed their support on staff's recommendations.

MOVED, (1) Authorize proceeding with the ground seeding site selection analysis and CEQA Development in FY 21-22; (2) Authorize staff to prepare a watershed wide SAWPA project application for Prop 1 Round 2 seeking 50% grant funding for a three-year pilot scale watershed weather modification program; and (3) Direct staff to perform outreach to seek additional funding partners.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote (Unanimously)
Motion/Second:	Dennstedt/Hayes
Ayes:	Dennstedt, Hall, Hayes, Slawson, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

D. OPPOSE POSITION FOR AB 377 (RIVAS) (CM#2021.25)

Jeff Mosher referenced the letter, contained in the agenda packet on pages 100 – 103, Opposing Position for AB 377 (Rivas) legislation which eliminates flexibility for the Regional Board on discharge requirements in terms of alternative compliance programs and schedules. Jeff Mosher noted that he worked with SAWPA's consultant, West Coast Advisors, on drafting the letter and it was distributed to SAWPA's member agencies for review, approval, and signature.

MOVED, Adopt an OPPOSE position on AB 377 (Rivas) and authorize staff to send the attached letter, with minor modifications, opposing the legislation.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote (Unanimously)
Motion/Second:	Hayes/Slawson
Ayes:	Dennstedt, Hall, Hayes, Slawson, Whitaker
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	None

7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS-

The following oral/written reports/updates were received and filed.

A. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/REPORT

There were no comments/reports from the Chair.

B. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

There were no comments from the Commissioners.

C. COMMISSIONERS' REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Dennstedt requested that SAWPA's percent for the unfunded pension liability with CalPERS be brought back as a future Agenda item.

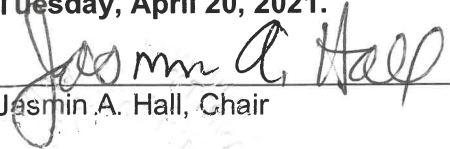
8. CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for review, Chair Hall adjourned the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

Approved at a Regular Meeting of the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Commission on Tuesday, April 20, 2021.



Jasmin A. Hall, Chair

Attest:



Sara Villa, Acting Clerk of the Board