

MINUTES
BORREGO SPRINGS WATERMASTER BOARD MEETING
Conducted Virtually via Microsoft Teams Meeting
Thursday, July 11, 2024, 4:30 p.m.

The following individuals were present at the meeting:

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| Directors Present | Chair Dave Duncan – Borrego Water District (BWD) |
| | Vice Chair Tyler Bilyk – Agricultural Sector |
| | Secretary and Treasurer Shannon Smith – Recreational Sector |
| | Mark Jorgensen – Community Representative |
| | Jim Bennett – County of San Diego |
| Watermaster Staff Present | James M. Markman, Legal Counsel |
| | Samantha Adams, Executive Director, West Yost |
| | Andrew Malone, Lead Technical Consultant, West Yost |
| | Lauren Salberg, Staff Geologist, West Yost |
| Others Present | Diane Johnson, BWD Board Member |
| | George Peraza, DWR |
| | Jessica Clabaugh, BWD Finance Office |
| | Kathy Dice, Board Alternate - BWD |
| | Leanne Crow, Board Alternate – County of San Diego |
| | Rich Pinel, Board Alternate – Recreational Sector |
| | Rodney Bruce, Rams Hill |
| | Tammy Baker, BWD Board Member |
| | Travis Huxman, UCI |
| | Trey Driscoll, Intera, TAC Member representing BWD |

Please visit the [Watermaster's Website](https://borregospringswatermaster.com/past-watermaster-meetings/)¹ to access the Agenda Packet, recording, and presentation for the July 11, 2024 Meeting.

I. Opening Procedures

- A. Due to issues with the regular GoTo Meeting platform, the meeting was delayed. Staff sent out a replacement meeting link using Microsoft Teams. Chair Duncan called the meeting to order at 4:38 PM at which time the meeting recording was started.
- B. Chair Duncan led the meeting participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. Samantha Adams, Executive Director (ED) called roll and confirmed that a quorum of all members of the Board were present.
- D. Approval of Agenda.

Motion: Motioned by Vice Chair Bilyk, seconded by Director Smith to approve the Agenda. *Motion carried unanimously by voice vote (5-0-0).*

II. Public Correspondence

- A. Correspondence Received. No public correspondence was received.
- B. Public Comments. Chair Duncan called for public comments. There were no public comments.

¹ <https://borregospringswatermaster.com/past-watermaster-meetings/>

III. **Consent Calendar.** Chair Duncan called for motion or discussion on the Consent Calendar items included in the July 11, 2024 agenda package. Discussion included:

- A request to distinguish between Board discussion and public comment for any key points of discussion listed on the meeting minutes.
- The process for reviewing and approving Watermaster staff invoices.
- The budget for the sand fence study under the Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands project.

Motion: Motioned by Director Bennett, seconded by Vice Chair Bilyk to approve the Consent Calendar. *Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote (5-0-0).*

IV. **Items for Board Consideration and Possible Action**

A. *Spring 2024 Semi-Annual Monitoring Report.* Lauren Salberg and Andy Malone provided a summary of the Spring 2024 Monitoring Event, which was detailed in a report included in the Agenda package. At the conclusion of the presentation, Chair Duncan opened the floor to public comment, followed by Board discussion. Public comment was made by Rodney Bruce and Trey Driscoll

Public Questions and Comments, including discussion points, if any:

- Are there “intermediary” thresholds for groundwater-quality that would trigger Watermaster to take actions related to managing groundwater-quality?
 - Currently there are no triggers for action based on specific groundwater-quality concentrations.
- Does Watermaster have well construction information, including screened and total depth, for all wells evaluated for inclusion in the groundwater monitoring program?
 - Well construction information is known for some, but not all of the wells evaluated. A part of the conversion of abandoned wells task, canvassed wells without construction information may be investigated via a video log to classify the well construction.
- What type of wells are being considered for inclusion in the groundwater monitoring program?
 - Some wells are active production wells, while others are inactive or abandoned.
 - Based on the well status (inactive wells vs. production wells), different sampling procedures are used to collect groundwater-quality samples, which are specified in the Groundwater Monitoring Plan.

The key points of discussion by the Board included:

- Statistical trend analysis of water quality data has not been performed. Trends are discerned from review of time-series charts of all historical data.
- Manual groundwater-level measurements are taken when transducer data are downloaded at wells.
- Recommendation to show fewer groundwater-levels, such as only showing static measurements, on Figures 4a-4p of Semi-Annual Monitoring Report.

- At several wells, the Measurable Objectives are below the Minimum Thresholds in the Groundwater Management Plan (GMP). As part of the 5-year GMP assessment, all Minimum Thresholds and Measurable Objectives will be evaluated and results from the Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM) will be used when considering adjustments to the Sustainable Management Criteria.
- Recommendation to add text to provide an explanation for the discrepancy between Minimum Thresholds and Measurable Objectives in the Semi-Annual Monitoring Report for consistency of reporting across Watermaster efforts. Staff noted that a footnote could be added to the report for clarity.
- Explanation as to why groundwater-quality samples from MW-5A were collected at a different depth than previous sampling events, resulting in different results.
- Recommendation for clarifying language when describing the range of thresholds for Total Dissolved Solids (TDS).
- Recommendation for presenting groundwater-quality results with a different color scheme in Figures 5 through 9.
- History of nitrate results from the Technical Support Services (TSS) wells MW-6S and MW-6D.

No Board action was taken.

- B. *Budget Status Report as of June 30, 2024.* ED Adams provided a summary of the memo included in the Agenda package. At the conclusion of the presentation, Chair Duncan opened the floor to public comment, followed by Board discussion. There were no public comments.

The key points of discussion with the Board included:

- There is a likelihood of needed a budget amendment in Water Year (WY) 2025 to carry forward unspent funds from WY 2024 for certain grant-funded projects.
- The new SGM Grant Manager is reviewing the fourth and fifth grant reimbursement requests and at this time payments are expected to be made with timing consistent with the financial model projections.
- The high balance of cash reserves currently shown in anticipation of upcoming vendor expenses for Sand Fence construction and well conversions.
- A request to add additional columns to the budget status table, including i) estimated cost to complete and ii) percent work complete.

No Board action was taken.

- C. *Status Update on the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield.* Mr. Malone provided a status update on the Redetermination on the Sustainable Yield, as summarized in the Agenda package memo. At the conclusion of the presentation, Chair Duncan opened the floor to public comment, followed by Board discussion. There were no public or Board comments.

No Board action was taken.

V. Reports.

A. Legal Counsel Report. Mr. Markman reported on the following items:

- The Board was notified about the response received to the letter sent to Mr. Leibert in response to his inquiry about BPA.
- Upcoming Legal activities include the August 22, 2024 Status Conference with the Judge.

B. Technical Consultant Report. Mr. Malone reported out from the July 1, 2024 TAC meeting and provided a status update on the Biological Restoration of Fallowed Lands and Address Abandoned Wells projects (see slides 28-31 of the [Board presentation slides](#)). There was no discussion.

C. Executive Director Reports. ED Adams reported on the status of the following items:

- Prop 68 Grant Updates
- Status of DWR's review of the Judgment and Groundwater Management Plan

D. Chairperson's Report. NONE

VI. Approval of Agenda Items for August 8, 2024 Board Meeting. ED Adams reviewed the potential agenda items for the next Board meetings listed in the agenda package. The Board discussed items to be included on the August 8, 2024 Board meeting agenda, in addition to items listed in the Agenda package. Board discussion included:

- Recommendation to add an agenda item discussing the start time of Watermaster Board meetings to the September agenda. Mr. Markman clarified that the agenda item must include notice that the start time of Board meetings may change.
- ED Adams updated the proposed Agenda for the August 8, 2024 meeting on the meeting screen based on discussion, noting it now includes the following items:
 - West Yost Administrative and Technical Services in WY 2025
 - Consideration of Approval of August TAC meeting agenda
 - Report out from July EWG meeting
 - Status Update on the Redetermination of the Sustainable Yield
 - Discussion of DWR review of Judgment/GMP (if applicable)
 - Status Update on the 5-year assessment of the GMP (if applicable)

Motion: Motioned by Vice Chair Bilyk seconded by Director Jorgensen, to approve the August 8, 2024 agenda presented. *Motion carried unanimously by roll-call vote (5-0-0).*

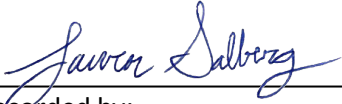
VII. Board Member Comments. Chair Duncan called for comments.

- Director Smith commented on the amount and intensity of work in the forthcoming months.
- Vice Chair Bilyk commented on the Semi-Annual Monitoring Report, noting that it's encouraging to see groundwater-levels stabilizing.

VIII. Next Meetings of the Borrego Springs Watermaster. Chair Duncan reviewed the meetings listed in the agenda package.

IX. Adjournment

A. Chair Duncan adjourned the meeting at 6:22 PM.



Recorded by:

Lauren Salberg, Staff Geologist, West Yost



Attest:

Shannon Smith, Secretary and Treasurer of the Board