
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

Meeting Minutes
In-person/Hybrid Meeting

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board Office

Carmel Room
Los Angeles, CA 90013

December 21, 2023

Chair Camacho called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Chair Camacho explained the process for participation in the virtual meeting and that the Board has Spanish interpretation services available through the Zoom platform. She announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Aldo Renteria, one of the Spanish interpreters, provided instructions on how to participate in the meeting in Spanish.

Chair Camacho acknowledged that all Board members were participating virtually.

Item 1 – Roll Call

Board Members Present: Sabrina Ashjian, Norma Camacho, Michael Méndez, and David Nahai.

Board Member Absent: Marissa Christiansen.

Staff Present: Susana Arredondo, Jenny Newman, Hugh Marley, Helen Rowe, Stephanie Yu (Remote), Amelia Carder (Remote), Adriana Nuñez (Remote), Aurel Agarin, Khalid Abdullah, Gerardo Rabelo, LB Nye, Russ Colby, Jeong-Hee Lim, Brian Anderson, Adam Taing, Steven Webb and Narmira Jain.

Item 2 – Order of Agenda

Chair Camacho asked the Executive Officer, Susana Arredondo if there were any changes to the agenda.

There were no changes to the Order of Agenda.

Item 3 – Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes for the November 16, 2023, Meeting.

Chair Camacho suggested changes before adoption of the minutes. She made a correction on page 4 to change trial to tribal and on page 7 to change Camcho to Camacho.

There were no objections from the Board members.

MOTION: Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to approve the November 16, 2023, draft meeting minutes with the suggested changes made by Chair Camacho

Seconded by: Board Member Ashjian

Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

Sabrina Ashjian - Yea

Norma Camacho – Yea

Marissa Christiansen – absent

Michael Méndez – Yea

David Nahai – Yea

Item 4 – Board Member Communications

- a. Ex Parte Disclosure (Board Members will identify any discussions they may have had requiring disclosure pursuant to Government Code section 11430.40.)

There were no ex parte disclosures reports by Board members.

- b. Board Member Reports (The Board Members may discuss communications, correspondence, or other items of general interest relating to matters within the Board's jurisdiction.)

Board Member Ashjian reported on the following:

- 1) Earlier during the week of December 21, 2023, she met with members of Los Angeles Waterkeeper. They discussed the Los Angeles Waterkeeper's platform, priorities, and policies. There was no discussion related to any specific Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) work or pending cases.
- 2) She acknowledged her one-year anniversary as a Board member.

Nothing to report from Board Member Méndez

Vice Chair Nahai reported on the following:

- 1) He mentioned that he serves as Chair for the Los Angeles Business Council (LACB). Vice Chair Nahai requested for the upcoming new year an introduction between the LARWQCB and the leadership of the LACB. Vice Chair Nahai hosted the LACB holiday party at his residence.
- 2) Vice Chair Nahai thanked LARWQCB staff for their leadership and service provided throughout 2023.

Chair Camacho reported on the following:

- 1) Chair Camacho thanked the LARWQCB staff and the Board members for their support throughout the year.
- 2) Chair Camacho mentioned her non-voting seat on the LA County Safe Clean Water Program (SCWP) on the Regional Oversight Committee. On December 7, 2023, the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) finalized the recommendations on the bi-annual report for SCWP.

Chair Camacho mentioned the following recommendations ROC is recommending to the LA County Board of Supervisors that relates to the LARWQCB:

- To establish water quality quantitative goals and develop a plan with timelines to accomplish these goals.
- To establish disadvantaged community investment quantitative goals and develop a plan with timelines to meet these goals.

The bi-annual report is available for review until January 8, 2024. On January 31, 2024, the ROC will hear comments from the bi-annual report review. The ROC will conduct monthly meetings.

Item 5 – Executive Officer’s Report

Susana Arredondo, Executive Officer, provided updates of the following items:

- 1) Garvey Garden Plaza LLC Administrative Civil Liability Order
- 2) Introductory meeting with U.S. EPA’s Region 9, Michael Montgomery, Director of Superfund and Emergency Management Division.
- 3) A tour of the Ventura Water Pure Ocean Outfall Project and the Ventura Water Reclamation Facility
- 4) An update on the Ballona Wetlands Project.

Chair Camacho opened the floor for Board members’ comments and questions.
Comments were made by Board Member Méndez and Vice Chair Nahai.

Item 6 – Update from State Water Board [Board Member Laurel Firestone]

The State Water Board Liaison provided an update of the following items:

- 1) Proposed Adoption of the Direct Portable Reuse Regulation
- 2) Update to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan
- 3) Proposed Adoption of the Amendments to the Water Quality Enforcement Policy
- 4) Commemoration of 100th SAFER Consolidation of Coachella
- 5) Applications for the debt forgiveness arrearages programs will close at the end of January 2024.
- 6) Eileen Sobeck will retire from the State Water Board and the end of the year. Eric Oppenheimer will be the new State Water Board Executive Officer.

Chair Camacho opened the floor for Board members’ comments and questions.
Comments were made by Chair Camacho and Board Member Méndez.

Item 7 – Public Forum

Speaker:

- Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay

Chair Camacho opened the floor for Board members’ comments and questions.
Comments were made by Vice Chair Nahai

Speakers (cont.):

- Caden Kavenaugh
- Walter Lamb, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust
- Caroline Ehren, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust
- Dr. Tom Williams

The Executive Officer, Susana Arredondo mentioned that Dr. Tom Williams' comments were for Item 13. She asked Legal Counsel, Stephanie Yu, for a recommendation regarding Dr. Williams' comments. Ms. Yu recommended that for Dr. Williams' comments to be considered he should repeat his comments during Item 13.

Speaker (cont.):

- Ray Tahir, TECS Environmental

Chair Camacho asked LARWQBC staff to respond to Mr. Tahir's comments.
Assistant Executive Officer, Jenny Newman and Dr. LB Nye, Section Manager, TMDL Program, responded to comments made by Mr. Tahir.

Vice Chair Nahai made comments and asked questions. Jenny Newman responded to his comments and questions.

Speaker (cont.):

- Charming Evelyn, Sierra Club

Item 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 – Uncontested Items

Chair Camacho stated the uncontested items as Items 8 through 12 for record.

Before Chair Camacho called for the vote, Sunny Wang, the City of Santa Monica spoke on Item 11. Comments were made by Chair Camacho and Vice Chair Nahai.

Chair Camacho asked for a Motion to approve uncontested Items 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. She then asked for a Second and Roll Call vote.

MOTION: Board Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to approve uncontested Items 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Seconded by: Board Member Méndez
Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

Sabrina Ashjian - Yea
Norma Camacho – Yea
Marissa Christiansen - Absent
Michael Méndez – Yea
David Nahai – Yea

Break: (10:22 a.m. to 10:35 a.m.)

Chair Camacho: Announced agenda Item 13 and administered the oath.

Item 13 – Consideration of Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements and NPDES Permit Renewal– General NPDES Permit for Discharge of Groundwater from Construction and Project Dewatering to Surface Waters in Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. General NPDES Permit No. CAG994004.

Staff Presentation: Augustine Anijiello, Supervisor, General Permitting Unit

Speakers:

- Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay
- Charming Evelyn, Sierra Club
- Ignacio Darnaude
- Jay Jacobson
- Dr. Tom Williams, Sierra Club California Water Committee
- Benjamin Harris, Los Angeles Waterkeeper

Chair Camacho opened the floor for Board members' comments, questions, and deliberations.

Board Member Ashjian, Chair Camacho, Board Member Méndez, and Vice Chair Nahai made comments and asked questions. Jenny Newman and Augustine Anijiello responded to the Board members' comments and questions.

Chair Camacho asked for a Motion to approve Item 13. Next, she asked for a Second and Roll Call vote.

MOTION: Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to approve the tentative Waste Discharge Requirements and NPDES Permit Renewal– General NPDES Permit for Discharge of Groundwater from Construction and Project Dewatering to Surface Waters in Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties with the LARWQCB staff recommended change sheet. He requested a continuation of the conversation on this Item for the upcoming January 2024 Board Member Retreat.

Seconded by: Board Member Ashjian
Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

Sabrina Ashjian - Yea
Norma Camacho – Yea
Marissa Christiansen - Absent
Michael Méndez – Yea
David Nahai – Yea

Item 14 – Consideration of a Tentative Resolution regarding the selection of Basin Planning priorities for the 2023 – 2025 Triennial Review was postponed to a future Board meeting.

Item 15 – Closed Session

Legal counsel, Stephanie Yu, announced the Board would discuss Item 15c., f., g., k., u., and v in closed session.

Chair Camacho announced that the Board members would go into closed session after a short break. The meeting would be adjourned after the closed session. And the webcast portion of the Board meeting was concluded.

Lunch Break: 12 noon to 12:20 p.m.

(The Board reconvened to closed session at 12:20 p.m. and adjourned at 1:29 p.m.)

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. (For more detailed information on any matter at our meetings, you may contact Helen Rowe at (213) 576-6612 or email at: Helen.Rowe@waterboards.ca.gov and she will provide an electronic copy of the transcript or audio, when available.)

Written and submitted by Helen Rowe, Board Clerk on: February 23, 2024

Signature on File