

**SAN GORGONIO PASS WATER AGENCY**  
1210 Beaumont Avenue, Beaumont, California 92223

**Official Minutes**  
**Board of Directors Regular Meeting**  
**December 2, 2024**

THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN PERSON,  
WITH PUBLIC AVAILABILITY PROVIDED VIA ZOOM.

**1. Call to Order, Invocation, and Pledge of Allegiance**

The San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors meeting was called to order by President Valdivia at 6:00 p.m., Monday, December 2, 2024, at the office of the Agency. Director Duncan gave the invocation and President Valdivia led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Roll Call**

President Valdivia requested a roll call.

**Board Present:**

Mickey Valdivia, President  
Chander Letulle, Vice-President  
Robert Ybarra, Treasurer  
Kevin Walton, Secretary  
Blair M Ball, Director  
Ron Duncan, Director  
Larry Smith, Director

**Staff Present:**

Lance Eckhart, General Manager  
Thomas Todd, Jr., Chief Financial Officer  
Maricela Cabral, Exec. Asst. /Clerk of the Board  
Emmett Campbell, Sr. Water Resources Planner  
Matt Howard, Operations Manager

**Consultant Present:**

Jeff Ferre, Legal Counsel

A quorum was present.

**3. Adoption and Adjustment of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted as published.

**4. Public Comment**

Joyce McIntyre, Board President of Yucaipa Valley Water District thanked and recognized Director Duncan for his years of dedicated service on the SGPWA Board and expressed gratitude and admiration for his support and kindness.

**5. Consent Calendar**

- A. Approve Minutes of the November 18, 2024, Regular Meeting of the San Geronio Pass Water Agency Board of Directors
- B. Approve the Finance and Budget Committee Meeting Report for November 2024

On a motion by Director Duncan, seconded by Vice President Letulle, the board approved the Consent Calendar as presented.

Approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Duncan, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

**Motion passed 7-0.**

## 6. Reports

### A. General Manager's Report

General Manager, Lance Eckhart reported on the following:

1. Will serve as a panelist at the Excellence in Innovation session during the ACWA Fall Conference, where SGPWA is a contender for the award.
2. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced a 5% allocation.
3. The State Water Resources Control Board, with support from CalRural, awarded a \$15 million grant to the Cabazon Water District.

### B. Legal Counsel's Report

Counsel, Jeff Ferre provided an update on two Brown Act bills set to take effect on January 1, 2025:

1. AB 2715, which clarifies that threats to infrastructure encompass cybersecurity risks.
2. AB 2302, which restricts remote participation to two instances for just causes and five emergencies annually.

## 7. New Business – Discussion and Possible Action:

### A. Authorize the General Manager to Execute a Contract with California Rural Water Systems Association to Assist with the Needs of Small Water Systems, including Economically Disadvantaged Communities, for a total amount not to exceed \$155,000

Operations Manager Matt Howard provided an overview of the small water systems program, highlighting its workflow and accomplishments, such as needs assessments, TMF reports, and preliminary engineering reports. He also outlined the proposed scope of work for the remainder of the fiscal year, which includes training and workshops, compliance and needs assessments, and grant application support.

The Board discussed the value of the program and the importance of compliance assessments, with Vice President Letulle highlighting the cost-effectiveness of the program compared to hiring consultants.

On a motion by Treasurer Ybarra, seconded by Vice President Letulle, the board authorized the General to execute a contract with California Rural Water Systems

Association to assist with the needs of small water systems, including economically disadvantaged communities, for a total amount not to exceed \$155,000.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Duncan, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

**Motion passed 7-0.**

**B. Approve Second Amendment to Agreement Providing GAP Funding to Cabazon Water District**

Chief Financial Officer Thomas Todd, Jr. provided background on the second amendment extending the gap funding agreement with Cabazon Water District to June 30, 2025, to allow for the completion of grant reimbursements and additional grant funding.

Vice President Letulle recommends structuring future agreements as evergreen with a sunset provision, emphasizing the importance of establishing a firm deadline for reimbursement.

On a motion by Director Duncan, seconded by Treasurer Ybarra, the board approved the second amendment to the Agreement for Providing Gap Funding to Cabazon Water District to allow for the completion of grant reimbursements and additional grant funding.

Approved by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Smith, Walton, Duncan, Ybarra, Letulle, Ball, Valdivia

Noes: None

Absent: None

**Motion passed 7-0.**

**C. Review of Director's Technology Policy**

Chief Financial Officer Thomas Todd, Jr. provided background on the current Director's Technology Policy outlining the guidelines for device use, cellular plans, applications, security, and support. The Board discussed the current policy and deliberated on whether any revisions were necessary. The Board provided feedback and suggestions on revisions to the policy and decided to table the item and bring the updated policy back for further review.

**8. Reports - Directors and Committee Report**

Director Smith expressed appreciation to General Manager Eckhart for his decision to have the agency join Urban Water Institute. General Manager Eckhart explained the benefits of participating in such organizations, including networking, name recognition, and access to valuable programs and initiatives.

Director Walton announced recent changes in the Budget and Finance Committee, suggesting a new approach to the committee's purpose as a screening and more thorough review process before bringing recommendations to the full board.

Treasurer Ybarra announced the City of Banning's Christmas Parade will be held on December 7, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. and mentioned his role in escorting Santa Claus. He also thanked Director Duncan for being a mentor and wished him luck in his future endeavors.

Vice President Letulle announced he will be attending the GOV AI Symposium, focusing on AI policy for districts and cities.

Director Ball reported he attended the November 21, 2024, Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District Special Meeting of the Board of Directors – Engineering Workshop. Director Ball mentioned he will be attending the upcoming Handbook Committee meeting. He also expressed appreciation and gratitude to Director Duncan for his 12 years of service on the Board and as a past President.

President Valdivia reported he will be attending the upcoming ACWA Fall Conference and will unfortunately miss General Manager Eckhart's session due to his commitment to attend the Riverside County Flood Control meeting on December 5, 2024.

President Valdivia apologized for not announcing the agency's closure during the previous meeting and expressed support for remote work during the holiday season. Clerk Cabral provided an overview of the closure and remote work schedule for the upcoming holidays, including specific dates for vacation and office closures. President Valdivia emphasized the importance of adhering to the established closure protocols.

President Valdivia acknowledged Director Duncan's long-term involvement, commitment and depth of knowledge which has been invaluable. Insights provided especially on financial commitments and critical projects like DCP and Sites Reservoir which have been instrumental in helping navigate complex decisions. On behalf of his fellow colleagues, he echoed Director Ball's sentiments in wishing him and Suzanne health, happiness, and success in their future endeavors.

Director Duncan reflected on his tenure with the SGPWA Board, expressing gratitude for the friendships and support he has experienced during his service. He extended his appreciation to his colleagues for their guidance and collaboration over the years.

Director Duncan shared his decision to step down from his position, emphasizing his commitment to family and community by supporting Sarah Wargo as his successor. He acknowledged Director Walton for his significant contributions, expressing heartfelt gratitude for his support and friendship.

In closing, Director Duncan extended his thanks to General Manager Eckhart, agency staff, and emphasized the importance of holding onto key team members. Lastly, he thanked external partners, recognizing their efforts, dedication and expressed confidence in the future of the agency under new leadership.

## **9. Topics for Future Agendas**

No topics were discussed.

**10. Announcements**

President Valdivia reviewed the following announcements:

- A. Winter Wonderland Health and Safety Fair, December 14, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.  
*(IERCD will be hosting a booth on behalf of SGPWA)*
- B. Regular Board Meeting, December 16, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
- C. Finance & Budget Committee Meeting, December 19, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.
- D. Office closed in observance of Christmas and New Year's Holiday's, December 23-Janury 1, 2025.

**11. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, President Valdivia adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, December 16, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

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Kevin Walton, Secretary of the Board

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