
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

November 16, 2023

Chair Camacho called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.

She 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.

Note: Michael Méndez was present for roll call. He had technical difficulties and could not be heard during roll call. David Nahai departed early after the closed session.

Staff Present: Susana Arredondo, Jenny Newman, Hugh Marley, Helen Rowe, Stephanie Yu (Remote), Amelia Carder (Remote), Adriana Nuñez (Remote), Aurel Agarin, Khalid Abdullah, Alfredo Duran, Gerardo Rabelo, LB Nye, Russ Colby, Jeong-Hee Lim, Brian Anderson, Bronwyn Kelly, Elisha Wakefield, Thomas Siebels and Eric Nelson.

Item 2 – Order of Agenda

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

Executive Officer, Susana Arredondo recommended a short lunch or no lunch break.

Chair Camacho asked for clarification if any agenda items were moving from contested calendar to uncontested calendar items.

Jenny Newman, Assistant Executive Officer stated for the record that Items 9, 10, 11 and 12 were uncontested calendar items.

Chair Camacho asked Bronwyn Kelly to recognize a staff member for a Special Staff Recognition Award.

Bronwyn Kelly, Industrial Permitting Unit Supervisor, presented Thomas Siebels with the Superior Accomplishment Award. She acknowledged his 33 years of service with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB) and announced his upcoming retirement.

Comments and Congratulatory remarks were made by Jenny Newman and Chair Camacho.

Item 3 – Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes for the October 19, 2023, Meeting.

Chair Camacho asked Legal Counsel, Stephanie Yu, for a suggested change to the minutes before the adoption of the October 19, 2023 meeting minutes.

Stephanie Yu suggested changing to the draft minutes to replace “(The Board met in closed session from 11:38 a.m. to 1:33 p.m.)” with “(The Board adjourned to closed session at 11:38 a.m. and reconvened in open session at 1:33 p.m.)”

There were no objections from the Board members.

MOTION: Board Member Ashjian made a motion to approve the October 19, 2023, draft meeting minutes with the suggested change made by Stephanie Yu.

Seconded by: Vice Chair Nahai

Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

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

Item 4 – Appointment of a Board Member to the Governing Board of the Santa Monica - Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC).

MOTION: Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to approve the appointment of Board Member Sabrina Ashjian as a voting member of the SMBRC’s Governing Board to replace former LARWQCB Member James Stahl’s appointment after vacating his position in August 2023.

Seconded by: Michael Méndez
Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

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

Item 5 – 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.)

Board Member Ashjian reported on one communication. She received an email letter from Heal the Bay, Los Angeles Waterkeeper and NRDC. The letter was a request for a meeting with LARWQCB staff to discuss the potential settlement for the Hyperion Advanced Water Purification Facility.

Board Member Méndez, Vice Chair Nahai and Chair Camacho reported they received the same email letter mentioned by Board Member Ashjian.

There were no ex parte disclosures reports from the 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) She attended the annual Water Quality Coordinating Committee (WQCC) meeting in Sacramento.
- 2) She attended the LA Sanitation District Centennial Celebration.
- 3) Today, November 16, 2023, the Emmett Institute is conducting an electrification panel on the Los Angeles and Long Beach ports.

Board Member Méndez reported on the following:

- 1) In October 2023, he attended (virtually) the annual WQCC meeting.
- 2) On November 15, 2023, the fifth National Climate Assessment Report was released. He is a contributing author for the Southwest region. Board Member Méndez reports on the LARWQCB.

Vice Chair Nahai reported on the following:

- 1) He attended the WQCC meeting. He attended the meeting in-person on the first day and virtually the second day. He mentioned the presentations on tribal issues. He asked how the Water Board is accommodating and recognizing

tribal concerns regarding water quality issues.

- 2) On November 24, 2023, the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACTI) held an evening event. Vice Chair Nahai is a Board Member of the LACTI. He requested that LARWQCB collaborate with LACTI because of the many young startup companies that are in the water industry. These companies possess innovative creative ideas, products, and technologies the LARWQCB should be aware of.
- 3) Later, today, November 16, 2023, the Los Angeles Business Council (LABC) will hold their 53rd Annual Architectural Awards Ceremony. The award ceremony will focus on affordable and homeless housing and a discussion on the housing crisis. Vice Chair Nahai serves as Chair of the LABC.

Chair Camacho reported on the following:

- 1) On October 23 and 24, 2023, she attended the WQCC meeting. She suggested a discussion on tribal engagement be a part of the LARWQCB's annual board retreat held in January 2024.
- 2) On October 26, 2023, Chair Camacho attended the LA Sanitation District Centennial Celebration.
- 3) She attended the Regional Oversight Committee for Safe Clean Water (SCWP.) There was an extensive discussion on the upcoming biennial SCWP report. Chair Camacho identified herself as a subcommittee member to assist with refining the bi-annual report. December 7, 2023, is the deadline to submit the bi-annual report to the full Regional Oversight Committee for review.
- 4) On November 2, 2023, she attended the dedication ceremony of the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water Southern California Innovation Center. Grace F. Napolitano attended the dedication ceremony.
- 5) Chair Camacho attended the Annual Southern California Water Coalition Dinner. The former California State Speaker, Anthony Rendon spoke at this event; retiring General Managers, Mike Marcus, Orange County Water District and Marty Adams, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, were honored at this event.

Item 6 – Executive Officer's Report

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

- 1) The Fire Underneath the 10 Freeway
- 2) The Tribal EPA and U.S. Region 9 2023 Annual Conference
- 3) The Watershed Regulatory Section
- 4) Administrative Civil Liability Issued to Venture Drilling, Inc.

- 5) The Superior Accomplishment Award for retiring LARWQCB staff member, Thomas Siebels. The Executive Officer expressed that Thomas Siebels was very grateful for the recognition and she congratulated him on his award.

Item 7 – Update from State Water Board [Board Member Laurel Firestone]

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

- 1) The one-year Water Supply Strategy Progress Report was released by Governor Newsom.
- 2) A workshop was held in Hanford for the first subbasin proposed for designation as a probationary basin under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). A determination on the proposed designation will be made in April 2024.
- 3) Starting on November 17, 2023, a series of workshop hearings with the State Water Board will be held in-person regarding updates to the Sacramento San Joaquin Bay Delta Water Quality Control plan. The public comment period was extended until mid-January 2024.
- 4) The State Water Board adopted guidelines for a second round of arrearages payments for the customer debt forgiveness program. The application period opened on November 1, 2023; customers must apply within 60 days.
- 5) An overview of the State Water Board’s site cleanup sub-account or SCAP programs.

Chair Camacho opened the floor for Board members’ questions.

Vice Chair Nahai and Chair Camacho made comments and asked questions. State Water Board Member Firestone responded to their comments and questions.

Item 8 – Public Forum

Speaker:

- Alison Wu, Heal the Bay presented the Beach Report Card.

Chair Camacho opened the floor for Board members’ questions.

Vice Chair Nahai, Board Member Méndez, and Chair Camacho made comments and asked questions. Allison Wu responded to the Board members’ comments and questions.

Item 8 – (Cont.)

Speakers:

- Walter Lamb, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust
Jenny Newman, Assistant Executive Officer responded to comments made by Walter Lamb.
- Benjamin Harris, LA Waterkeeper
- Ray Tahir, TECS Environmental

Items 9, 10, 11 and 12 – Uncontested Items

Chair Camacho stated the uncontested item as Items 9 through 12 for the record. She asked for a Motion to approve uncontested Items 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 9, 10, 11, and 12

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

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

Item 13 – Consideration of tentative Time Schedule Order for AES Alamitos LLC (Alamitos Generating Station), Long Beach, CA. NPDES No. CA0001139.

Staff Presentation: Bronwyn Kelly, Industrial Permitting Unit Supervisor

Speakers:

- Mark Miller, AES
- Joe Geever, Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust
- Nela Cook, Downtown Los Angeles Anchor
- Amy Smith, CREEDLA
- Zach Strasters, CREED LA
- Shomari, Davis IBEW Local 11
- Benajmin Harris, Los Angeles Waterkeeper
- Omar Galindo, UA Plumbers 78
- Gus Torres, UA Local 250
- Daniel Michel
- Henry Rogers, Harbor Association of Industry and Commerce
- Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay
- Katie Mills, TreePeople
- Colin Averill, City of Long Beach Public Works
- Jan Smutny-Jones, Independent Energy Producers
- Eric Saavedra

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

Board Members Ashjian and Méndez, Vice Chair Nahai and Chair Camacho made comments and asked questions. Bronwyn Kelly and Jenny Newman responded to the

Board members' comments and questions.

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

MOTION: Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to approve the tentative Time Schedule Order for AES Alamitos LLC (Alamitos Generating Station), Long Beach, CA. NPDES No. CA0001139.

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

Chair Camacho: Announced agenda Item 14 and administered the oath.

Item 14 – Consideration of a proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region to establish a site-specific water quality objective (SSO) for chloride in reach 6 of the Los Angeles River

Staff Presentation: Elisha Wakefield, Supervisor, TMDL and Non-point Source Unit

Speakers:

- Dave Pedersen, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District

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

Chair Camacho commended the LARWQCB staff for working with the Las Virgenes Municipal Water District to develop the site-specific water quality objective.

Chair Camcho asked for a Motion to approve Item 14. Next, she asked for a Second and Roll Call vote.

MOTION: Board Member Ashjian made a motion to approve a proposed amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region to establish a site-specific water quality objective (SSO) for chloride in reach 6 of the Los Angeles River with the staff-proposed changes.

Seconded by: Board Member Méndez

Legal Counsel, Stephanie Yu, asked for clarification that Board Member Ashjian's motion to approve Item 14 included the staff-proposed changes. Board Member Ashjian affirmed that it did, and Board Member Méndez agreed with the clarification.

Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

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

Lunch Break/Closed Session

Item 16 – Closed Session

Legal counsel, Amelia Carder, announced the Board was going into closed session to discuss Item 16.r., iii. Consideration of the appointment, employment, or evaluation of performance about a public employee. (Gov Code § 11126, subd. (a).)

(The Board adjourned to closed session at 11:58 a.m. and reconvened open session at 12:45 p.m.)

Chair Camacho: Announced agenda Item 15.

Item 15 – Information Item an update on Proposition 1 Projects- Regional Board Staff, along with the State Water Resource Control Board Division of Financial Assistance Staff and Proposition 1 Project Grantees will present an overview of the Region's Proposition 1 Groundwater Grant Funded Projects intended to prevent and cleanup contamination of groundwater that serves or has served as a source of drinking water.

Staff Presentation: Eric Nelson, Engineering Geologist, Site Cleanup Program

Speakers:

- Alex Huang – Senior Engineering Geologist - State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Finance Assistance
- Christofer Coppinger – Senior Hydrogeologist - United Water Conservation District
- Randy Schoellerman – Executive Director - San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority
- Louis Rubalcaba – Manager of Project Management Office - Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
- Brian Partington – Manager of Hydrogeology - Water Replenishment District

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

Chair Camacho and Board Members Ashjian and Méndez asked questions and made comments. Brian Partington, Randy Schoellerman, and Eric Nelson responded to their comments and questions.

The meeting adjourned at 1:56 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: 12/21/2023

Signature On File