



Minutes of the Casitas Municipal Water District
Board Meeting Held
October 25, 2017

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held October 25, 2017 at the Casitas Municipal Water District located at 1055 Ventura Ave. in Oak View, California. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. Directors Baggerly, Word, Hicks, Bergen and Kaiser were present. Also present were Steve Wickstrum, General Manager, Rebekah Vieira, Clerk of the Board, and Attorney, John Mathews. There were six staff members and eleven members of the public in attendance. President Baggerly led the group in the flag salute.

1. Public comments (Items not on the agenda – three minute limit).

Johnny Johnston, Mayor for the City of Ojai expressed the council's sentiment on drought and water security issue. The city moved to communicate with Casitas and OBGMA as major suppliers and we recognize we have no authority or jurisdiction but we believe in collaboration in the valley to minimize costs and to attract money to help us with that so that we are all pulling the same direction. We are open ready, willing and able. Casitas has the largest jurisdiction. I would be happy to meet with the staff and talk about messaging to the public regarding where we are and where we may be going. A personal concern is I don't want to lose the sense of urgency and don't want everyone to panic. I will deliver same message to OBGMA tomorrow. President Baggerly responded that I appreciate that outreach and have expressed the same sentiments by this board.

William Weirick, Ojai City Council emphasized the mayor's strong commitment on the part of the council members. Collaborative efforts are essential to maximizing probability of grant applications. The Council is committed to that. Collaboration is an important part of moving forward in the valley because of the way the grant applications are reviewed.

Renee Roth said it was great to see the article in the Water Deeply magazine. There were some good comments on our watershed and how we are managing to stay high and dry. The Green Coalition is getting ready to have another article such as that. It was good to see you at Ojai day. We had some people say they used to live in Ojai and moved to SLO and it was all over the place on saving water and what their reduction goals had to be. They came back to the Ojai valley and there is no mention of it. There is nothing going on. There does not seem to be a consolidated, coordinated extreme message getting out to

residents. It is in the Ventura River Watershed management plan so there are a lot of things we could be doing. I talked before about a sustainable landscaping book. Ventura Water is moving ahead and preparing that for their customers. We could be doing more to get a stronger message out.

Director Hicks responded that we can always do more. Ron Merckling has done a terrific job getting the message out. Direct customers lowered usage 73% and that is incredible. We are getting the message out and spending a lot of money for advertising. Director Bergen added there have been articles in the Ojai Valley News, The VC Star, signs, and workshops we do. Of all the programs in Ventura County, I believe we have the most proactive. If you want more, we are communicating with our direct customers. The City and Green Coalition can do more and not beat on us to do more.

Ellen Sklarz mentioned that realtors are giving out wrong information. Customers being misinformed. Maybe getting together with realtors may be beneficial. As a citizen there have been so many entities not collaborating enough to achieve a common goal. I hope I am seeing a shift to come together for bigger common good. I am so excited by Angelo's presentation and hope for a valley wide plan. I support item 7 and support what Johnny and Bill said.

Ron Merckling appreciated the accolades for our efforts and emphasized it is a whole team including Cinnamon McIntosh, Bryan Sandoval and Larry Harris who were all at Ojai day working hard. Nov 2nd there is a Ventura River Watershed meeting to talk about water issues in the area.

2. General Manager comments.

Mr. Wickstrum expressed that he watched Ron Merckling and the conservation team during Ojai Day talking with people and they had a good idea to have people take a pledge for water conservation. They had over 190 pledges This was one of the best Ojai Days I have seen. We had more smiles than we ever had in taking over the Ojai water system. There were a lot of questions on when they will get their first water bill. The Recreation area had a lot of visitors in their area. A lot of credit to Carol Belser and her staff not only for recreation but also to protect our water supply in our lake. Her staff worked very hard and had good public interactions. It is good to be embraced by the public.

On November 9th at 2:00p.m. we have the AWA bus tour. Let us know if you can make it as we welcome those folks. If the public is interested contact Kellie at AWA Ventura county.

Regarding the Ojai system there continue to be numerous leaks. On a positive note, we are close to finishing replacing 1929 pipe on Mallory Way and Eucalyptus. There is a lot of aged infrastructure that was not tended to for decades.

3. Board of Director comments.

None

4. Board of Director Verbal Reports on Meetings Attended.

Director Word attended the water issues meeting talking about alternative supplies. Susan from Calleguas gave a report on what they found on exploring alternatives. The alternatives were ranked: 1 was recycling, 2 was retention, 3 was arrundo removal. A 4-6 acre dense stand of arrundo removal can generate 2000 acre feet of water. After that was shared desal and almost at the bottom of the list was imported water because of cost and reliability. In addition to that, there was a report on Fox Canyon groundwater sustainability. The Oxnard plain is overdrafted. They have to reduce the pumping by 40% in the Oxnard plain for it to reach a sustainable yield over the next 20 years. They are nowhere near that. A representative from Metropolitan was at that meeting and their take on Westlands vote to not support the tunnel is they are looking for the deal they have now, just pay for the water and not for the project. Director Word passed out a legislative update.

President Baggerly attended Ojai Day for OBGMA that I am appointed to. It was a very busy day. A lot of people got informed on how groundwater works in the Ojai basin. It was a very positive experience.

5. Consent Agenda

ADOPTED

- a. Minutes from the October 11, 2017 meeting.
- b. Service contract with Mission Linen Supply for the provision of uniform pants for treatment plant staff for an annual expense of \$1,300.
- c. Outside Contract to fabricate four replacement wheels for intake structure grapple cart in the amount of \$10,400.
- d. Purchase of Case 580SN Backhoe from Diamond A Equipment Sales in the amount of \$96,417.75.

Director Word asked for a correction in the minutes items 7-13 voting needs to be modified to show his votes as aye.

The Consent agenda was offered by Director Word, seconded by Director Kaiser and passed by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word, Baggerly
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

6. Review of District Accounts Payable Report for the Period of 10/5/17 - 10/18/17.

APPROVED

Director Kaiser questioned the encroachment permit for the City of Ojai. Mr. Wickstrum explained that we have two things going on, the normal patch work for the leaks over the last few months and the permit to do the pipeline replacement at Mallory and Eucalyptus.

On the motion of Director Hicks, seconded by Director Word the Accounts Payable Report was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word, Baggerly
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

7. Presentation by Regina Hirsch and Angelo Spandrio regarding “An Integrated Self-Reliant Water Strategy for Ojai Valley”.

Angelo Spandrio and Regina Hirsch provided a presentation regarding collaborative planning and implementing action to take advantage of state funding grant opportunities. They suggested that funds spent on the state water tie in and hobo project could be used. They suggested a collaborative meeting in Mid-November to early December to build a Prop 1 Ojai Valley Management Plan. Handouts were provided by Angelo Spandrio and Regina Hirsch exploring grant funding available.

Randy Haney, Ojai City Council added that we reached out to Steve a few weeks ago to meet with Regina. I believe it was a good meeting and there is something in it for all of us. Regina finding us is a blessing and will be fools if we don't tap into her. She is a great resource for this community to become more sustainable. He submitted the Ojai Valley Water Sustainability Plan and asked that Casitas be a part of it along with the City and OBGMA and some other entities. Someone is needed to lead and manage this.

Ellen Sklarz agreed with Randy, having Regina come in she seems to be very collaborative. It would be a great gift to bring us all together.

Renee Roth mentioned that Ron was kind enough to give me a copy of the 2016 Urban Water Management Plan and Ag Water Management Plan. There is a section on future water projects. You have made a lot of progress on what you have done so far and I appreciate the efforts that have been made. I would like to agree that a regional approach after sitting on the Ventura Watershed Council or six years I see projects funded at state level and most of it is downstream. Part of it has to do with the matching funds. We are at a critical turning point and have to spend more money to find more sources of water. I believe the state realizes we are in a unique position and wants to help us. I endorse what Regina and Angelo have said.

Director Kaiser asked Regina if she has her own business and if the grants pay for her services and Regina answered yes. Director Bergen added that there is a lot of stuff going on and I can see the need for integration and coordination. I am involved in the application for the Upper Ventura River GSA and there is a capacity problem. There is a lot of administration and a lot of time and the match is a big issue. Some plans are mandated, legally mandated. We can't operate with anyone else except DWR. It is a big plan and will be four years down the line. Answers are not known yet. There is no mechanism to jump into another area. You need to define where you are going with this. Do you want projects that are ancillary to what is going on? I feel like Casitas staff are so overstretched at this point we could not lead this at the time. We have done grants and they take a lot of time and energy just in the administration. I would like to pull together the whole picture of the Ojai valley and wonder how we go about it and I'm not sure how it works.

Randy added that is why it can't be one entity, it has to be a group or team. He added that if we use we can't do it as our excuse it will never get done. We can't wait. We need to look at this and figure out what each of us can give. We can't have the mentality that we can't do it.

Director Kaiser added I appreciate that and we have to look at our existing priorities. We have just taken over the Ojai system and grants do take up considerable time. Having been involved in grant writing it takes a lot of time.

President Baggerly added obtaining a grant is not a goal in itself as it does not gain one drop of water. Be prepared to tell us what is on your mind. You have not provided any idea on the projects the money will pay for. What kind of governance will be there? Who will administer the grant, who gives up authority for dealing with water so a few ngo's that want to get involved to tell us what to do. There is no structure whatsoever. You have not provided structure for how this might work and that does not work at all. Is there any idea on what projects the money would pay for and what legal governance the group would be under.

Regina added the governance depends on the grant. President Baggerly added staff would need to look at it to see if it is feasible.

Mr. Wickstrum added the questions just asked could be a good first meeting. We have looked for opportunities since 1952. Six years ago we were looking at taking over the Ojai system and previous conjunctive use process for a party that didn't want to be a part of the party. You need to bring water to the table. There are some opportunities. Ventura County Watershed Protection District has worked on arrundo removal for a few years. Matilija Dam removal is a good candidate for stream flow enhancements. The Hobo project may go a long way for this community. Collaboration is good but the other part is understanding that we have some entities we are already working with regionally such as the Watersheds Coalition Ventura County. We have a collaborative process within the county system, ratings and promoting valuable projects with

support of agencies within Ventura county. Locally, the City of Ojai can be supportive of these projects as it helps to be successful for grant funding. We now are the water purveyor of that city. Perhaps a first meeting that may be some of the discussions. We can't answer all situations. We approached Senior Canyon and worked with them to build their system up. It was quite an effort for six years to help this mutual water company. Takes a lot of effort and takes a community to do it.

Randy asks for your commitment to attend a meeting. Angelo and Regina and I will put together a simple agenda.

President Baggerly added never lose sight for our fiduciary responsibility. Be careful to encumber those agencies with debt. We could move forward with projects for Watershed Coalitions of Ventura County. Putting the Hobo project on that list. It is not as if we are sitting here doing nothing. We are working through specific issues within our budgets. He directed staff regarding a meeting with Director Kaiser suggesting analysis on the impacts and revenue cost benefits analysis.

8. Request of Valerie Barth to reverse the over allocation penalty and water usage charges resulting from a private water line leak.

DENIED

Valerie Barth stated a leak was incurred as the result of force pressure on my water. The water was off and turned back on and was opened full bore under extreme pressure as a result I had three leaks which caused overconsumption and penalties. I ask that the fees and charges of the penalties be waived due to the unnecessary pressure forced on the line. This wasn't due to anything I did. I have taken responsibility for other leaks. To blow it on three places it was too much pressure. This is the responsibility of Casitas. It would not be right for me to cause damage on someone else's property.

Mr. Wickstrum explained the meter sits near the surge tank at top of the hill near Spring Street. She lives down below Spring Street. The valve opened up and the pressure may be close to 200 psi at her house. She shows a pressure regulator that our individual noticed there was water coming out down near the property. Her line runs down the hill. It was a coupling that gave way. I had one break in June with time and age. The question she is raising is turning it off due to non-payment and turning it back on caused the three leaks. She has had zero use. The water that did leak from her own plumbing. We have people who have come before us wanting leak relief.

Director Word added have to maintain a certain level of water pressure. I have had to put pressure regulators on my property to bring the pressure down. Valerie stated I have regulators and it blew before the pressure regulator. She added it is the way the lines are handled and common to know how much pressure is asserted when you open a valve.

Director Kaiser said looking at the staff report it talks about 0 consumption since May and the lack of payment being the impetus for why the water was turned off and then back on. He added we have to have consistency on treating our rate payers and have zero allowance for over consumption and water leaks.

Director Kaiser moved to deny the request. President Baggerly added that under normal usage her lines would have been intact. Extra pressure they got because of us turning it back on we are somehow implicated in the break. I won't support the motion.

On the motion of Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Word with the additional suggestion that staff would work out a payment schedule, the above appeal was denied by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Kaiser, Bergen, Word
NOES:	Directors:	Hicks, Baggerly
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

9. Recommend approval of unbudgeted costs to upgrade the network connection between Lake Casitas and the District Office by the purchase of materials and support of a consultant in the amount of \$7,000.

APPROVED

On the motion of Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Hicks, the above recommendation was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word, Baggerly
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

10. Progress Report by Staff on the development of the Dressenid Mussel Invasive Species Rapid Plan.

Mr. Wickstrum explained that six weeks ago you challenged us to put together a rapid response plan, to get it in place and get it to be something that DFW could approve. It is an Emergency response and when we do this in coordination with incident command center and similar practices just in case we get someone from FEMA looking at us. It makes sense; the existing emergency action plan has situations such as contamination of the water. The structure of how we would set up the incident command center and what follows is the rapid response plan if we should ever discover veliger's in Lake Casitas. Prevention and monitoring plans have been done for quite some time.

Carol Belser discussed the actions that would be taken in the Recreation Area and Susan McMahon discussed the actions and analysis that would be taken by the Water Quality section and possible treatment and permit issues. Michael Shields discussed concerns about infrastructure and is reviewing

possible coatings that could be placed on some of the material to discourage the mussels from attaching. Ron Merckling briefly discussed a detailed communication plan to develop how to communicate with the different customer groups.

President Baggerly asked for a presentation to the Board on November 22nd.

11. Resolution changing the meeting time of the second regular Board meeting of November 2017, cancelling the second regular Board meeting of December 2017, rescheduling the November Finance Committee to November 14th and cancelling the December Water Resources meeting.

ADOPTED AS MODIFIED

Mr. Wickstrum mentioned a change to the resolution as it is the Executive Committee that is to be changed not the Finance Committee. Director Bergen mentioned she would not be able to attend the November 22nd meeting.

On the motion of Director Hicks, seconded by Director Kaiser the above resolution as modified was adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word, Baggerly
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

Resolution is numbered 17-28

12. Information Items:

- a. Lake Casitas Monthly Status Report for September 2017.
- b. ACWA 2017 Fall Conference Memorandum.
- c. Executive Committee Minutes – 10/13/17.
- d. Finance Committee Minutes – 10/20/17.
- e. Investment Report.

On the motion of Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Word, the Information items were approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word, Baggerly
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

President Baggerly moved the meeting to closed session at 5:15 p.m.

14. Closed Session

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION
(Subdivision (a) of Section 54956.9

Name of Case: Paula Suzanne Taylor v. Casitas Municipal Water District;
Stephen E. Wickstrum and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive.
Civil Action No. 2:16-cv-7864-BRO-E.

President Baggerly moved the meeting back to open session at 5:54 with Mr. Mathews stating the board met with special counsel who provided an update to the board and no formal action was taken.

15. Adjournment.

President Baggerly adjourned the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Bill Hicks, Secretary