MINUTES OF THE SOUTHEAST WATER COALITION
REGULAR MEETING OF THE POLICY BOARD
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Southeast Water Coalition Joint Powers Authority was held on Thursday, April 2, 2026 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 7:02 p.m. At the time the meeting was called to order, a quorum of members was present.

Ms. Madeline Gallagher took attendance, and the following Board of Directors members were present:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frank Aurelio Yokoyama	City of Cerritos
Mario Trujillo	City of Downey
Todd Rogers	City of Lakewood
Ana Valencia	City of Norwalk
Isabel Aguayo	City of Paramount
Joe Angel Zamora	City of Santa Fe Springs
Melissa Ybarra	City of Vernon
Octavio Martinez	City of Whittier

STAFF AND GUESTS ON SIGN-IN SHEET:

Alvin Papa	City of Cerritos – AE
Dan Mueller	City of Downey – AE
Derek Nguyen	City of Lakewood – AE
Michelle Tse	City of Paramount – AE
Chris Castillo	City of South Gate – AE
Joanna Moreno	City of Vernon – AE
Jacque Koontz	City of Norwalk Staff
Madeline Gallagher	SEWC Staff
Nicholas Ghirelli	Richards Watson & Gershon
Vera Robles DeWitt	Water Replenishment District (WRD)
Stephan Tucker	Water Replenishment District (WRD)

ITEM 2 – PUBLIC COMMENT

Director Valencia introduced Ms. DeWitt from WRD, who provided history on the relationship between WRD and SEWC and previous letters sent between the two entities. She noted that she wants to work together amicably and that WRD recently helped support a City member of SEWC.

There were no further comments.

ITEM 3 - CONSENT CALENDAR

Director Rogers moved to approve the consent calendar.

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

AYES:	**Yokoyama, Trujillo, Rogers, Valencia, Aguayo, Zamora, Ybarra, Martinez**
NOES:	**None.**
ABSTAIN:	**None.**

ITEM 4 - PRESENTATION BY THE ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCIES (ACWA)

Ms. Koontz Ms. Koontz introduced ACWA presenter Mr. Michael Cervantes, who joined virtually to outline ACWA membership and available resources. He reviewed ACWA's structure, including the executive committee, ten regions, and the active role of regional boards. He noted that SEWC cities are part of Region 8, covering the Los Angeles area, and encouraged participation in regional events and other opportunities offered throughout the year.

Mr. Cervantes highlighted ACWA's 13 standing committees, government relations work, and extensive advocacy efforts. He explained that ACWA tracks hundreds of bills for members, that State Legislative Committee meetings are open for listening, and that a monthly regulatory update email is available for those who join the distribution list.

He also summarized ACWA's major events, including regional gatherings, two annual conferences, workshops, webinars, a legislative symposium, and the February Washington, D.C. conference. He emphasized the strong networking opportunities at the spring conference in Sacramento and the fall conference in Anaheim, along with member pricing for all events.

Mr. Cervantes concluded by outlining ACWA's communications tools that members can access online or receive directly by email. He also noted that ACWA offers several award programs recognizing member agencies and their work.

ITEM 5 - DISCUSSION/ACTION REGARDING A POLICY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY LETTERS

Ms. Koontz stated that this item was brought forward because in November AE meeting, there was a discussion regarding the need for the AE to write and send letters on behalf of SEWC when deadlines do not allow sufficient time for prior approval at Board Meetings.

She noted that the issue arose specifically as a result of concerns surrounding state proposed public health goals for contaminants in drinking water and associated deadlines for public comment. She then presented the policy and standardized template that the AE put together for the Board's consideration and approval.

Director Zamora moved to approve the following:

a) Review and approve the draft policy and letter template that would allow the Administrative Entity to collectively send correspondence without Board approval, if necessary.

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

AYES: **Yokoyama, Trujillo, Rogers, Valencia, Aguayo, Zamora, Ybarra, Martinez.**

NOES: **None.**

ABSTAIN: **None.**

ITEM 6 – DISCUSSION/ACTION REGARDING UPDATE TO THE WATER REPLENISHMENT DISTRICT'S REQUEST TO JOIN THE SOUTHEAST WATER COALITION

Ms. Koontz provided context around the original letter from WRD and the consensus among the AE members that WRD's application should be discussed further. To help provide clarity and to develop a recommendation to the Board, an ad-hoc committee was formed.

The original plan was that once the subcommittee completed its review, they would provide an update to the AE at their March meeting followed by a recommendation from the AE to the Board in April.

However, this most recent letter from WRD, dated February 23, 2026, rescinded their request to join, so no review was necessary. The letter was included in the Agenda Packet as reference.

There were no further questions or comments.

ITEM 7 – GENERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Ms. Koontz introduced Mr. Ghirelli, who provided an update on SB-1313, the bill proposing the creation of a fund within the State Water Board. He explained that although the bill previously passed both houses without issue, it was ultimately vetoed by the Governor due to the absence of dedicated funding. The bill has since been reintroduced, and Mr. Ghirelli will continue to keep SEWC informed as it moves forward. He also noted that ACWA will be sharing significant updates on related legislative activity.

In response to a question from Director Valencia regarding whether the bill had changed, Mr. Ghirelli confirmed that revisions have been made, particularly related to penalty structures and PFAS remediation.

ITEM 8 – BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Director Zamora invited SEWC members to his city's Arts Fest on April 25th at 2:00 PM, noting that there will be a lot of artists from surrounding cities.

Director Rogers wished members the best of luck with upcoming elections.

ITEM 9 – ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY CHAIR/LEAD AGENCY COMMENTS

Ms. Koontz reported on two items. She shared that Norwalk staff has mailed out membership packets, and that Lynwood requested and received informational materials as well, though they have not yet submitted an official application.

She also noted that WRD had been asked to present their budget. WRD indicated they were unable to do so at this meeting but confirmed they will provide the presentation at the next meeting.

ITEM 8 - ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

The next regular Southeast Water Coalition Board Meeting will be on June 4, 2026

at 7:00 p.m. at the Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex, Sproul Room, 13000 Clarkdale Avenue, Norwalk CA 90650.

Ana M. Valencia

Ana Valencia, Chair

6/4/26

Date