
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

Meeting Minutes
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality
Control Board Office

Carmel Room
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Chair Camacho called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

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

Carlos Rodriz, one of the Spanish interpreters, provided instructions on how to participate in the meeting in Spanish.

Item 1 – Roll Call

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

Note: Board Member Marissa Christiansen arrived late after the approval of the draft meeting minutes for the April 25, 2024 meeting and did not vote on Item 3.

Staff Present: Susana Arredondo, Jenny Newman, Russ Colby, Helen Rowe, Stephanie Yu, Amelia Carder, Khalid Abdullah, Gerardo Rabelo, Susana Lagudis, LB Nye, Art Heath, Jeong-Hee Lim, Brian Anderson, Steven Webb, Thizar Tintut-Williams, Don Tsai, Danielle Robinson and Bronwyn Kelly.

Item 2 – Order of Agenda

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

The EO asked for item 10 to be moved to the uncontested items calendar. And that Item 11 the Information Item can be heard after Item 7 Public Forum.

There were no objections to these requested changes.

Item 3 – Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes for the April 25, 2024, Meeting.

Chair Camacho asked for a Motion to approve the April 25, 2024, meeting minutes. She then asked for a Second and Roll Call vote.

MOTION: Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to approve the April 25, 2024, draft meeting minutes.

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.)

Board Member Christiansen reported on one communication.

She had a brief discussion with a colleague at the Nature Conservancy regarding a potential permit application for the Bowtie project at Taylor Yard.

- 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 Méndez reported on the following:

On June 1, 2024, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power will hold a dedicate ceremony honoring the former assemblymember Cindy Montanez. He will attend this event.

Board Member Ashjian reported on the following:

Board Member Ashjian reported that she received an email and a letter mailed by a member of the public to her home, which is not public information. She stated the communications were misogynistic, vitriolic, and threatening, and consistent with a broader societal trend discouraging capable individuals from serving their communities in elected and appointed positions. Board Member Ashjian voiced that she hopes this type of communication stops.

She requested members of the public, if they have arguments to address, to base them on facts, reasons, and issues in a quality way before the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQBC).

Board Member Ashjian serves as President of the National Women's Political Caucus. She is Vice President of California Women Lead. These organizations assist women serving in elected and appointed office.

Board Member Ashjian also reported that June 8, 2024, is World Oceans Day. She encouraged members of the public to attend this event. The next Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission meeting will be held on June 18, 2024.

Following Board Member Ashjian's report, Chair Camacho indicated her support for Board Member Ashjian's statements regarding the communications she has received and stated that other Board members have received similar types of communications over time. Chair Camacho stated that communications to Board members that include name calling and unjustified accusations were inappropriate and hoped they would cease. She reiterated that there is an opportunity for members of the public to communicate with Board members at meetings during public forum.

Board Member Christiansen reported on the following:

She has been on a personal sabbatical since the end of February 2024. She utilized her time to enrich her education in regenerative agriculture. Board Member Christiansen completed a four-week Climate Farm School course offered by Terra.do.

She also expressed support for Board Member Ashjian.

Chair Camacho reported on the following:

On April 29, 2024, Chair Camacho attended the Los Angeles County Water Plan Resiliency Summit. Lindsay Horvath, Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, attended the summit. One objective of the summit is for municipalities and agencies to show support for the water plan. She mentioned the LARWQCB is a part of the water plan and asked staff if there is anyway the regional Board could provide support for the water plan.

On May 4, 2024, Chair Camacho toured the former Kast Property Tank Farm Site in Carson. She commented on the site today, when the Information Item (an update on the former Kast Property Tank Farm) was presented to the LAWQCB.

On May 8, 2024, she attended the Los Angeles County Safe Clean Water Program Regional Oversight Committee meeting. The meeting included discussions on goals, objectives, and measurable goals.

Chair Camacho mentioned that the Water Quality Analysis Simulation Program (WASP) will be expanding and developing watershed specific long-range plans. Additional information will be provided later.

Item 5 – Executive Officer’s Report

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

- 1) The former Waymire Drum Company site.
The site cleanup and assessment has been conducted by a LARWQCB contractor using SB 544 funding, which was recently extended. Since June 5, 2019, U.S. EPA has been conducting an emergency response action at the Site. On May 13, 2024, the LARWQCB executive staff met with staff from DTSC and the State Water Board to discuss the process to formally request the U.S. EPA have the site listed on the National Priorities List and that full assessment and cleanup can be conducted under CERCLA with U.S. EPA as the lead agency. A formal request will be submitted through CalEPA.
- 2) This year 2024, the LARWQCB is participating in the yearly pre-holiday assessments for freshwater harmful algal blooms.
For the pre-holiday assessments, Emily Duncan, Senior Environmental Scientist and LARWQCB F-HAB Coordinator is working with State Water Board staff to assess local waterbodies for harmful algal blooms prior to major holiday. The LARWQCB recommends posting caution, warning, or danger advisories. Waterbody managers can choose to limit access to local waterbodies depending on their situation. LARWQCB will advise the regional Board of the results of the pre-Memorial Day holiday assessment.

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

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

- 1) In April 2024, the State Water Board (SWB) adopted a drinking water maximum contaminant level for hexavalent chromium, a cancer-causing contaminant. U.S. EPA adopted the first enforceable drinking water standard for PFAS substances, which is the first step that EPA has taken as part of its Strategic Roadmap.
- 2) The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)
Tulare Lake is the first sub-basin going through the probation process. In-mid April 2024, the SWB held a workshop on the Tule sub-basin. Tule is the second sub-basin in the probation process. The hearing for Tule will be held in September 2024.
- 3) A resolution was adopted to revise the interim mitigation payment calculation for the once through cooling mitigation.
- 4) A three-day public workshop was held to discuss voluntary agreements as part of the update to the Bay Delta plan.
- 5) The second meeting of the SAFER Advisory Group was held, SWB anticipates providing both the needs assessment and draft fund expenditure plan in the next one or two months. Public workshops will be held for these items.
- 6) Yesterday, May 22, 2024, the SWB held their annual workshop on the oversight of the Salton Sea Management Program.
- 7) The May 2024 Budget revisions. The new fiscal year budget will fund, hundred percent of the drinking water, wastewater infrastructure and state revolving fund resources. Some PFAS funding will be provided through federal funding. A significant amount of funding (100 million dollars) was not provided for water recycling in the revised budget.

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

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

Item 7 – Public Forum

Speakers:

- Ray Tahir, TESC Environmental

Chair Camacho: Announced the Information Item.

Item 11 – Information Item Update on the status of the ongoing cleanup activities at the Former Kast Property Tank Farm Site in Carson. Regional Board staff and stakeholders will brief the Regional Board on the cleanup activity under the Revised Cleaned and Abatement Order No. R4-2011-0046

Staff Presentation Introduction: Thizar Williams, Supervisor, Site Cleanup Program Unit III

Presentation by: Deny Gomez, Shell Oil Products US, and John R. Raymond (J.R.), City of Carson, Assistant City Manager

Speaker: Lula Davis-Holmes, Mayor, City of Carson

Presentation (cont.) Susana Lagudis, Los Angeles Water Board and Vanessa Kang, NakatomiPR

Presentation Acknowledgements and Closing Remarks: Thizar Williams

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

Comments and questions were asked by Board Members Ashjian, Christiansen and Méndez, Vice Chair Nahai and Chair Camacho. Deny Gomez and Thizar Williams responded to their comments and questions.

Item 10 – Consideration of Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements and NPDES Permit Renewal for University of Southern California, Wrigley Marine Science Center, Avalon, CA. NPDES No. CA0056651

Chair Camacho stated that Item 10 was uncontested. And asked legal counsel to introduce Item 10 for the record. Item 10 was introduced by legal counsel Stephanie Yu.

Chair Camacho asked for a Motion to approve Item 10. She then asked for a Second and Roll Call vote.

MOTION: Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to approve Item 10.

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

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

Break: (11:23 a.m. to 11:37 a.m.)

Chair Camacho: Announced agenda Item 8 and administered the oath.

Item 8 – Consideration of Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements and NPDES Permit Renewal for Avalon Wastewater Treatment Facility, City of Avalon, CA. NPDES No. CA0054372.

Staff Presentation: Steven Webb, Supervisor, Municipal Permitting Unit

Speakers:

- Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay
- Benjamin Harris, LA Waterkeeper

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

Comments and questions were made by Board Members Christiansen and Ashjian, Vice Chair Nahai, and Chair Camacho. Steven Webb, Assistant Executive Officer, Jenny Newman, Acting Assistant Executive Officer, Russ Colby, Watershed Regulatory Section, Manager, Jeong-Hee Lim and City of Avalon, Attorney, Samuel Johnson responded to the Board member's comments and questions.

Chair Camacho asked for a Motion to approve Item 8. Next, she asked for a Second and Roll Call vote.

MOTION: Vice Chair Nahai made a motion to Item 8.

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

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

Chair Camacho: Announced agenda Item 9 and administered the oath.

Item 9 – Consideration of Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements and NPDES Permit Renewal for City of Oxnard, Oxnard Water Resource Recovery Facility, Oxnard, CA. NPDES No. CA0054097.

Staff Presentation: Steven Webb, Supervisor, Municipal Permitting Unit

Speakers:

- Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay
- Benjamin Harris, LA Waterkeeper
- Tevin Schmitt, Wishtoyo Foundation

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

Comments and questions were made by Board Member Méndez, Vice Chair Nahai, Board Members Christiansen and Ashjian and Chair Camacho. Steven Webb and Jenny Newman responded to their comments and questions.

Chair Camacho asked for a Motion to approve Item 9. Next, she asked for a Second and Roll Call vote.

MOTION: Board Member Ashjian made a motion to approve Item 9.

Seconded by: Board Member Christiansen.

Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

Sabrina Ashjian - Yea

Norma Camacho – Yea

Marissa Christiansen – Yea

Michael Méndez – Yea

David Nahai – Yea

After the vote on Item 9, Board directions for staff, regarding Item 9 were requested by Board Member Christiansen. The directions were stated for the record by Jenny Newman.

Comments and questions regarding the Board directions were made by Board Member Méndez, Chair Camacho and Vice Chair Nahai. Jenny Newman responded to their comments and questions.

Item 13 – Closed Session

Legal counsel, Stephanie Yu announced the Board would discuss Item 12t.(iii), Consideration of the appointment, employment, or evaluation of performance about a public employee, in closed session.

Chair Camacho announced that the Board members would go into closed session and that the meeting would be adjourned after closed session. The webcast portion of the Board meeting was concluded. The Board went into closed session from 12:50 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned after closed session. (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: June 27, 2024

Signature on File

Helen Rowe