MINUTES OF THE SOUTHEAST WATER COALITION
REGULAR MEETING OF THE POLICY BOARD
THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southeast Water Coalition Joint Powers Authority was held on Thursday, August 1, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex, Sproul Room, 13000 Clarkdale Avenue, Norwalk CA 90650.

Chair Ana Valencia called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chuong Vo	City of Cerritos
Kevin Lainez	City of Commerce
Mario Trujillo	City of Downey
Todd Rogers	City of Lakewood
Ana Valencia	City of Norwalk
Andrew Lara	City of Pico Rivera
Joe Angel Zamora	City of Santa Fe Springs
Maria del Pilar Avalos	City of South Gate
Octavio Martinez	City of Whittier

STAFF AND GUESTS ON SIGN-IN SHEET:

Andrew Caraveo	City of Commerce - AE
Dan Mueller	City of Downey - AE
Derek Nguyen	City of Lakewood – AE
Glen Kau	City of Norwalk – AE
Gladis Deras	City of South Gate – AE
Joanna Moreno	City of Vernon – AE
Ray Cordero	City of Whitter – AE
Jacque Koontz	Norwalk Staff

Madeline Anderson	SEWC Staff
Nicholas Ghirelli	Richards Watson & Gershon

ITEM 2 – PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEM 3 - CONSENT CALENDAR

Director Rogers moved to approve the consent calendar.

The motion was seconded by Director Avalos and was approved by the following voice vote:

AYES:	**Vo, Lainez, Trujillo, Rogers, Valencia, Lara, Zamora, Avalos, Martinez**
NOES:	**None.**
ABSTAIN:	**None.**

Director Avalos noted that she was late to the previous meeting, but still approves the minutes.

ITEM 4 - CONSIDERATION OF SEWC SUPPORT FOR THOMAS BEKELE AS CITIES REPRESENTATIVE FOR CENTRAL BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT BOARD

Mr. Kau began by highlighting the fact that Thomas Bekele was elected by the cities as the representative on the CBMWD Board and that there has been recent disagreement after Mr. Bekele stated that he will need to step down but did not specify a timeframe. He did note that he will leave his position once it is filled. The notice of wanting to step down created controversy and now there is discussion of potential legal action and consequences.

Mr. Kau reiterated that the purpose of this agenda item is to express support for Thomas Bekele and recognize him as the rightful representative during the time between when he provided notice of his desire to step down and once his replacement is elected.

Mr. Zamora asked what the precautions are if a city does not support this item. He wanted to know if cities would be required to pay for legal support, but the purpose of this item was to express support, not pay for legal support.

Mr. Nguyen then provided more context around the purpose of this agenda item and clarified the importance of supporting Thomas, especially as Thomas supports policies that are very important to the SEWC Cities.

Mr. Nguyen also noted that the nomination process for Mr. Bekele's replacement started on May 22, 2024, and by Aug 27, 2024, there will be a replacement for Mr. Bekele. The nomination deadline was extended to August 16, 2024 to give cities more time to nominate candidates.

There was a discussion regarding the nomination process, which requires each city to nominate and vote for their candidate. Mr. Lara noted the challenges of serving on the board and stressed the need to support representatives like Bekele, who have worked hard to maintain transparency and keep cities informed.

Director Lara moved to approve the following:

a. Support Thomas Bekele as Cities Representative for Central Basin Municipal Water District Board.

The motion was seconded by Director Martinez and was approved by the following voice vote:

AYES: **Vo, Lainez, Trujillo, Rogers, Valencia, Lara, Zamora, Avalos, Martinez**

NOES: **None.**

ABSTAIN: **None.**

ITEM 5 – BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

There was a discussion on how meetings work after motions are made and it was agreed that there is an opportunity for questions to be asked after a motion and a second.

Additionally, Mr. Lara thanked SEWC for the support regarding PFAS issues. The letter that was written jointly really helped. The result was weekly meetings and they are excited to say that they just got their permit.

Ms. Avalos mentioned that South Gate was given $2 million for PFAS cleanup. Mr. Lara also mentioned that Pico Rivera was given startup money, but they will need to go back to representatives from WRD for operations and maintenance support.

Ms. Avalos asked for an update on the PFAS lawsuit and Mr. Ghirelli touched on updates regarding 3M and Dupont.

Ms. Valencia pointed out that the date on posting of the agenda should have read July 29, not August 29.

ITEM 6 – ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY CHAIR/LEAD AGENCY COMMENTS

Mr. Nguyen mentioned that the PFAS lawsuit is ongoing but there have been four companies that have agreed to settle. Mr. Nguyen also reiterated Mr. Lara's comment about the power of SEWC and the benefits of standing together united to get solutions.

ITEM 7 - ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

The next regular Southeast Water Coalition Board Meeting will be on October 3, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. at the Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex, Sproul Room, 13000 Clarkdale Avenue, Norwalk CA 90650.

_____ _____

Ana Valencia, Chair Date

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Ana Valencia

Ana Valencia, Chair

12/5/24

Date