

Minutes of the Casitas Municipal Water District
Board Meeting Held
October 12, 2016

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held October 12, 2016 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 Kaiser, Baggerly, Word, Hicks and Bergen were present. Also present were Steve Wickstrum, General Manager, Rebekah Vieira, Clerk of the Board, and Attorney, John Mathews. There were two staff members and nine members of the public in attendance. President Kaiser led the group in the flag salute.

Mr. Wickstrum informed the board that the closed session, item 8, would not be held.

1. Public Comments (items not on the agenda – three minute limit).

Stephani Vang addressed the board regarding concerns about the water situation. As a 30 year resident I am used to walking at the lake and watching it go down. I attended the drought summit but you forgot to mention a solution. First if there isn't a plan yet it is time to formulate a plan. If there is a plan please communicate what you can to the public. There is a lot of tension and anxiety in Ojai regarding this topic. It could be alleviated if people knew there was a plan beyond conservation. If connecting to the state water project is part of the plan you need to outline that and if not outline the options. What is the process for state water? What happens next? When would work start, what are the pros and cons? It was mentioned at the city council meeting that Supervisor Bennett is against the plan. How much water will we get, what will it cost and how will you pay for it? Please consider a forum where you can address some of these concerns, some way to communicate with the community.

Michael Shapiro, an Ojai resident stated the lack of a plan has been publically enunciated. This group has operated in the shadows and is the most un-transparent government body in the valley. Meetings are not videotaped and livestreamed. Is this a group that wants secrecy? I think you do want to communicate with the public. This is archaic, can't you afford a simple video system for the public to have input. It is time to be brought into the 21st century. No excuse. It should be done immediately. You will ensure much greater confidence among the public. The longer you wait to do it; the distrust will continue to permeate the Ojai Valley. Mr. Wickstrum you are a good engineer but you need to know your communication skills are lacking. The Mayor and City Manager invited you to something you should have called them back. We need to come together with open two way conversation.

George Galgas, resident of Oak View circulated a paper on Cloud Seeding as an answer to the five year drought. The benefits are that it would help to recharge the watershed for the groundwater we need, provide water for steelhead. It is imperative to take immediate action and pursue remedies before encountering yet another year of droughts. Director Baggerly mentioned that the County of Santa Barbara is continuing with their cloud seeding program and has

done so over the years. He added that he asked Jeff Pratt if they would do cloud seeding and the answer was no.

Angelo Spandrio provided a handout and said he had responses from three companies on proposals and quotes for a sediment study. The handout illustrates the situation with connecting a water line to the state water tie in. He suggested running as big a pipe as possible and consideration of running a 30 inch pipe the whole way. He also suggested having pipes in place to perhaps run desal in the system at some point in the future. Mr. Spandrio also commented that it is critical that the public know the costs for the water. How much more expensive will it be. People need to know what it will cost to live here. Director Baggerly commented that four of us on the board saw the desal presentation for Calleguas. Director Hicks added it will take 13 years and 2 billion dollars. Director Word added that in order to get a final permit you have to show you are using every drop of reclaim water. Director Bergen added the financing will be the critical part of this as we have a small population and a limit to the amount that people can pay. Mr. Spandrio added we may see an assessment to the Ojai Valley for the tie in and the sooner the public knows that is critical. They need to see the cost estimate to see the impact of living here if we don't get more rain. President Kaiser added our way of life is changing, every drop makes a difference. Our way of life will change if Mother Nature does not help us out. There are lots of costs for these projects and a major financial hurdle to overcome. In closing, Mr. Spandrio added we are at the end of the pipe in Ojai Valley. We have to figure out a way to pump water and what the cost will be.

William Weirick said he has been coming to meetings and you have received concerns from constituents. It is hard to hear what you are saying. You should have mics and amplification. They cannot hear in the back. This needs to be done right away. You have to serve the needs of your constituents. We are having once a month discussions at Ojai City Council meetings. The last meeting we invited your General Manager and Chair to speak to us. Mr. Baggerly showed up and we appreciate that. But you said you didn't know why you were there. The City's official position is to inquire of this board expressing a concern about the connection to the State Water Project and policy goals to be served by that connection. I as individual city council person feel it is an important matter to take a policy position on. What policy goals hope to be served by what is part of a regional collaboration and in terms of the type and management of the connection to the State Water Project? I do not think this is a technical issue or management issue. It is an important policy issue for this board to take a policy on officially. As lead administrator for three state water project entitlements, what you hope will be achieved and vision for the connection into the future. I urge you to take a policy position and not treat it as a management/technical issue.

Mr. Mathews stated that he appreciates the comments that were made today. The issue as I see it, I agree with Mr. Weirick, part of this is policy. Policies are best done if based on all the facts. The last several years, this board has looked at issues, and know they are important to the valley and are looking at all alternatives. Our district manager wrestles with this. It is a complicated issue with a lot of moving parts, my advice to the board is to make sure you have

the facts before you make a policy decision. It may not be as fast as what you want. This is a road, path, it takes time. There is frustration and perhaps the board can be better getting things out. There is no intent to hide or operate in secrecy. We want to get the best solution.

President Kaiser added any policy making board has to have the information before them for an informed decision. It has to be based on information to make an accurate informed decision. I directed the General Manager to meet with your City Manager and the manager of Golden State Water Company so your manager can provide information to your council. Mr. Mathews added Steve works for this board. The public believes Casitas has all the answers. We need help from the City of Ojai and Golden State and Steve will take direction from this board when they decide the direction they will go.

William Weirick added that is critical in working together. It will be collaborative efforts among agencies with political pressure and financing issues. We have to work together to have a vision and fund it. Have to do it together.

Director Baggerly added this board has given staff direction to be at the table for the intertie for the State Water Project. We are involved and will stay involved.

2. General Manager comments.

Mr. Wickstrum reported on a meeting with consultants to consider their qualifications for the state water tie in project. Mr. Spandrio asked if he could get feedback from the meeting. Mr. Wickstrum stated you probably would not see a lot of information until it is agendized by the City. Mr. Wickstrum added that he spent two and a half hours with Mr. Spandrio on Thursday talking about the sediment issue. Mr. Spandrio said he would like to be at the Ventura City Council meeting.

Mr. Wickstrum then informed the board of his attendance at the Matilija Restoration Roundtable with Secretary John Laird, Julia Brownley, Hanna Beth Jackson and Das Williams. There were discussions on the options and the questions are on the financing. Hannah Beth Jackson said if the projects are shovel ready to get them submitted. This was followed by a meeting at the Oak View Community Center a few hours later which was informative.

The One Love fest at Lake Casitas went well and staff did a good job.

Mr. Wickstrum then informed the board the he and President Kaiser would be part of the state water tour on Friday and Saturday. The main topic on Saturday will be on the twin tunnels. We will hear more about that project and the peril for the delta and potential for earthquake.

Mr. Wickstrum reported that the Mira Monte well is producing 300 gpm. Mr. Spandrio asked if it is pulling water from the Upper Ventura River Basin. Mr. Wickstrum explained that it does not affect the Ventura River Wells. The issue

was high nitrates as there were either septic tanks or a chicken farm in that area. This is within the boundaries of the Upper Ventura GSA that is being developed.

We have received many calls on water allocations with the \$5 surcharge that has been put in place and we found a few things to refigure for a couple of customers. The water conservation crew is getting very busy and will be recommending the need for additional help. Last night we discovered a water theft, the sheriff was called in and we are dealing with it.

Mr. Wickstrum informed the board that he would be bringing forward to the Executive Committee the possibility of moving forward with a study on the sedimentation at Lake Casitas. We will put out an RFP and come back with cost estimates to consider going forward as a project.

Mr. Wickstrum informed the board of the new sign at the Lake Casitas entrance that was built by staff.

Mr. Wickstrum then mentioned the AP report on Casitas' water conservation numbers. We were slammed hard this last week for being one of the worst water conservation areas. That is not true. We had to lump Ag use in with residential and system losses. It isn't a valid number. Staff is now being required to submit a list of Ag constituents. Carpinteria water was then asked for APN's and other data. There is a government code where we can provide confidential information to another government agency but we usually don't let that customer data out. We will review that with our attorney. President Kaiser asked if what the state is asking for is an invasion of privacy. Mr. Wickstrum stated it could be if they don't handle the information properly. We have to do due diligence to protect our customer's information.

3. Board of Director comments.

President Kaiser thanked the General Manager for the field trip to the lake and the old dam. The old structure is prominent and does not show much sedimentation. He suggested the other board members take a look at it.

Director Hicks stated if Steve Bennett is against the hook up to state water, we have a big political issue. Mr. Wickstrum added that part of it in fairness and understanding is the unreliability of state water. Director Baggerly commented that it is the California syndrome; you use up your own water resource until it is gone and then you supplement it from someone else's. We have not done that. We have done a good job at serving our constituents and we will continue to do that.

4. Board of Director Verbal Reports on Meetings Attended.

Director Hicks reported on his attendance at the meeting regarding Matilija Dam and his concern about us not diverting and that the Ventura County Star stated in their article that the lake would have to be at least 80% for them to do the project.

Director Baggerly reported that he attended the Ojai City Council meeting last night and mentioned that people are very concerned about the drought and we have to accommodate the concerns as best we possibly can.

President Kaiser mentioned that he would be heading up to Sacramento to tour the State Water Project.

5. Consent Agenda ADOPTED

- a. Minutes of the September 28, 2016 Board Meeting.

The Consent Agenda was offered by Director Baggerly, seconded by Director Hicks and passed by the following roll call vote:

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

6. Review of District Accounts Payable Report for the Period of 9/26/16 – 10/12/16. APPROVED

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

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

7. Information Items: APPROVED

- a. Lake Casitas Recreation Area Report for August, 2016
- b. Recreation Committee Minutes.
- c. September 14, 2016 letter from the City of Ojai regarding water supply and the State Water Project.
- d. Water Consumption Report.
- e. CFD No. 2013-1 (Ojai) Monthly Cost Analysis.
- f. Investment Report.

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

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

8. Closed Session CANCELLED

- a. (Govt. Code Sec. 54957)
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE/DISMISSAL/RELEASE

9. Adjournment

President Kaiser adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

James W. Word, Secretary