



MARINA COAST WATER DISTRICT & GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

920 SECOND AVENUE, MARINA, CA 93933-6009

Home Page: www.mcwd.org

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DIRECTORS

GAIL MORTON
President

JAN SHRINER
Vice President

BRAD IMAMURA
THOMAS P. MOORE
STACEY SMITH

Agenda

Regular Board Meeting, Board of Directors

Marina Coast Water District

and

Regular Board Meeting, Board of Directors

Marina Coast Water District Groundwater Sustainability Agency

920 2nd Avenue, Marina, California 93933

Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 6:00 p.m. PST

Members of the public may attend the Board meeting in person or can attend remotely via Zoom conference.

Members of the public participating by Zoom will be placed on mute during the proceedings and will be acknowledged only when public comment is allowed, after requesting and receiving recognition from the Board President. Persons who are participating via telephone will need to press *9 to be acknowledged for comments. Public comment on the action item can also be submitted in writing to Paula Riso at priso@mcwd.org by 9:00 am on Tuesday, February 17, 2026; such comments will be distributed to the MCWD Board before the meeting.

This meeting may be accessed remotely using the following Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88211630827?pwd=D7LtoKj6cRPsobFrKGYa79FjvqbWU3.1>

Passcode: 165813

To participate via phone: 1-669-900-9128; Meeting ID: 882 1163 0827 Passcode: 165813

Our Mission: *Marina Coast Water District delivers safe and environmentally sustainable water, recycled water, and wastewater services that meet community needs.*

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Oral Communications

Anyone wishing to address the Board on matters not appearing on the Agenda may do so at this time. Please limit your comment to four minutes. The public may comment on any other items listed on the agenda at the time they are considered by the Board. Disruptive behavior may result in the removal of the individual responsible.

This agenda is subject to revision and may be amended prior to the scheduled meeting. Pursuant to Government Code section 54954.2(a)(1), the agenda for each meeting of the Board shall be posted at the District offices at 920 2nd Avenue, Marina. A complete Board packet containing all enclosures and staff materials will be available for public review on the District website, Wednesday, February 11, 2026. Information about items on this agenda or persons requesting disability related modifications and/or accommodations should contact the Board Clerk 48 hours prior to the meeting at: 831-883-5931.

5. Consent Calendar

- A. Receive and File the Check Register for the Month of January 2026
(Page 2)
- B. Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Joint Board/GSA Meeting of December 15, 2025
(Page 8)
- C. Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Joint Board/GSA Meeting of January 21, 2026
(Page 14)

6. Action Item

- A. Provide Direction to the Board President Regarding Voting for Election of One Special District Regular Member to the Local Agency Formation Commission
(Page 19)

7. Public Comment on Closed Session Items *Anyone wishing to address the Board on matters appearing in Closed Session may do so at this time. Please limit your comment to four minutes. The public may comment on any other items listed on the agenda at the time they are considered by the Board. Disruptive behavior may result in the removal of the individual responsible.*

8. Closed Session

- A. Pursuant to Government Code 54957
Public Employee Performance Evaluation – Provide Goals and Objectives
Title: General Manager

9. Reportable Actions Taken During Closed Session *The Board will announce any reportable action taken during closed session and the vote or abstention on that action of every director present and may take additional action in open session as appropriate. Any closed session items not completed may be continued to after the end of all open session items.*

10. Correspondence

(Page 33)

11. Board Member Requests for Future Agenda Items

12. Director's Comments *Director reports on meetings with other agencies, organizations and individuals on behalf of the District and on official District matters.*

13. Adjournment *Set or Announce Next Meeting(s), date(s), and time(s):*

Regular Meeting: Monday, March 16, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

**Marina Coast Water District
Agenda Transmittal**

Agenda Item: 5

Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

Prepared By: Paula Riso

Approved By: Remleh Scherzinger, PE

Agenda Title: Consent Calendar

Staff Recommendation: Approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

Background: *Strategic Plan, Mission Statement – Marina Coast Water District delivers safe and environmentally sustainable water, recycled water, and wastewater services that meet community needs.*

Consent calendar consisting of:

- A) Receive and File the Check Register for the Month of January 2026
- B) Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Joint Board/GSA Meeting of December 15, 2025
- C) Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Joint Board/GSA Meeting of January 21, 2026

Discussion/Analysis: See individual transmittals.

Environmental Review Compliance: None required.

Legal Counsel Review: See individual transmittals.

Climate Action: Not applicable.

Other Considerations: The Board of Directors can approve these items together or they can pull them separately for discussion.

Material Included for Information/Consideration: Check Register for January 2026; draft minutes of December 15, 2025; and, draft minutes of January 21, 2026.

Action Required: Resolution Motion Review
(Roll call vote is required.)

Board Action

Motion By _____ Seconded By _____ No Action Taken _____

Ayes _____ Abstained _____

Noes _____ Absent _____

**Marina Coast Water District
Agenda Transmittal**

Agenda Item: 5-A

Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

Prepared By: Mary Lagasca, CPA

Approved By: Remleh Scherzinger, PE

Agenda Title: Receive and File the Check Register for the Month of January 2026

Staff Recommendation: Receive and file the January 2026 expenditures totaling \$2,524,773.96.

Background: *Strategic Plan, Objective No. 3.2: Finances are well managed to provide adequate revenue and avoid volatile rates.*

Discussion/Analysis: These expenditures were paid in January 2026, and the Board is requested to receive and file the check register. The January check register was larger than normal due to the following payments:

1. Check No. 78095 – Maggiora Bros Drilling in the amount of \$191,103.90 for monitoring well installation – Progress Payment #4
2. Wire Payment – Santa Cruz County Bank in the amount of \$118,694.06 for BLM Construction Loan Payment
3. Check No. 78170 – Garney Pacific, Inc. in the amount of \$168,387.50 for Imjin Parkway SS Manhole Rehab

Environmental Review Compliance: None required.

Legal Counsel Review: None required.

Climate Adaptation: Not applicable.

Financial Impact: Yes No **Funding Source/Recap:** Expenditures are allocated across the six cost centers; 01-Marina Water, 02-Marina Sewer, 03- Ord Water, 04- Ord Sewer, 05-Recycled Water, 07-Groundwater Sustainability.

Other Consideration: None.

Material Included for Information/Consideration: January 2026 Summary Check Register.

Action Required: Resolution Motion Review

Board Action

Motion By _____ Seconded By _____ No Action Taken _____

Ayes _____ Abstained _____

Noes _____ Absent _____

JANUARY 2026 SUMMARY CHECK REGISTER

DATE	CHECK #	CHECK DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
01/06/2026	ACH	Friedman & Springwater LLP	94,236.43
01/06/2026	78092 - 78119	Check Register	600,462.80
01/13/2026	ACH	Griffith, Masuda & Hobbs	29,983.25
01/13/2026	Wire	Santa Cruz County Bank	118,694.06
01/13/2026	78120 - 78134	Check Register	22,060.46
01/21/2026	78135 - 78178	Check Register	574,739.18
01/26/2026	78179 - 78203	Check Register	51,627.56
01/02/2026	ACH	Payroll Direct Deposits	153,082.46
01/02/2026	ACH	CalPERS	36,468.01
01/02/2026	ACH	Empower Retirement	35,527.27
01/02/2026	ACH	Internal Revenue Service	68,261.67
01/02/2026	ACH	State of California - EDD	21,301.76
01/02/2026	ACH	WageWorks, Inc.	3,259.79
01/06/2026	502064 - 502065	Check Register	1,214.46
01/12/2026	502066 - 502078	Check Register	49,022.76
01/16/2026	ACH	Payroll Direct Deposits	147,638.33
01/16/2026	ACH	Empower Retirement	35,821.27
01/16/2026	ACH	Internal Revenue Service	64,750.74
01/16/2026	ACH	State of California - EDD	16,582.70
01/16/2026	ACH	WageWorks, Inc.	3,259.79
01/20/2026	502079	Check Register	121,309.33
01/30/2026	ACH	Payroll Direct Deposits	154,939.29
01/30/2026	ACH	Empower Retirement	33,421.27
01/30/2026	ACH	Internal Revenue Service	68,343.88
01/30/2026	ACH	State of California - EDD	15,505.65
01/30/2026	ACH	WageWorks, Inc.	3,259.79
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS			<u>2,524,773.96</u>

Check No	Invoice Date	Check Date	Vendor Name	Description	Amount
ACH	12/09/2025	01/06/2026	Friedman & Springwater LLP	Legal Services 11/2025	94,236.43
78092	12/21/2025	01/06/2026	Pitney Bowes Global Financial Services LLC	Postage Machine Lease 11/09 - 02/08	1,089.75
78093	12/05/2025	01/06/2026	Rauch Communication Consultants, Inc.	Public Relations 09/2025	10,617.49
78094	12/10/2025	01/06/2026	Groundwater Resources Association of California	2026 Membership	1,500.00
78095	12/30/2025	01/06/2026	Maggiora Bros Drilling	Monitoring Wells Installation - Progress Pmt #4	191,103.90
78096	12/26/2025	01/06/2026	McGrath Rent Corp.	Locker Room Trailer Rental - Ord Office 01/2026	7,286.98
78097	11/25/2025	01/06/2026	Calcon Systems, Inc.	SCADA Programming; Annual Software Subscription 09/2025 - 08/2026	10,900.00
78098	11/30/2025	01/06/2026	Pacific Ag Rentals LLC	(5) Mobile Restroom Rentals - MCWD Sites 11/2025	378.36
78099	12/15/2025	01/06/2026	East Bay Tire Co.	Tire Replacement - Vehicle #2001	1,644.04
78100	12/16/2025	01/06/2026	Richards, Watson & Gershon	Legal Services 11/2025	98,655.31
78101	12/08/2025	01/06/2026	Remy Moose Manley, LLP	Legal Services 11/2025	152,288.04
78102	12/22/2025	01/06/2026	Monterey Bay Technologies, Inc.	IT Support Services 12/2025	3,750.00
78103	12/23/2025	01/06/2026	ICONIX Waterworks (US), Inc.	(2) Hymax Couplers - Colonel Durham St Repair; (4) Couplers, (2) Valves, General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	3,805.48
78104	12/05/2025	01/06/2026	Western Exterminator Company	Bait Stations, Pest Control - MCWD/ BLM Offices 12/2025	1,694.76
78105	12/15/2025	01/06/2026	AT&T	Phone and Alarm Line Services 12/2025	127.23
78106	12/23/2025	01/06/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	340 Elba Cir - (2) Toilet Rebates	150.00
78107	12/19/2025	01/06/2026	EKI Environment & Water, Inc.	Engineering Assistance - FO-10 MW Replacement; Monterey Subbasin GSP Implementation 11/2025	49,093.82
78108	12/23/2025	01/06/2026	Ferguson Enterprises, Inc.	(19) Water Main Shutoff Valves	36,124.83
78109	12/25/2025	01/06/2026	WEX Bank	Fleet Gasoline 12/2025	4,567.81
78110	01/01/2026	01/06/2026	The Ferguson Group, LLC	Grant Writing and Legislative Advocacy 01/2026	1,870.00
78111	07/31/2025	01/06/2026	Regional Government Services Authority	CS/UB Consulting Services - Reimbursable Expenses 06/2025 - 07/2025	3,034.73
78112	12/21/2025	01/06/2026	T-Mobile	GPS Service - (40) Fleet Vehicles 12/2025	854.00
78113	12/20/2025	01/06/2026	T-Mobile	Cellular Services 10/19 - 11/18	878.82
78114	12/21/2025	01/06/2026	T-Mobile	Cell Phone Service 12/2025	2,167.25
78115	12/08/2025	01/06/2026	Staples, Inc.	Office Supplies	63.10
78116	12/24/2025	01/06/2026	Blaine Tech Services Inc	Water Quality Testing - Well FO-11S; Electrical Conductivity Profiling - (22) Wells 12/2025	12,365.60
78117	12/18/2025	01/06/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	3004 Concord Ct - Landscape Rebate	1,345.50
78118	12/19/2025	01/06/2026	Spotted Dog Design	PAFR Document Design, Production	2,500.00
78119	12/29/2025	01/06/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	476 Logan Way - Landscape Rebate	606.00
ACH	12/09/2025	01/13/2026	Griffith, Masuda & Hobbs	Legal Services 11/2025	29,983.25
Wire	12/09/2025	01/13/2026	Santa Cruz County Bank	BLM Construction Loan Payment	118,694.06
78120	11/18/2025	01/13/2026	Harris & Associates	Inspection Services - Armstrong Ranch Irrigation Connections 10/2025	569.99
78121	12/12/2025	01/13/2026	HD Supply, Inc.	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	1,795.86
78122	01/07/2026	01/13/2026	Special District Association	SDA Quarterly Meeting	240.00
78123	12/23/2025	01/13/2026	Fastenal Industrial & Construction Supplies	General Administration, Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	757.37
78124	12/12/2025	01/13/2026	Val's Plumbing & Heating, Inc.	Toilet Leak Repair - IOP Office	1,385.69
78125	12/16/2025	01/13/2026	Green Rubber-Kennedy AG, LP	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	120.90
78126	01/01/2026	01/13/2026	U.S. Bank National Association	Ord Office Copier Lease 12/26 - 01/25	221.77
78127	01/04/2026	01/13/2026	U.S. Bank National Association	IOP A Side Office Copier Lease 12/29 - 01/28	456.28

Check No	Invoice Date	Check Date	Vendor Name	Description	Amount
78128	12/12/2025	01/13/2026	Monterey Bay Technologies, Inc.	Computer/ IT Supplies	430.43
78129	11/30/2025	01/13/2026	Evoqua Water Technologies, LLC	Chemical Pump Maintenance - East Garrison LS	1,006.20
78130	12/31/2025	01/13/2026	Iron Mountain, Inc.	Shredding Service 12/2025	363.10
78131	12/15/2025	01/13/2026	Applied Best Practices	2026 Financial Planning	1,968.90
78132	12/22/2025	01/13/2026	Ritter GIS, Inc.	GIS/ Cityworks AMS - IT Support Services 11/2025 - 12/2025	11,610.00
78133	12/18/2025	01/13/2026	HPS West, Inc.	General Meter Reader Supplies	291.11
78134	12/22/2025	01/13/2026	Amazon Capital Services, Inc.	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	842.86
78135	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Ace Hardware of Watsonville, Inc.	General Administration, Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	344.89
78136	01/01/2026	01/21/2026	Insight Planners	Web Development/ Maintenance and Hosting 12/2025	1,944.00
78137	12/30/2025	01/21/2026	PG&E	Gas and Electric Service 12/2025	90,444.46
78138	01/09/2026	01/21/2026	PG&E	Electric Service 12/2025	2,022.27
78139	01/09/2026	01/21/2026	PG&E	Electric Service 12/2025	11,172.22
78140	01/07/2026	01/21/2026	Jane's Answering Service	Answering Service 12/10 - 01/06	258.41
78141	11/30/2025	01/21/2026	Schaaf & Wheeler	Design Phase - B2 Zone Tank; Design Phase Engineering Services - Gigling LS FM Replacement 11/2025	15,503.76
78142	01/01/2026	01/21/2026	MBS Business Systems	Copier Maintenance 12/20 - 03/19	323.95
78143	01/07/2026	01/21/2026	Pitney Bowes Purchase Power (Postage)	Postage Meter Refill	1,006.00
78144	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Peninsula Welding & Medical Supply, Inc.	Gas Cylinder Tank Rental Fees - Welding Supplies 12/2025	64.50
78145	12/23/2025	01/21/2026	Monterey Bay Analytical Services	Laboratory Testing	908.00
78146	01/09/2026	01/21/2026	Rauch Communication Consultants, Inc.	Conservation Outreach Program 11/2025 - 12/2025; Public Relations 10/2025 - 12/2025	41,206.65
78147	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Maggiora Bros Drilling	Well Pump Equipment Rental - Well 12 Rehab 11/2025 - 12/2025	3,000.00
78148	01/01/2026	01/21/2026	Maynard Group	Network Support 01/2026	5,343.17
78149	01/12/2026	01/21/2026	Carollo Engineers, Inc.	Recycled Water Title 22 Report Update; Design, Bid, Construction Support - RW Chemical Injection Building 11/2025 - 12/2025	28,105.75
78150	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Pitney Bowes, Inc. (Supplies)	General Administration Supplies	365.40
78151	12/16/2025	01/21/2026	American Supply Company	Janitorial Supplies	455.25
78152	12/16/2025	01/21/2026	Wallace Group	Construction Management - Imjin, Lightfighter Manhole Rehab, Wet Well Lining 10/2025 - 11/2025; Construction Management - LS Safety Grate Improvements 11/2025	41,237.84
78153	12/11/2025	01/21/2026	Whitson Engineers	Land Surveying/ Engineering Services - Inter-Garrison Rd Pipeline Upsizing	3,844.00
78154	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Pacific Ag Rentals LLC	(5) Mobile Restroom Rentals - MCWD Sites 12/2025	611.36
78155	12/15/2025	01/21/2026	Daiohs USA	Coffee Supplies	760.01
78156	12/08/2025	01/21/2026	U.S. Bank Corporate Payment Systems	2025 ACWA Fall Conference Hotel - GM; Employee Anniversary Plaques - (3) Staff; CWEA Membership Renewals; IT/ Computer Supplies; Monthly/ Annual Software Subscriptions; General Supplies	5,816.20
78157	01/16/2026	01/21/2026	U.S. Bank National Association	IOP B Side Office Copier Lease 01/10 - 02/09	275.32
78158	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	3014 Eddy St, 3118 Carmelo Cir - Landscape Rebate	460.36
78159	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Peninsula Messenger LLC	Courier Service 01/2026	272.00
78160	12/28/2025	01/21/2026	AT&T	Phone and Alarm Line Services 12/2025	172.60
78161	01/01/2026	01/21/2026	Simpler Systems, Inc.	UB/ Finance Datapp Maintenance 01/2026	500.00
78162	12/26/2025	01/21/2026	Marina Coast Water District (BLM)	BLM Water, Sewer, Fire Service 12/2025	434.71

Check No	Invoice Date	Check Date	Vendor Name	Description	Amount
78163	01/01/2026	01/21/2026	Pure Janitorial, LLC	Janitorial Service - BLM/ MCWD Offices 12/2025	5,258.09
				Engineering Procedures/ Guidelines Support, MS Project Implementation Support, Power Generation, Microgrid Strategy Support 11/2025 - 12/2025; 2025 Urban Water Management Plan Development 12/2025	
78164	01/08/2026	01/21/2026	Zanjero, Inc.		39,987.50
78165	01/14/2026	01/21/2026	City of Seaside	City Utility Tax 10/2025 - 12/2025	57,094.59
78166	09/30/2025	01/21/2026	Regional Government Services Authority	CS/UB Assessment, Change Implementation Services 09/2025	618.60
78167	01/03/2026	01/21/2026	Kysmet Security & Patrol, Inc.	Security Patrol Services - MCWD Offices 12/2025	300.00
78168	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Quick Quack Car Wash Holdings, LLC	Car Washes - (3) Fleet Vehicles 12/2025	24.00
				Customer Billing Statements; Maintenance/ IVR Transaction Fees 12/2025; Graphic Design Services - How to Read Your Bill Inserts	
78169	01/09/2026	01/21/2026	InfoSend, Inc.		8,701.16
78170	12/10/2025	01/21/2026	Garney Pacific, Inc.	Construction Services - Imjin Pkwy SS Manhole Rehab 10/2025	168,387.50
78171	12/22/2025	01/21/2026	Staples, Inc.	Office Supplies	38.41
78172	01/09/2026	01/21/2026	San Jose State University Research Foundation	Groundwater-Dependent Ecosystem Monitoring 04/15/25 - 12/15/25	31,939.39
78173	11/30/2025	01/21/2026	TerraVerde Energy LLC	Energy, Power Program Development 11/2025	850.27
78174	01/01/2026	01/21/2026	Greenwaste Recovery, Inc.	Garbage Collection & Recycling Services 01/2026	658.57
78175	01/14/2026	01/21/2026	ASAP Signs & Printing	(30) Evacuation Plan Signs - IOP Building	898.02
78176	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	3004 Concord Ct - Landscape Rebate	220.00
78177	12/12/2025	01/21/2026	Ghirardelli Associates, Inc.	Construction Inspection Support - Fire Hydrant Replacement Project	2,760.00
78178	12/31/2025	01/21/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	470 Logan Way - Washer Rebate	150.00
78179	12/31/2025	01/26/2026	Quinn Company	Load Bank Testing, Oil Analysis - (11) Sites	17,020.00
78180	12/31/2025	01/26/2026	Denise Duffy & Associates, Inc.	Notice of Exemption Filing - FO-10 MW Replacement 12/2025	2,499.50
78181	12/28/2025	01/26/2026	Home Depot Credit Services	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	1,307.12
78182	01/05/2026	01/26/2026	Grainger	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	235.04
78183	01/21/2026	01/26/2026	Monterey Bay Analytical Services	Laboratory Testing	2,226.00
78184	12/18/2025	01/26/2026	Verizon Wireless	Cell Phone Service 12/2025	468.62
78185	01/12/2026	01/26/2026	Collins Electrical Company, Inc.	Breaker Troubleshoot - Beach Office; Outlet Installation - IOP Office	2,183.90
78186	11/19/2025	01/26/2026	SWRCB	WW Collection Facility Permit Fee 07/2025 - 06/2026	3,945.00
78187	01/06/2026	01/26/2026	Fastenal Industrial & Construction Supplies	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	362.53
78188	12/30/2025	01/26/2026	Calcon Systems, Inc.	PLC Programming	2,380.00
78189	01/20/2026	01/26/2026	Daiohs USA	Coffee Supplies	476.27
78190	01/15/2026	01/26/2026	Monterey County Water Resources Agency	Technical/ Professional Assistance - GSP Development 12/2025	5,135.50
				Repair Clamp - Crivello Rd Repair; General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	
78191	01/07/2026	01/26/2026	ICONIX Waterworks (US), Inc.		864.83
78192	01/01/2026	01/26/2026	California Water Efficiency Partnership	2026 CalWEP and AWE Dues	3,539.31
78193	01/08/2026	01/26/2026	ALK Services, Inc.	Keys - IOP Office	17.48
78194	12/31/2025	01/26/2026	AutoZone Parts, Inc.	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	14.51
78195	01/05/2026	01/26/2026	Interstate Battery of San Jose	(8) Batteries - C, F Reservoirs	1,497.16
78196	12/19/2025	01/26/2026	BSK Associates	Laboratory Testing	535.00
78197	01/12/2026	01/26/2026	Southland Industries	HVAC Troubleshoot/ Repair - IOP Office	2,540.00
78198	01/12/2026	01/26/2026	Staples, Inc.	General Administration Supplies	651.94
78199	01/12/2026	01/26/2026	Amazon Capital Services, Inc.	General Operations/ Maintenance Supplies	34.85
78200	01/15/2026	01/26/2026	First Alarm	Security, Fire Alarm Monitoring - MCWD Offices 02/2026	1,471.00

Check No	Invoice Date	Check Date	Vendor Name	Description	Amount
78201	01/05/2026	01/26/2026	Rincon Consultants, Inc.	City of Marina 2040 General Plan Update Water Supply Assessment	1,997.00
78202	01/21/2026	01/26/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	21874 Ord Ave - Washer Rebate	150.00
78203	01/21/2026	01/26/2026	Conservation Rebate Program	3076 Sunset Ave - Toilet Rebate	75.00
ACH	01/02/2026	01/02/2026	Payroll Direct Deposits	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	153,082.46
ACH	01/02/2026	01/02/2026	CalPERS	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	36,468.01
ACH	01/02/2026	01/02/2026	Empower Retirement	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	35,527.27
ACH	01/02/2026	01/02/2026	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	68,261.67
ACH	01/02/2026	01/02/2026	State of California - EDD	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	21,301.76
ACH	01/02/2026	01/02/2026	WageWorks, Inc.	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	3,259.79
502064	01/02/2026	01/06/2026	Teamsters Local Union No. 856	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	866.00
502065	01/02/2026	01/06/2026	CA State Disbursement Unit	Payroll Ending 12/26/25	348.46
502066	12/09/2025	01/12/2026	Becks Shoe Store, Inc. - Salinas	Boot Benefit - Meter Reader	246.08
502067	01/08/2026	01/12/2026	ACWA Joint Power Ins Authority	Workers Compensation Insurance 10/01/25 - 12/31/25	17,423.11
502068	12/08/2025	01/12/2026	CWEA - Monterey Bay Section	Membership Renewals	502.00
502069	12/25/2025	01/12/2026	AFLAC	Employee Paid Benefits 12/2025	2,120.62
502070	12/30/2025	01/12/2026	Board Reimbursement	2025 ACWA Fall Conference Hotel	111.00
502071	12/26/2025	01/12/2026	Employnet, Inc.	Temporary Engineering Assistant 12/03 - 12/18	3,812.97
502072	12/18/2025	01/12/2026	Principal Life	Employee Paid Benefits 01/2026	513.36
502073	11/10/2025	01/12/2026	Lincoln National Life Insurance Company	Life, Disability, AD&D Insurance 12/2025	4,115.50
502074	12/23/2025	01/12/2026	WageWorks, Inc.	FSA Admin Fees 12/2025	218.00
502075	11/25/2025	01/12/2026	Federico Embroidery	Uniform Benefit - Administration	64.75
502076	12/17/2025	01/12/2026	Transamerica Life Insurance Company	Employee Paid Benefits 12/2025	313.96
502077	11/30/2025	01/12/2026	Cintas Corporation No. 630	Uniforms, Towels, Rugs 11/2025	1,244.61
502078	11/30/2025	01/12/2026	Regional Government Services Authority	Advertisement - Cross-Connection Control Specialist; Human Resources Consulting Services 11/2025	18,336.80
ACH	01/16/2026	01/16/2026	Payroll Direct Deposits	Payroll Ending 01/09/26	147,638.33
ACH	01/16/2026	01/16/2026	Empower Retirement	Payroll Ending 01/09/26	35,821.27
ACH	01/16/2026	01/16/2026	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Ending 01/09/26	64,750.74
ACH	01/16/2026	01/16/2026	State of California - EDD	Payroll Ending 01/09/26	16,582.70
ACH	01/16/2026	01/16/2026	WageWorks, Inc.	Payroll Ending 01/09/26	3,259.79
502079	01/06/2026	01/20/2026	ACWA/ JPIA	Medical, Dental, Vision, EAP Insurance 02/2026	121,309.33
ACH	01/30/2026	01/30/2026	Payroll Direct Deposits	Payroll Ending 01/23/26	154,939.29
ACH	01/30/2026	01/30/2026	Empower Retirement	Payroll Ending 01/23/26	33,421.27
ACH	01/30/2026	01/30/2026	Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Ending 01/23/26	68,343.88
ACH	01/30/2026	01/30/2026	State of California - EDD	Payroll Ending 01/23/26	15,505.65
ACH	01/30/2026	01/30/2026	WageWorks, Inc.	Payroll Ending 01/23/26	3,259.79

Total Disbursements for January 2026

2,524,773.96

**Marina Coast Water District
Agenda Transmittal**

Agenda Item: 5-B

Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

Prepared By: Paula Riso

Approved By: Remleh Scherzinger, PE

Agenda Title: Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Joint Board/GSA Meeting of December 15, 2025

Staff Recommendation: Approve the draft minutes of the December 15, 2025 regular joint Board/GSA meeting.

Background: *Strategic Plan, Mission Statement – Marina Coast Water District delivers safe and environmentally sustainable water, recycled water, and wastewater services that meet community needs.*

Discussion/Analysis: The draft minutes of December 15, 2025 are provided for the Board to consider approval.

Environmental Review Compliance: None required.

Legal Counsel Review: None required.

Climate Adaptation: Not applicable.

Financial Impact: Yes No **Funding Source/Recap:** None

Other Considerations: The Board can suggest changes/corrections to the minutes.

Material Included for Information/Consideration: Draft minutes of December 15, 2025.

Action Required: Resolution Motion Review

Board Action

Motion By _____ Seconded By _____ No Action Taken _____

Ayes _____ Abstained _____

Noes _____ Absent _____



Marina Coast Water District

Marina Coast Water District

Regular Board Meeting/Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board Meeting
December 15, 2025

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order:

President Morton called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. on December 15, 2025 at 920 2nd Avenue, Marina, California; 41-1320 Kalanianaole Hwy, Waimanalo, HI; and, via Zoom teleconference.

2. Roll Call:

Board Members Present:

President Morton, Vice President Shriner, Director Imamura, Director Moore, Director Smith.

Board Members Absent:

None.

Staff Members Present:

Remleh Scherzinger, General Manager; David Hobbs, District Counsel; Derek Cray, Operations and Maintenance Manager; Mary Lagasca, Director of Administrative Services; Garrett Haertel, District Engineer; Charly Liscomb, Interim Water Resources Manager; Teo Espero, Information Technology Administrator; and, Paula Riso, Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board.

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Access Media Productions; Andy Sterbenz; Derrell Parker; Jack Gao; Katie Lampkin; Mayra Magdaleno; Andreas Baer; Paula Pelot; Greg Furey; Liam; John; Michael; and, Mike Sipal.

3. Pledge of Allegiance:

David Hobbs led everyone present in the pledge of allegiance.

4. Election of Board President and Vice-President for 2026:

Motion by: Director Moore Second by: Director Shriner;
to: 1) appoint Director Morton as Board President. Motion passed.

Ayes: Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton Noes: Imamura
Absent: None Abstained: None

Agenda Item 4 (continued):

Motion by: Director Shriner Second by: Director Moore;
to: 1) appoint Director Shriner as Board Vice President. Motion passed.

Ayes: Moore, Shriner, Morton Noes: Imamura, Smith
Absent: None Abstained: None

5. Oral Communications:

There were no comments.

6. Consent Calendar:

Director Smith pulled Agenda Item 7-B, and President Morton pulled Agenda Item 7-E from the Consent Calendar.

B. Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Joint Board/GSA Meeting of November 17, 2025:

Motion by: President Morton Second by: Vice President Shriner;
to: 1) approve the draft minutes of the regular Joint Board/GSA meeting of November 17, 2025 with the following amendments: i) correcting the vote on Page 4, Item 7-B showing it was Director Moore who abstained from the vote, and not Director Smith; and, ii) adding language to the General Manager's report that the Art Policy request was at the request of Director Smith. Motion passed.

Ayes: Imamura, Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton Noes: None
Absent: None Abstained: None

Motion by: President Morton Second by: Vice President Shriner;
to: 1) approve the Consent Calendar consisting of items A) Receive and File the Check Register for the Month of November 2025; C) Approve the Draft Minutes of the Special Joint Board/GSA Meeting of November 24, 2025; and, D) Receive the Validated 2024 Water Loss Audit Report and 2024 Level 1 Validation Review Documents. Motion passed.

Ayes: Imamura, Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton Noes: None
Absent: None Abstained: None

E. Approve the Proposed Regular Board/GSA Meeting and Workshop Schedule for 2026:

Motion by: Director Imamura Second by: President Morton;
to: 1) approve the proposed Regular Board/GSA Meeting and Workshop Schedule for 2026 with the following amendment: i) move the December 2026 meeting to the 14th. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 6-E (continued):

Ayes: Imamura, Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton Noes: None
Absent: None Abstained: None

7. Action Items:

Motion by: Director Imamura Second by: President Morton ;
to: 1) move to Agenda Item 7-B. Motion passed.

Ayes: Imamura, Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton Noes: None
Absent: None Abstained: None

B. Discussion and Potential Motion to Determine Violation of MCWD Board Procedures Manual Policy and Authorize Appropriate Action(s):

Motion by: Director Smith Second by: Director Imamura ;
to: 1) determine that there was a violation of the Board Procedures Manual and asked for the following two actions: i) remove the offending Director from committees and representative positions to which the Director has been appointed or designated by the Board or by the President; and, ii) prevent the offending Director from placing items on the agenda without the specific, advance authorization of the Board. Advanced authorization of the Board requires the request is reviewed at the Executive Committee and no specific timeline or deadline is activated.

Paula Pelot commented.

Greg Furey commented.

Motion failed.

Ayes: Imamura, Smith Noes: Moore, Shriner, Morton
Absent: None Abstained: None

Motion by: Director Smith Second by: Director Imamura ;
to: 1) authorize a third-party investigator.

Substitute Motion by: President Morton Second by: Director Moore ;
to: 1) that a violation of the MCWD Board Procedures Manual Policy was not found; and, 2) directed staff to organize a Board retreat as quickly as possible.

Paula Pelot commented.

Mike Sipel commented.

Greg Furey commented.

Agenda Item 7-B (continued):

Substitute motion passed.

Ayes: Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton _____ Noes: Imamura _____
Absent: None _____ Abstained: None _____

A. Make Director Appointments to Standing Committees of the Board and to Outside Agencies for 2026, and as Negotiators to any Ad Hoc Committees of the Board:

President Morton assigned the Committees as follows:

1. Executive Committee: Morton, Shriner
2. Budget and Engineering Committee: Morton, Smith – Shriner as Alternate
3. Community Outreach Committee: Imamura, Smith – Moore as Alternate
4. Resources and Groundwater Sustainability Committee: Moore, Morton – Imamura as Alternate
5. Joint City/District Committee: Imamura, Smith – Morton as Alternate

Appointments to outside agencies:

1. M1W: Moore – Imamura as Alternate
2. LAFCO: Imamura – Amith as Alternate
3. JPIA: Imamura – Shriner as Alternate
4. MCWD/SVBGSA Steering Committee: Morton – Moore as Alternate
5. Special Districts Association: All Directors

1. CAP Ad Hoc Committee: Moore – Imamura as Alternate

8. Informational Items:

A. General Manager's Report:

General Manager provided a report.

B. Committee and Board Liaison Reports:

1. Executive Committee:

Committee members provided a report.

2. Community Outreach and Personnel Committee:

Committee members provided a report.

3. Resource and Groundwater Sustainability Committee:

Committee members provided a report.

4. M1W Board Member Liaison:

Committee member provided a report.

9. Board Member Requests for Future Agenda Items:

- 1) Budget amendment for Board Conference line item.

10. Director's Comments:

Director Imamura, Director Smith, Director Moore, Vice President Shriner, and President Morton made comments.

11. Adjournment:

President Morton adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

APPROVED:

President Morton

ATTEST:

Paula Riso, Deputy Secretary

**Marina Coast Water District
Agenda Transmittal**

Agenda Item: 5-C

Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

Prepared By: Paula Riso

Approved By: Remleh Scherzinger, PE

Agenda Title: Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Joint Board/GSA Meeting of January 21, 2026

Staff Recommendation: Approve the draft minutes of the January 21, 2026 regular joint Board/GSA meeting.

Background: *Strategic Plan, Mission Statement – Marina Coast Water District delivers safe and environmentally sustainable water, recycled water, and wastewater services that meet community needs.*

Discussion/Analysis: The draft minutes of January 21, 2026 are provided for the Board to consider approval.

Environmental Review Compliance: None required.

Legal Counsel Review: None required.

Climate Adaptation: Not applicable.

Financial Impact: Yes No **Funding Source/Recap:** None

Other Considerations: The Board can suggest changes/corrections to the minutes.

Material Included for Information/Consideration: Draft minutes of January 21, 2026.

Action Required: Resolution Motion Review

Board Action

Motion By _____ Seconded By _____ No Action Taken _____

Ayes _____ Abstained _____

Noes _____ Absent _____



Marina Coast Water District

Marina Coast Water District

Regular Board Meeting/Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board Meeting
January 21, 2026

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order:

President Morton called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. on January 21, 2026 at 920 2nd Avenue, Marina, California; 2526 W. Chanute Pass, Phoenix, AZ; and, via Zoom teleconference.

2. Roll Call:

Board Members Present:

President Morton, Vice President Shriner, Director Moore, Director Smith, and Director Imamura-joined at 6:06 p.m.

Board Members Absent:

None.

Staff Members Present:

Remleh Scherzinger, General Manager; Roger Masuda, District Counsel; Derek Cray, Operations and Maintenance Manager; Mary Lagasca, Director of Administrative Services; Garrett Haertel, District Engineer; Charly Liscomb, Interim Water Resources Manager; Teo Espero, Information Technology Administrator; and, Paula Riso, Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board.

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Andy Sterbenz; Joe Pineda; Tuan Nguyen; Rene Magdaleno; Jonathan Ahmadi; Mayra Magdaleno; Andreas Baer; Doug Yount; Mark Lasnik; Liam; Michael; and, Ryo Takanashi.

3. Pledge of Allegiance:

Tuan Nguyen led everyone present in the pledge of allegiance.

4. Presentation:

A. Adopt Resolution No. 2026-01 to Recognize Tuan Nguyen, System Operator II, for 20 Years of Service to the Marina Coast Water District:

Motion by: President Morton Second by: Director Moore ;
to: 1) adopt Resolution No. 2026-01 to recognize Tuan Nguyen, System Operator II, for 20 years of service to the Marina Coast Water District. Motion passed.

Agenda Item 4-A (continued):

Ayes: Imamura, Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton _____ Noes: None _____
Absent: None _____ Abstained: None _____

5. Public Comment on Closed Session Items:

There were no comments.

The Board entered into Closed Session at 6:24 p.m. to discuss the following item.

6. Closed Session:

- A. Pursuant to Government Code 54957 (a)
 - Threat to Public Services or Facilities
 - Consultation With District Counsel and Information Technology Administrator

The Board ended closed session at 6:55 p.m. President Morton reconvened the meeting to open session at 7:00 p.m.

7. Reportable Actions Taken During Closed Session:

President Morton stated that the Board unanimously adopted Resolution No. 2026-02 to accept the proposal and approve the award of a Professional Services Agreement to Cogent Infotech Corporation for Cybersecurity Assessment Services in an amount not-to-exceed \$98,500.

8. Oral Communications:

Jonathan Ahmadi commented.

9. Consent Calendar:

Remleh Scherzinger stated that Agenda Item 9-B was pulled from the agenda.

Motion by: Director Imamura _____ Second by: Director Moore _____; to: 1) approve the Consent Calendar consisting of items A) Receive and File the Check Register for the Month of December 2025; C) Receive the 4th Quarter 2025 MCWD Water Consumption and Wastewater Flow Report; D) Receive a Status Report Update on Current Capital Improvement Projects; E) Adopt Resolution No. 2026-03 to Amend the Construction Contract with Golden State Construction & Utility, Inc. for the Construction and Closeout of Inter-Garrison Road Pipeline Upsizing Project (OW-2421); and, F) Adopt Resolution No. 2026-04 to Authorize a Professional Services Agreement Contract Amendment with Schaaf & Wheeler Consulting Civil Engineers for Engineering Services During Construction for the A1/A2 B/C Booster Station Project (GW-0112).

Agenda Item 9 (continued):

Motion passed.

Ayes: Imamura, Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton Noes: None
Absent: None Abstained: None

10. Action Items:

A. Adopt Resolution No. 2026-05 to Award a Construction Contract to Garney Pacific, Inc. for General Construction Services for Phase 1 of the Reservation Road Desalination Plant Renovation Project (CIP #OW-2404):

Motion by: Director Imamura Second by: Director Smith ;
to: 1) adopt Resolution No. 2026-05 to award a construction contract to Garney Pacific, Inc. for General Construction Services for Phase 1 of the Reservation Road Desalination Plant Renovation Project (CIP #OW-2404). Motion passed.

Ayes: Imamura, Moore, Smith, Shriner, Morton Noes: None
Absent: None Abstained: None

11. Informational Items:

A. General Manager's Report:

General Manager provided a report.

B. Committee and Board Liaison Reports:

1. Executive Committee:

Committee members provided a report.

2. Budget and Engineering Committee:

Committee members provided a report.

3. Community Outreach and Personnel Committee:

Committee members provided a report.

12. Board Member Requests for Future Agenda Items:

- 1) Brown Act Changes; 2) Art Policy; 3) Strategic Plan Update.

13. Director's Comments:

Director Imamura, Director Smith, Director Moore, Vice President Shriner, and President Morton made comments.

14. Adjournment:

President Morton adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

APPROVED:

President Morton

ATTEST:

Paula Riso, Deputy Secretary

**Marina Coast Water District
Agenda Transmittal**

Agenda Item: 6-A

Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

Prepared By: Paula Riso

Approved By: Remleh Scherzinger, PE

Agenda Title: Consider Providing Direction to the Board President Regarding Voting for Election of One Special District Regular Member to the Local Agency Formation Commission

Staff Recommendation: The Board of Directors provide direction to the Board President regarding voting for election of one Special District regular member to the Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County (LAFCO).

Background: *Strategic Plan, Mission Statement – Marina Coast Water District delivers safe and environmentally sustainable water, recycled water, and wastewater services that meet community needs.*

Discussion/Analysis: On January 21, 2026, LAFCO sent a ballot for election of a Special District representative regular member seat with a term that will expire in May 2030. Four Special District representatives have submitted their nominations for the seat: Jonathan Ahmadi, Monterey Peninsula Airport District; David Kong, Greenfield Public Recreation District and Greenfield Cemetery District; Mary Ann Leffel, Monterey Peninsula Airport District (Incumbent); and, Bill Lipe, Resource Conservation District of Monterey County.

Ballots must be received by LAFCO by March 6, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

Environmental Review Compliance: None required.

Climate Adaptation: Not applicable.

Financial Impact: Yes No **Funding Source/Recap:** None

Other Considerations: The Board can decide not to vote for any nominee running for office.

Material Included for Information/Consideration: LAFCO Memorandum regarding Ballot for Election of LAFCO Commissioner – Special District Regular Member; and nominees' statements.

Action Required: Resolution Motion Review

Board Action

Motion By _____ Seconded By _____ No Action Taken _____

Ayes _____ Abstained _____

Noes _____ Absent _____

LAFCO *of Monterey County*

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

2026 Commissioners

Chair
Wendy Root Askew
County Member

Vice Chair
Mary Ann Leffel
Special District Member

Mike Bikle
Public Member, Alternate

Kate Daniels
County Member

Dennis Donohue
City Member

Matt Gourley
Public Member

David Kong
Special District Member, Alternate

Chad Lindley
Special District Member

Chris Lopez
County Member, Alternate

Ian Oglesby
City Member

Anna Velazquez
City Member, Alternate

Counsel

Reed Gallogly
General Counsel

Executive Officer

Kate McKenna, AICP

132 W. Gabilan Street, #102
Salinas, CA 93901

P. O. Box 1369
Salinas, CA 93902

Voice: 831-754-5838

www.monterey.lafco.ca.gov

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 21, 2026

TO: Independent Special District Presiding Officers c/o Clerks of the Districts, General Managers, Fire Chiefs, and Presidents/CEOs

FROM: Kate McKenna, AICP,
Executive Officer



SUBJECT: Ballot for Election of LAFCO Commissioner – Special District Regular Member (Due March 6, 2026)

This memorandum transmits a ballot, voting instructions and candidate information for the election of one Independent Special District Regular Member to serve a four-year term on the Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County. Please forward the ballot and information to the legislative body of your District for voting and signature by the presiding officer (Board President) or designee. Vote for one of the four candidates. The deadline to return the ballot is Friday, March 6, 2026. LAFCO may extend this deadline if more time is needed to obtain ballots from a majority of Districts.

A second ballot, for election of one Special District Alternate Member, will be issued after the election of a Regular Member. Sequential balloting is in accordance with adopted procedures to ensure diversity in representation.

Thank you for participating in the election process. Please contact Principal Analyst Jonathan Brinkmann if you have any questions about the election process. He can be reached at (831) 755-5121 or by email at brinkmannj@monterey.lafco.ca.gov.

Enclosures:

Ballot and Voting Instructions
Candidate Information

LAFCO of Monterey County

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

January 21, 2026

OFFICIAL BALLOT OF THE INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT SELECTION COMMITTEE

FOR ELECTION OF ONE REGULAR SPECIAL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE TO LAFCO

Voting Instructions:

1. The presiding officer of the legislative body of the District or the legislative body's alternate officer is authorized to vote. Please vote for one candidate. A majority of Districts must return ballots in order to conclude the election. The candidate receiving the most votes will be elected to a Regular Member seat.
2. Please return this ballot to LAFCO of Monterey County at P.O. Box 1369, Salinas, CA 93902 or at 132 W. Gabilan Street, Suite 102, Salinas, CA 93901 or by email to mckennak@monterey.lafco.ca.gov.
3. **Deadline** - Ballots must be received in the LAFCO office by March 6, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. LAFCO may extend this deadline if more time is needed to obtain ballots from a majority of Districts.

PLEASE VOTE FOR 1 CANDIDATE (REGULAR MEMBER SEAT):

Jonathan Ahmadi (Monterey Peninsula Airport District)

David Kong (Greenfield Public Recreation District and Greenfield Cemetery District)

Mary Ann Leffel (Monterey Peninsula Airport District)

Bill Lipe (Resource Conservation District of Monterey County)

VOTING MEMBER SIGNATURE: _____

INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT: _____

DATE: _____

LAFCO of Monterey County

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT SELECTION COMMITTEE

NOMINATION FORM

TO DECLARE CANDIDACY AND REQUEST NAME AND STATEMENT ON BALLOTS FOR ONE REGULAR POSITION AND ONE ALTERNATE POSITION ON THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

Due Date: January 20, 2026

Nominations will be considered to fill the four-year term for one Regular seat (expiring May 2030) and the four-year term for one Alternate seat (expiring May 2030) for Independent Special District Commissioners on the Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County.

By policy, all three Special District LAFCO representatives should reflect a broad cross-section of services and geography, and no two Commissioners shall be from agencies that provide like services. Therefore, candidates for this election shall not be from a Fire District.

Nomination Deadline and Process:

Nominations must be received in the LAFCO Office by Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Qualified persons may submit their own nominations using this form (no Board action is needed). You may email the completed form to mckennak@monterey.lafco.ca.gov OR mail it to P.O. Box 1369, Salinas, CA 93902 OR hand-deliver it to 132 W. Gabilan Street, Suite 102 in Salinas.

Nomination Statement:

"I, Jonathan Ahmadi, hereby declare myself a candidate for the election to the position of Regular or Alternate Commissioner of the LAFCO of Monterey County. I am an elected or appointed Monterey County Independent Special District board member or trustee residing within the county and not a member of a legislative body of a city or county. I request my name be placed on the official ballot and, if elected, I will qualify and accept the office of Regular or Alternate LAFCO Commissioner for which I am selected and serve to the best of my ability."

Nominee Information:

Name: Jonathan Ahmadi

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone and e-mail: [REDACTED]

District represented: Monterey Peninsula Airport District

Your position with the District: Division 1 Director

Number of years as a District Board Member or Trustee: 1 year

Candidate Statement for the Ballot:

Please give reasons for wanting to be an elected LAFCO Commissioner and briefly summarize qualifications and background:

I want to be a LAFCO Commissioner because I believe deeply in the mission of encouraging orderly growth of local government agencies, preserving agricultural lands and open space, discouraging urban sprawl, and efficiently providing local government services and I would like to continue to

serve my community. I currently work as a Senior Project Manager for a Transition Planning consulting firm in the field of healthcare construction, have a degree in Aeronautical Engineering from UCLA, and serve as a Director on the Monterey Peninsula Airport District Board. I also am serving on the Board of the Housing Resource Center of Monterey County and regularly volunteer with Friends of Seaside Parks. My wife and I are avid hikers and regularly enjoy our local trails on the weekends. I lived in Los Angeles for over 20 years and see what urban sprawl does to a community and want to ensure that doesn't happen here while also ensuring we are protecting our local economy and prime farmland. Finally, I believe that government has a moral responsibility to efficiently use taxpayers dollars.

Signed:

Jonathan Ahmadi

Name (Print): Jonathan Ahmadi

Date:

January 20, 2026

Thank you for your interest in serving on LAFCO of Monterey County.

LAFCO *of Monterey County*

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT SELECTION COMMITTEE

NOMINATION FORM

**TO DECLARE CANDIDACY AND REQUEST NAME AND STATEMENT ON BALLOTS
FOR ONE REGULAR POSITION AND ONE ALTERNATE POSITION ON
THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY**

Due Date: January 20, 2026

Nominations will be considered to fill the four-year term for one Regular seat (expiring May 2030) and the four-year term for one Alternate seat (expiring May 2030) for Independent Special District Commissioners on the Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County.

By policy, all three Special District LAFCO representatives should reflect a broad cross-section of services and geography, and no two Commissioners shall be from agencies that provide like services. Therefore, candidates for this election shall not be from a Fire District.

Nomination Deadline and Process:

Nominations must be received in the LAFCO Office by Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Qualified persons may submit their own nominations using this form (no Board action is needed). You may email the completed form to mckenmak@monterey.lafco.ca.gov OR mail it to P.O. Box 1369, Salinas, CA 93902 OR hand-deliver it to 132 W. Gabilan Street, Suite 102 in Salinas.

Nomination Statement:

"I, DAVID KONG, hereby declare myself a candidate for the election to the position of Regular or Alternate Commissioner of the LAFCO of Monterey County. I am an elected or appointed Monterey County Independent Special District board member or trustee residing within the county and not a member of a legislative body of a city or county. I request my name be placed on the official ballot and, if elected, I will qualify and accept the office of Regular or Alternate LAFCO Commissioner for which I am selected and serve to the best of my ability."

Nominee Information:

Name: DAVID KONG

Address:

Phone and e-mail:

District represented: GREENFIELD PUBLIC RECREATION DISTRICT AND
Your position with the District: GREENFIELD CEMETERY DISTRICT

Number of years as a District Board Member or Trustee:

Number of years as a District Board Member or Trustee: RECREATION DISTRICT 6 YEARS
I AM TRUSTEE FOR BOTH DISTRICTS CEMETERY DISTRICT 4 YEARS

Please give reasons for wanting to be an elected LAFCO Commissioner and briefly summarize qualifications and background:

I AM A RETIRED EDUCATOR AFTER WORKING 35 YEARS IN EDUCATION IN VARIOUS ROLES. MY LAST ASSIGNMENT

WAS WORKING AT THE MONTEREY COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION FOR 23 YEARS IN THE I.T. AND BUSINESS SERVICES. I AM ALSO A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER AT THE GREENFIELD UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT. I ~~THINK~~ AM ALSO A MEMBER OF THE GREENFIELD ROTARY CLUB. I ATTEND CONFERENCES TO MAKE ME A MORE INFORMED LAFCO BOARD MEMBER. I WISH TO CONTINUE TO GIVE BACK TO MY COMMUNITY.

Signed:

David Kong

Name (Print):

DAVID KONG

Date:

1/19/2026

Thank you for your interest in serving on LAFCO of Monterey County.

LAFCO of Monterey County

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT SELECTION COMMITTEE

NOMINATION FORM

TO DECLARE CANDIDACY AND REQUEST NAME AND STATEMENT ON BALLOTS FOR ONE REGULAR POSITION AND ONE ALTERNATE POSITION ON THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

Due Date: January 20, 2026

Nominations will be considered to fill the four-year term for one Regular seat (expiring May 2030) and the four-year term for one Alternate seat (expiring May 2030) for Independent Special District Commissioners on the Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County.

By policy, all three Special District LAFCO representatives should reflect a broad cross-section of services and geography, and no two Commissioners shall be from agencies that provide like services. Therefore, candidates for this election shall not be from a Fire District.

Nomination Deadline and Process:

Nominations must be received in the LAFCO Office by Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Qualified persons may submit their own nominations using this form (no Board action is needed). You may email the completed form to mckennak@monterey.lafco.ca.gov OR mail it to P.O. Box 1369, Salinas, CA 93902 OR hand-deliver it to 132 W. Gabilan Street, Suite 102 in Salinas.

Nomination Statement:

"I, MARY ANN LEFFEL, hereby declare myself a candidate for the election to the position of Regular or Alternate Commissioner of the LAFCO of Monterey County. I am an elected or appointed Monterey County Independent Special District board member or trustee residing within the county and not a member of a legislative body of a city or county. I request my name be placed on the official ballot and, if elected, I will qualify and accept the office of Regular or Alternate LAFCO Commissioner for which I am selected and serve to the best of my ability."

Nominee Information:

Name: MARY ANN LEFFEL
Address: 132 W. Gabilan Street, Suite 102, Salinas, CA 93902
Phone and e-mail: [REDACTED]
District represented: Monterey Peninsula Airport District
Your position with the District: Board Member
Number of years as a District Board Member or Trustee: 17 years

Candidate Statement for the Ballot:

Please give reasons for wanting to be an elected LAFCO Commissioner and briefly summarize qualifications and background:

I believe we have an obligation to preserve & maintain ag land, while honoring a commitment to our workforce for providing housing & services.

I have served on LAFCO (MoCo) for 8 years, including as Chair and as Chair of the Budget/Financial Committee, providing leadership on budget approvals, and the award winning mitigation policy.

It would be my honor to represent the districts and our community as a trustee for another term.

Signed: Mary Ann Lefel

Name (Print): MARY ANN LEFEL

Date: 1.20.26

Thank you for your interest in serving on LAFCO of Monterey County.

I currently serve as a board member of Ventana Wildlife Society, Mon Bay DART, (Advised All Mobility) Marin Chamber of Commerce, Old Monterey Foundation, Carmel Valley Art Association, LAFCO MoCo, and Monterey Peninsula Airport District, as well as Special Districts Mo County.

In addition, I am a member of Monterey Rotary, Monterey History & Art Assoc., Monterey County Hospitality Assoc.

I co-founded the Monterey County Business Council, Leadership Monterey County, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, Monterey Bay Defense Alliance and CSUMB's Institute for Innovation & Economic Development and Central Coast Broadband Consortium.

I have served as Chair of multiple boards listed above, as well as Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, MoCo Economic Development Commission and Volunteer Center, Monterey County.

My list of over 30 other boards and commissions span a period of my 43 years of active community service in Monterey County.

I retired after 45 years of teaching, live in Monterey and love Monterey County.

LAFCO of Monterey County

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT SELECTION COMMITTEE

NOMINATION FORM

TO DECLARE CANDIDACY AND REQUEST NAME AND STATEMENT ON BALLOTS FOR ONE REGULAR POSITION AND ONE ALTERNATE POSITION ON THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF MONTEREY COUNTY

Due Date: January 20, 2026

Nominations will be considered to fill the four-year term for one Regular seat (expiring May 2030) and the four-year term for one Alternate seat (expiring May 2030) for Independent Special District Commissioners on the Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County.

By policy, all three Special District LAFCO representatives should reflect a broad cross-section of services and geography, and no two Commissioners shall be from agencies that provide like services. Therefore, candidates for this election shall not be from a Fire District.

Nomination Deadline and Process:

Nominations must be received in the LAFCO Office by Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Qualified persons may submit their own nominations using this form (no Board action is needed). You may email the completed form to mckennak@monterey.lafco.ca.gov OR mail it to P.O. Box 1369, Salinas, CA 93902 OR hand-deliver it to 132 W. Gabilan Street, Suite 102 in Salinas.

Nomination Statement:

"I, Bill Lipe, hereby declare myself a candidate for the election to the position of Regular or Alternate Commissioner of the LAFCO of Monterey County. I am an elected or appointed Monterey County Independent Special District board member or trustee residing within the county and not a member of a legislative body of a city or county. I request my name be placed on the official ballot and, if elected, I will qualify and accept the office of Regular or Alternate LAFCO Commissioner for which I am selected and serve to the best of my ability."

Nominee Information:

Name: Bill Lipe

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone and e-mail: [REDACTED]

District represented: Resource Conservation District of Monterey County

Your position with the District: Director

Number of years as a District Board Member or Trustee: 8+

Candidate Statement for the Ballot:

Please give reasons for wanting to be an elected LAFCO Commissioner and briefly summarize qualifications and background:

See attached for qualifications.

Signed:

William O. Lipe

Name (Print): William O. Lipe

Date:

1/12/2026

Thank you for your interest in serving on LAFCO of Monterey County.

COVER LETTER

Bill Lipe
Salinas, California

Re: Candidacy for Independent Special District Alternate Seat – LAFCO of Monterey County

Dear Selection Committee Members,

I am submitting my candidacy for the Independent Special District Alternate seat on the Local Agency Formation Commission of Monterey County, with a public-service background centered on land-use decision-making, agency authority, and the long-term governance of shared resources.

Much of my public service has involved advising and governing at the intersection of land use, water systems, and agricultural activity—areas where jurisdictional clarity and institutional coordination are essential. As a Director of the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County, I participate in governance decisions affecting conservation programs, land stewardship priorities, and partnerships that directly shape how land and water resources are managed across jurisdictional boundaries.

Over the past fifteen years, I have also served on the Monterey County Agriculture Advisory Committee and on advisory committees of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, including the Basin Management Advisory Committee and the Reservoir Operations Advisory Committee. In these roles, I have worked with County staff and policymakers on issues where land use, infrastructure operations, and regulatory authority converge—often requiring careful alignment between agency mandates and on-the-ground realities.

Across these appointments, my focus has been on ensuring that decisions are grounded in statutory authority, transparent governance processes, and a clear understanding of how service responsibilities affect communities over time. LAFCO’s mandate—to oversee agency boundaries, service extensions, and orderly growth—directly reflects this same responsibility.

I would welcome the opportunity to support LAFCO’s land-use and agency-formation mission as an Alternate Commissioner and to contribute disciplined, independent judgment to its deliberations.

Respectfully,
Bill Lipe

CV / RESUME

BILL LIPE

Salinas, California



PUBLIC SERVICE & LAND-USE GOVERNANCE EXPERIENCE

Resource Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC)

Director, Board of Directors | 2020–Present

- Provide governance oversight for a special district whose work directly intersects land use, watershed management, and agricultural conservation.
- Review and guide policies affecting conservation planning, land stewardship priorities, and inter-agency coordination.
- Support alignment between district authority, partner agencies, and landowners across multiple jurisdictions.
- Participate in long-range planning and policy discussions shaping how conservation services are delivered geographically.

Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SVBGSA)

Director, Upper Valley (Elected) | 2017–2021

- Participated in governance of basin-wide groundwater management affecting land use, pumping allocations, and long-term development constraints.
- Reviewed groundwater sustainability plans with direct implications for agricultural land use and regional planning.
- Helped balance statutory requirements with practical impacts on communities and landowners.

Monterey County Agriculture Advisory Committee

Committee Member / Chair (Various Periods) | Past 15 Years

- Advised the County on agricultural land-use policy, zoning considerations, and related regulatory impacts.
- Worked with County departments to evaluate how land-use decisions affect agricultural operations and rural communities.

Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA)

Basin Management Advisory Committee — Member | Various Periods, Past 15 Years

- Contributed to advisory discussions on basin management strategies influencing land use, water availability, and agency coordination.
- Helped frame technical water-management issues in policy terms relevant to land-use and service planning.

Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA)

Reservoir Operations Advisory Committee — Member | Various Periods, Past 15 Years

- Advised on reservoir operations and flood-management considerations with direct land-use and public-safety implications.
- Supported coordination between operational authority, regulatory requirements, and downstream land uses.

PUBLIC-SERVICE FOCUS AREAS

- Land-use governance and policy oversight
- Agency authority and jurisdictional coordination
- Special district governance
- Water-related land-use constraints
- Public-safety considerations in infrastructure planning
- Long-range service and boundary implications

Correspondence

Notes from the 2025 Special District Leadership Academy Conference
November 16-18, 2025
Monterey Conference Center, Monterey, CA

Dr. Tom Moore, Member, Board of Directors
Marina Coast Water District
Monterey One Water

Monday, November 17, 2025

WHO DOES WHAT AND WHY? A MASTER CLASS ON GOOD GOVERNANCE – Andreas Booher and Brian Hughes, Best, Best & Krieger, LLP

- Attorneys for Special Districts represent the District itself, not the Board or any employees, i.e., the District is the client.
- In Special Districts the staff roles include:
 - Informing and educating the Board of Directors.
 - Facilitate the implementation of Board policies.
 - Run the District on a day-to-day basis.
 - Communicate with the Board consistently, fairly and honestly.
- The role of Counsel for a Special District includes:
 - Ensure that Board policies are legally sound.
 - Educate the Board and staff about the legal risks associated with alternative decisions.
 - Provide the Board with options but do not make Board decisions for them.
 - Know how and when to advise in public settings versus non-public settings.
 - Know the District's goals, strengths and challenges.
- Board members must not step out of their director role by micromanaging or individually directing staff. All requests for information from staff must go through the General Manager.
- The General Manager must keep all directors equally well informed.
- Staff must not attempt to set policy for the District.
- Board members are not liable for an injury resulting from an act or omission in the Director's discretion. There is a two-part test that must be passed for this immunity to take effect:
 - The decision that resulted in the injury had to have been made at the policy or planning level in the District.
 - The decision cannot involve actual fraud, corruption or malice.
- However, a public official is not immune from liability for injuries caused by his/her own wrongful conduct.

- Information obtained in closed sessions must remain confidential unless a Board majority authorized its release.
- Directors should avoid criticizing staff or other Board members in public sessions.
- The Board should evaluate the General Manager periodically based on the goals of the District and how they manage subordinate staff members.
- The Board should not be involved in evaluating the performance of other staff members.

FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR DISTRICT: TECHNOLOGY PLANNING FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES – Ammon Bécar, VC3

- It is essential that the District have a Board approved strategic plan for information technology.
- Obsolete information technologies:
 - Windows 7 and Windows 10
 - MS Office 2010 and MS Office 2013
 - Traditional firewalls.
 - Traditional antivirus software
 - Single Factor Authentication
- Current baseline information technologies
 - Windows 11
 - Multi-factor authentication
 - Endpoint detection and response (EDR)
 - Data backup and disaster recovery
 - Email filtering and web filtering
 - Security awareness training for all users
 - Access control to facilities
 - Patch management
- Foundational information technologies
 - MS Office 365
 - Cloud services
 - Dark web monitoring
 - NextGen firewalls
 - Business continuity processes
 - Password managers
 - Managed detection and response (MDR)
- Foundational information technologies that should be in your IT strategic plan if you don't already have them
 - MS Azure AD/InTune
 - MS Office 2022

- Evolving information technologies to seriously consider
 - More cloud-based infrastructure
 - Mobile device management
 - Internet of Things (IoT)
 - Vulnerability management
 - Security Incident and Event Manager (SIEM)
 - Security Orchestration, Automation and Response (SOAR)
- Evolving information technologies that might be in your IT strategic plan
 - Windows 12
 - MS Office 202X
 - Zero trust
- Futuristic information technologies (they may carry significant unknown risks)
 - Generative AI
 - 5G communication
 - Use of blockchain technology
- Zero Trust is a security model that operates on the fundamental principle of "never trust, always verify." This architecture requires all users, whether inside or outside the organization's network, to be authenticated, authorized, and continuously validated before being granted access to any system or data. The principles of zero trust involve:
 - Identity Verification
 - Least Privileged Access
 - Micro-Segmentation
 - Continuous monitoring
 - Data security
 - Incorporation of the most modern information technologies

GENERAL MANAGER EVALUATIONS: A STRATEGIC APPROACH THAT WORKS – Martin Rauch,
Rauch Communication Consultants, Inc.

- Reasons for periodic General Manager (GM) evaluations:
 - Helps GM understand the Board members better.
 - Helps build good working relationship between Board and GM.
 - Helps GM serve the Board and the agency more effectively.
 - Allows GM to learn if he or she is accomplishing the Board's strategic goals.
 - Help GM develop professionally.
- Periodic evaluations should not be punitive, judgmental or critical, nor should they be strictly a numerical grade.
- The Board's role is to:
 - Set direction and goals.

- Authorize the use of resources and funds.
 - Set the desired end state.
 - Establish limits on management.
 - With the assistance of the GM and staff, adopt various types of plans (budgets, master plans, financial plans, etc.).
- The Board shouldn't involve itself in how things get done – the Board's interest is in what gets done.
- The GM's role is to:
 - Support the Board.
 - Follow the Board's policy direction.
 - Get done the work required to meet this policy direction.
 - Reports results to the Board in a timely way.
- Problems arise when:
 - One or more Board members get involved in management and/or operations.
 - GM or other staff try to steer the Board to fit their personal interests.
- Good communications between the GM and Board members includes:
 - Directors feeling free to talk with the GM to clear up issues and questions before Board meetings.
 - GM and individual Directors meet periodically over lunch or similar venue.
 - Directors are clear about how frequently they want reports from the GM, what topics they want reported by the GM and what reporting format or method they want.
 - The GM provides these reports in the formats desired by the Board.
- The Board should identify who will lead the evaluation process. Logical choices are:
 - Board president or chair.
 - Attorney for the organization.
 - Specialty facilitator.
- The leader must ensure the entire Board participates in the process.
- Performance of the GM must be measured against previously defined goals and objectives, a strategic plan and/or personal goals of the GM.
- Performance should be evaluated annually.
- The Board should come to a consensus regarding performance feedback, otherwise the GM may be given conflicting feedback that makes it impossible for the GM to improve.
- Possible areas of performance evaluation:
 - Communication with the Board and Staff.
 - Communication with the Public and other audiences.
 - People management.

- Organizational effectiveness.
- Personal traits.
- Completion of goals and objectives.
- The Board may also suggest a performance improvement plan and the establishment of future goals.
- A step-by-step evaluation process taking place over three months (or three Board meetings) was described.
- He briefly discussed 360-degree evaluations and Board investigations of serious concerns regarding a GM.

WORKING WITH OVERSIGHT ORGANIZATIONS: LAFCOS, GRAND JURIES AND MORE – Richard Rogers, Director, Civil Grand Jury Association of California and Matthew Summers, Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC

- Grand Juries perform different functions including:
 - Initiation of court proceedings to remove a person from public office for willful or corrupt misconduct;
 - To initiate an indictment for criminal conduct (done by criminal Grand Juries).
 - Local government oversight (done by civil Grand Juries).
- The Civil Grand Juries Association (CGJA) promotes, preserves and supports the civil grand jury system through training, education and outreach.
- They do annual training for more than 1,000 jurors in 50 venues. They have a two-day initial seminar and a one-day report writing workshop.
- Their training covers the functions of civil grand juries, the pertinent law, the various related roles (jurors, judges, county counsels and District Attorneys) and procedures.
- Civil grand juries have the legal power to investigate and report on the operations of local government entities within a county.
- They may not investigate or comment on government policies or policy decisions. They may however comment on decision making procedures or on how a policy was carried out by staff.
- Their objective is to help government improve efficiency and effectiveness and to promote accountability and transparency.
- Grand juries get ideas for investigation from multiple sources:
 - Media coverage
 - Local resident's complaints
 - Prior reports and responses
 - Evidence passed forward from the prior grand jury

- Personal knowledge or interest of individual jurors
- Jurors must sometimes recuse themselves.
- Reasons for recusal include employment in the past three years by the government agency of interest to the Grand Jury, or a perception of bias for or against that government agency due to the juror's family relationships, close friends or business associations.
- Bias may arise due to employment, contracts, family or personal relationships, litigation with the government entity, or public advocacy about the issue being investigated.
- Recused jurors must play no role in the investigation or report writing. Failure to recuse results in a tainted civil grand jury report.
- Civil grand juries should select topics that are potentially consequential. Consequences may include significant cost savings, a reduction in negative media attention, elimination of the problem, or the importance of the issue to the public.
- The chances of a special district being investigated increase if the district brushed off an earlier investigation or there is negative media coverage or resident's complaints.
- Grand juries are entitled to free access at all reasonable times to the examination without charge of public records held by any special district within the county.
- Grand juries do not have to use the Public Records Act. Their records requests may be made by telephone, email or personally during interviews. The special district may negotiate due dates and manner of delivery of the records.
- If the special district wants to object to a request for records, they should object directly or through their legal counsel. However, the grand jury can ask a judge or District Attorney to issue a subpoena for those records. Our best advice is to try and work things out with the grand jury.
- The grand jury must interview the "subject of the investigation." This is usually the general manager or members of the agency's board of directors. The interviewee has no right to have counsel present during the interview.
- Interviewees may be asked to bring records. Interviewees will be admonished not to reveal what is discussed in the interview. Interviewees have a right to ask for clarification of questions, to correct or expand on answers, and to take a break to call District Counsel.
- Interviewees may ask for a follow up or exit interviews. Interviewee identities may never be revealed by grand jury members.
- Grand juries are required to provide their report to the subjects of the report two working days in advance of its public release. You should read it immediately. If you spot errors, you should immediately contact the grand jury or its legal adviser. Its legal adviser is typically County Council or the District Attorney.

- The grand jury report will have numbered findings and recommendations for the governing board of the public agency. Only governing boards are mandated to respond to the grand jury's report. Such responses are required within 90 days. Responses must be on time and there is some required wording.
- For each grand jury finding you must state whether you agree or disagree. And if you disagree you must explain your reasons for your disagreement.
- For each grand jury recommendation, you must indicate if your agency has implemented it and give a summary of that implementation including its time frame. If the recommendation requires further analysis, you must provide an explanation and a timeframe for that analysis. If the government agency decides not to implement the recommendation, it must explain why it is not warranted or not reasonable to do so.
- Here are some tips for working smoothly with civil grand juries:
 - Be cooperative.
 - The forthright and avoid misunderstandings caused by hedging your answers.
 - Offer proof if you disagree.
 - Request exit interviews.
 - Contact the grand jury immediately if you see errors in their report.
 - Do not brush off the grand jury.
 - Consult with your agency's counsel as needed.
- Mr. Summers provided an overview about the 50 LAFCO's in California.
- He pointed out that they have broad powers under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.
- County LAFCO's have jurisdiction over boundaries and service authorities of nearly every of special district in California.
- They have jurisdiction over changes to special districts such as formations, annexations, detachments, dissolutions, consolidations, mergers, and the exercise of new or latent powers.
- LAFCO's do Municipal Service Reviews, Sphere of Influence determinations, and special studies.
- Special districts must comply with LAFCO requests for information.

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

PROTECTING PUBLIC FUNDS: FINANCIAL POLICIES FOR EFFECTIVE BOARD GOVERNANCE –

James Ramsey, CPA, Eide Bailly

- Members of special district boards of directors have board responsibilities related to finance:
 - Duty of care.

- Duty of loyalty.
- Duty of obedience.
- Risk management and compliance.
- Strategic direction and oversight.
- Transparency and accountability.
- To be educated and engaged.
- Oversight responsibilities of directors include:
 - Approving an annual budget.
 - Monitoring monthly financial reports and annual filings.
 - Ensuring proper management of grants and donations in line with the intent.
 - Engaging independent auditors and reviewing their findings.
- The board is also responsible for adopting certain policies including:
 - Developing adopting and periodically reviewing financial policies.
 - Updating policies to reflect changes in regulations, law, technology, and organizational needs.
- There are a variety of policies a special district should have on its books such as:
 - Budgeting and financial planning policy.
 - Transparency and accountability policy.
 - Cash management and Investment policies.
 - Audit and oversight policies.
 - Internal controls policy. This policy should follow the ARC acronym – This means that expenditure authorization, expenditure recording, and check issuance should be done by separate people.
 - Conflict of interest, ethics, and integrity policies.
 - Whistleblower and document Retention policies.
 - Debt Management policies.
 - Fund stabilization and reserve policies.
 - Capital asset management policies.
 - Grant and funding policies.
 - Artificial intelligence use policies.
 - Emergency management policies.
- He noted that one of the biggest risks of fraud experienced by special districts is related to credit cards issued to employees.

DON'T CONFUSE KINDNESS WITH WEAKNESS: HOW TO HANDLE DISRUPTIVE PUBLIC MEETINGS – David Lim, Richards Watson Gershon

- If in doubt about how to handle a disruptive meeting, consult with District counsel, preferably ahead of the meeting.

- It is almost always better to let people speak, than to cut them off, no matter how offensive the content of their speech may be.
- While it is legal to clear the meeting room under certain circumstances, it is usually better to reschedule the meeting rather than take all the time it will take to clear the room and continue the meeting. It is also possible under those circumstances to continue the meeting in a smaller more private nearby room and exclude the public.
- Clearing the room may only be legally done when the meeting is willfully interrupted by a group or groups so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting unfeasible and when order cannot be restored by the removal of the disruptive individuals.
- The presiding member of the board conducting a meeting may remove or cause the removal of an individual for disrupting the meeting. However, before doing so the individual must be warned that they are disrupting the meeting and will be removed if they do not cease doing so.
- Removing a member of the public must always be your last resort.
- Willful disruptors are seeking a reaction. They want you to be shocked and offended. They want you to lose your cool.
- Elected officials may file a workplace restraining order against possible disruptors. However, strong evidence will be required to get the court to issue such an order.
- Mr. Lim provided a script for dealing with or offensive comments made by the public in the virtual or zoom environment. The script admonishes the speaker for straying from the agendized topic of the public comment. If they continue making racist or offensive comments after being admonished, they may be cut off in the virtual environment. The public should them be told that they were cut off for straying from the topic of the public comment.

THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) IN SPECIAL DISTRICTS: LEGAL RISKS AND GOVERNANCE SOLUTIONS – Gabriella Kamran and Alexander Volberding, Liebert Cassidy Whitmore

- The Department of Homeland Security has published guidelines for agency implementation of artificial intelligence: <https://www.dhs.gov/publication/dhs-generative-ai-public-sector-playbook>.
- Historical note: The first traffic lights in the 1920s were individually staffed by police officers who manually turned the lights on and off. We have come a long way in automating various functions including using machines and artificial intelligence.
- Here are some examples of where we are using artificial intelligence today:
 - Monitoring images from wildland cameras to detect wildfires.

- Streamlining the building permit process after the Palisades and Eaton fires in the county of Los Angeles.
- Capturing images from cameras on city vehicles to detect and evaluate potholes, and then generate automated work orders for street and road repairs.
- The promise of artificial intelligence includes increased efficiency, increased productivity and less time spent on mundane tasks by humans.
- The perils of AI include inaccurate information, hallucinations, proliferation of biases and discrimination, the potential for omnipresent surveillance, compromised privacy, and anxiety associated with fear of change and job loss.
- Note that Chat GPT was only launched in November 2022.
- There are seven steps to government adoption of artificial intelligence:
 1. Identify potential uses consistent with the Agency's mission and that improve effectiveness or efficiency.
 2. Set a governance structure for control of artificial intelligence, i.e., determine who has authority to authorize use of specific AI for specific purposes. Create an AI committee or working group that has and includes core AG leadership, IT and security staff members, legal counsel, and departmental representatives.
 3. Adopt the appropriate AI tools and technologies. Run test pilot programs with limited users in a controlled environment. Refine and expand to additional users and figure out the optimal use of the technology along the way. Finally roll it out to scale.
 4. Have the board adopt an AI use policy. At the minimum, it should cover privacy and confidentiality issues and enforcement.
 5. Monitor and measure outcomes and results from the use of AI. These assessments may be done internally or externally or both.
 6. You should consider whether to retain and train current personnel or recruit new person already experience with AI.
 7. You should monitor AI use from the very beginning by testing, evaluating, and obtaining feedback from users and other stakeholders.
- Legislative action in California related to artificial intelligence:
 - SB 53: Related Large Language Model developers. Approved in the 2024-2025 legislative session.
 - SB 524: AI use by law enforcement agencies. Approved in the 2024-2025 legislative session.
 - AB 316: Related to AI defenses. Approved in the 2024-2025 legislative session.
 - Other proposed bills failed but could be resurrected in some form.
- If AI is used in the recruitment and hiring process, human decision makers must still be involved in the entire process.

- AI is being used to analyze the need for various government services to inform resource allocation and scheduling.
- In performance evaluation, AI can create written products that are more constructive for the recipient. In disciplinary actions AI can better connect evidence to the disciplinary case.
- AI systems should not be used to solely determine hours worked based on productivity metrics. There must be human oversight.
- All employees should be formally notified that they have no privacy rights when they use government information technologies including AI.
- Management may be able to think of lots of ways to use AI to help do payroll related tasks. However, one must be very careful in doing so to ensure fairness and accuracy to the employees.
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Audits may use AI. Will it produce accurate audits?
- There are potential forthcoming statutory limitations on the use of AI regarding Labor Relations issues.
- The impacts and effects of AI in a government agency maybe a negotiable issue with bargaining units.
- Liebert Cassidy Whitmore has AI policy templates available.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT OPTIONS AND POLICIES FOR SPECIAL DISTRICTS – Rick Wood, CSDA

- The recent passage of Senate Bill 820 now means that every two years members of government agency boards must take a two-hour training on government financing. The requirement went into effect on January 1st 2026. Existing board members have six months to complete the initial training. CSDA is offering this training free to CSDA members. See: <https://www.csda.net/events/event-description?CalendarEventKey=5c0dfffe-9f9d-480e-8793-019a80bd9a7f&Home=%2flearn%2fall-events%2fall-events-webinars>
- Public agency officials are fiduciaries, subject to the “prudent investor standard.”
- Government Code Section 53600 requires the investment of public funds to have the following primary goals in the following priority order:
 - Safety.
 - Liquidity.
 - Yield.
- Special district must follow the accounting and reporting guidelines found at: https://www.sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD-Local/spd_manual_2024_edition.pdf
- When investing the public’s money, you must avoid concentration risk, i.e., don’t put all your eggs in one basket.

- Every local government agency must have an investment policy and should provide a statement of that policy on their website.
- State law specifies what types of information must be in quarterly investment reports provided to the board by the agency treasurer or investment officer. See California Government Code section 53646.
- The agency treasurer or investment officer is required to provide the Board with monthly reports of any transactions in the agency investment portfolio. See California Government Code section 53607.
- The information in the required quarterly report investment report may be combined with the information in the monthly investment transactions report as long as it's provided monthly.
- If your agency deposits funds in a California bank, that California bank must be able to demonstrate to the federal government that it has enough collateral to cover 105% of the total of the government funds it has on deposit.
- A district's investment policy should be influenced by the following factors:
 - Assets and liabilities.
 - Liquidity needs.
 - The cash flow schedule.
 - The district's sensitivity to gains and losses.
 - The district's sensitivity to its credit rating.
 - Unique district risks and biases.
- The CSDA's California CLASS will soon be publishing a cash flow model for Special Districts.
- California Special Districts may invest in the following limited list of investments:
 - LAIF (a pooled investment program run by the State).
 - California CLASS (a pooled investment program established by CSDA).
 - Money market funds.
 - U.S. Treasury bills and bonds.
 - U.S. Government agencies.
 - Negotiable Certificates of Deposit.
 - Repurchase agreements.
 - Banker's acceptances.
 - Commercial paper
 - Corporate notes.
 - Municipal notes.
 - Mortgage-backed securities.
 - Asset backed securities.

- Special districts may invest directly under the control of their treasurer or investment officer in these various forms of investment. Or they may hire an outside firm to manage their investment in accordance with the Special District's investment policy. Or they may choose to invest exclusively in the investment pools like LAIF and California CLASS.
- Use of the pooled investment programs is better for smaller districts. They get exposure to a broader range of investments. And they get professional portfolio management, risk management, ensured compliance with the law and proper reporting from the pool. This can be highly cost efficient.
- Managed portfolios can outperform LAIF or California class, but come with costs paid to the management firm. Usually, this option is only appropriate for larger special districts with larger portfolios to invest.
- Direct investment by the special district under the control of their treasurer or investment officer is usually only an option for the largest of special districts and investment portfolios. It comes with a requirement for significant staff time, and trading and custody costs. And the District must have the manpower, the expertise, the time, and the research and monitoring capabilities to accomplish direct investment successfully.
- The key takeaways are to manage expectations, focus on cash flow, and diversify in accordance with California law.
- CSDA has a free investment policy guide. See: <https://www.csda.net/blogs/kristin-withrow1/2022/10/20/does-your-district-have-an-investment-policy>.

Notes from the 2025 ACWA Conference
December 2-4, 2025
Sheraton San Diego Resort, San Diego, CA
Dr. Tom Moore, Director, Marina Coast Water District

December 2, 2025

ACWA Groundwater Committee Meeting

- The committee has completed 70% of the 2025 goals of the ACWA strategic plan.

Paul Goslin – Deputy Director, California Department of Water Resources

- Bulletin 118 is updated every five years. DWR recently changed the update period to ten years. It is an enormously valuable resource document.
- There are four themes to be built into Bulletin 118 going forward:
 - Sustainable Groundwater Management - This theme advocates for the implementation of practices that ensure groundwater supplies are not depleted, promoting methods such as aquifer recharge and efficient water use.
 - Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement - Involves various parties, including local governments, water agencies, and community members, to create holistic approaches that consider diverse perspectives and needs.
 - Data Collection and Monitoring - A robust framework for ongoing measurement of groundwater levels, quality, and use. This is essential for informed management decisions and policy formulation.
 - Adaptability and Resilience - Preparing for uncertainties—like droughts or changing land use—ensures that groundwater management can adjust as necessary to protect water supplies effectively.
- The comment period for the latest revision to Bulletin 118 closes December 5, 2025.
- The upcoming DWR budget doesn't look very good.
- Held a GSA Forum in November that 200 people attended.

ACWA Groundwater Committee Policy Update

Morgan Campbell, Director of Regulatory Affairs, Westside Water Authority

- Groundwater Banks are:
 - Programs that purposefully store water in groundwater aquifer.
 - Recovery rights (pumping or exchange).
 - Have related accounting systems that track deposits and withdrawals.
 - Accounting system track losses due to conveyance and seepage.
 - They plan to develop a groundwater bank permitting system.
 - Asked for folks to tell the Groundwater Committee to tell them about their groundwater bank inventory.

- There is a lot more space in groundwater basins to store water than in surface storage.
- Only one groundwater bill that ACWA opposed made it to the Governor's desk to be signed.

Christy Kennedy, Sr. Water Resources Engineer & Hydrogeologist, Woodard & Curran, Inc. and Executive Director of the Groundwater Resources Association of California (GRAC)

- The Groundwater Resources Association of California (GRAC) is an organization focused on advancing groundwater management and promoting sustainable water resource practices in California.
- Key Functions and Activities:
 - Advocacy: GRAC advocates for effective groundwater policy and regulatory frameworks.
 - Education: They provide training and workshops aimed at enhancing knowledge about groundwater management.
 - Networking: The organization fosters collaboration among professionals and stakeholders involved in groundwater resources.
 - Research: GRAC supports research initiatives that contribute to a better understanding of groundwater issues.
- Their goal is groundwater sustainability for all.
- They have a statewide Board.
- They have eight branches and several statewide committees
- They held the 2025 Western Groundwater Congress last month – 400 participants attended.
- Themes:
 - Legislative and regulatory evolution are needed to make more projects happen.
 - Technology and innovation – we don't have enough.
 - Data analytics has become an essential part of groundwater management.
 - Climate adaptation must be integrated with land use.
 - Stakeholder engagement and communication are essential.
 - Emerging groundwater contaminants are a major concern.
 - How to bridge the urban/agricultural divide.
- GRAC also does a lot of education via online and in-person conferences.
- GRAC has a quarterly magazine.
- Two upcoming events:
 - Biennial Symposium on Managed Aquifer Recharge (BISMAR), March 31 – April 2, 2026, Sacramento, CA.
 - SIGMA Summit in Clovis, CA in first week of June.
- Their website is <https://www.grac.org/>

ACWA Water Management Committee Policy Update

David Peterson – General Manager at Los Virgenes Municipal Water District and Chair, ACWA Water Management Committee

- Wants more input from the ACWA Regions regarding future government policy.

- Would like to see ACWA develop a process to take a position pro or con on projects of state-wide importance.

Adam Robin - Government Relations Manager, Yuba Water Agency

- Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan is a regulatory blueprint for the management of water in the Bay/Delta watershed. It includes water quality, agriculture and other beneficial uses and recreational issues. A 1996 agreement established the groundwork for this plan.
- State Water Resources Control Board authorities are limited to flow and surface water rights.
- There are other important characteristics of the Bay/Delta watershed besides flows and water rights.
- There is an update underway for Phase 2 of the Bay/Delta Plan that may come out in December 2025 and to be considered by the SWRCB in fall 2026.

Michael Cook – Director of Water Resources and Regulatory Affairs, Turlock Irrigation District

- There has been work going on to amend the Bay/Delta Plan since 2018. This process might be completed in 2027.
- Bay/Delta Plan is very complex....

Tia Fleming – Executive Director of the California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP) (formerly the California Urban Water Conservation Council)

- Urban water use reports are due by the end of January 2026.
- AB 5072 prohibits the use of potable water on nonfunctional turf – businesses and organizations must adopt a related policy by June 30, 2027.
- Nonfunctional turf is commercial turf that isn't used for recreational purposes. This applies to properties like commercial complexes, municipalities, and other public areas, while exemptions exist for functional green spaces like sports fields and recreational parks.
- There are new regulatory reporting requirements. CalWEP has lots of online resources to help businesses comply with these requirements. See <https://calwep.org/NFT/>
- Must report on usage of dedicated irrigation meters.
- They have put together the Coalition for Water Data Streamlining to tackle the challenges of water data reporting to two different California government agencies. Unfortunately, these agencies do not share data or have common data structures.
- Their website is <https://calwep.org/>

Andrew Schwartz – Climate Action Manager, California Department of Water Resources

- The California Department of Water Resources released the State Water Project Adaptation Strategy earlier in 2025. See <https://cawaterlibrary.net/document/state-water-project-adaptation-strategy/>
- California will be dealing with a fundamentally different climate in the future.
- We are losing about 3% of California water supplies each year due to climate change.

- First priority of the State Water Project is to maintain and renew its infrastructure.
- We need more storage both above and below ground to protect from droughts.
- Fire prevention plays an important role in preserving State water infrastructure.
- They also need to deal with subsidence in the San Joaquin Valley as it affects the conveyance system to southern California.
- The Delta Conveyance Project is highly important to the State Water Project.

Education Session: Procurement Pathways for Powering Water Infrastructure

Tony Pastore – Advisor, TerraVerde Energy

- PG&E has had a 65% cost increase in the past four years.
- \$0.05 per KWH is the cost of solar power.
- Battery storage costs have come down significantly in recent years.

Ali Chehrehsaz – Chief Executive Officer, TerraVerde Energy

- The traditional project procurement method is Design, Bid, Build (DBB). However, alternative methods called Progressive Procurement Alternatives (PPA):
 - Progressive Design-Build (PDB) - This method consolidates design and construction responsibilities, leading to faster project delivery. Early contractor involvement can provide valuable insights that enhance design feasibility and cost-effectiveness.
 - Progressive Design-Build Operate Maintain (PDBOM) - This procurement model is an extension of the traditional design-build framework, specifically designed for projects that require ongoing operations and maintenance after construction. It integrates the phases of design, construction, operation, and maintenance into one cohesive process, promoting collaboration and efficiency throughout the project lifecycle.
 - Construction Management at Risk (CMAR) – the construction manager acts as a consultant during the design phase and takes on the role of the general contractor during construction. This method allows for a more accurate budget and schedule tracking.
 - Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) - This innovative approach encourages collaboration among all stakeholders, sharing risks and rewards. It fosters open communication, leading to better problem-solving and a focus on overall project success rather than individual goals.
- When designing the finances of alternative energy projects, be sure to incorporate the cost of tearing down and disposing of the project at the end of its life. Note that most likely this original project will be replaced with a similar project but with improved technology.

Dennis Cafferty – General Manager, El Toro Water District

- El Toro is building a solar photovoltaic project and two battery projects. It's the first project like this that they have done.
- Electricity is one third of El Toro's total costs.
- The potential savings were not as great as they expected.

- There are certain types of costs related to energy projects where it is not clear if it qualifies for energy grant funding.
- El Toro Water District could potentially become an entity of foreign concern to the Federal government if it owes money (via bonds or other types of loans) to a foreign entity that is of concern to the Federal government.
- They used an alternative procurement method authorized under Government Code Section 4217.10. This code section addresses the procurement of public works projects by local agencies in California. This code allows local agencies to implement alternative procurement methods when certain criteria are met. These alternative methods include PDB and CMAR.
- The Code requires the project to create a financial benefit for the customers. This puts pressure on the project bidders to keep costs down.

Craig Hayes – Partner at Best, Best & Krieger LLP (BB&K) with focus on infrastructure projects

- He focuses on the procurement of energy projects.
- The traditional (design, bid, build) procurement method is very linear.
- There are alternate progressive (such as Construction Management at Risk for Design and Construction (CMDC)) procurement methods. Water agencies have been given authority to use alternative procurement pathways but they only apply to energy projects.
- Progressive design/build – can be used on projects values at more than \$5 million.
- One step procurement is possible for smaller projects – it involves RFQs, not RFPs.
- The government agency's procurement documents must follow the State regulations carefully.

Marc Serna – Assistant General Manager, South Coast Water District

- They are building the Dana Point/Doheny State Beach Desalination Project.
- The project uses slant wells to get water at near open ocean salinity.
- They used the Progressive Design Build, Operate, Maintain (PDBOM) procurement method.
- It is approved currently as a 5 MGD desalination plant.
- 1 MGD of plant capacity is funded by a water agency that is 50 miles away.

Education Session: Building Leadership Durability in Turbulent Times

Brad Sherwood – Assistant General Manager, Sonoma Water

- Employees must get recognition from elected officials.
- Employees must feel empowered and able to raise concerns early in decision making processes.
- Key water contractors were allowed to participate in the interview process when Sonoma Water hired a replacement for their retiring Chief Financial Officer (CFO).
- Their government affairs contractors/representatives are required to spend time at the District to fully understand the District's projects.
- Supporting employee participation in ACWA is one way of better developing employees.

- When they have a manager go on leave for a week or more for whatever reason, they will backfill the position temporarily. They will rotate different people into these temporary backfills.
- Make sure you let natural disasters drive innovative thinking.
- Try to develop relationships with the District's elected officials and candidates early on. Early education of current and potential Board members is important.

Carol Lee Gonzales-Brady – Member, Board of Directors, Rancho Water

- It's important to have interns and other young folks working in the agency.
- You must recognize innovation in your employees.

Willie Whittlesey – General Manager, Yuba Water Agency

- They focus on two areas of investment:
 - Infrastructure
 - Employees
- It's important to expand the thinking about all possible alternatives, i.e., don't reject alternatives too soon in the planning process.
- They view employees as 20-year commitments. And don't be afraid to have employees who move on as part of their employment growth.
- Success isn't a zero-sum game.
- Work hard to get the facts out to the Directors and the public.
- Use the gap time between the day after election and the day of their first Board meeting to educate quickly the new board members.

Federal Affairs Committee Meeting

- There are new rules being proposed by the EPA under the Toxic Substances Control Act for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). There is a December 29, 2025 comments deadline.
- There are rule changes due November 22, 2025 regarding the Federal Endangered Species Act.
- Funding for a variety of Federal programs related to water is still somewhat uncertain.
- The Water Resources Development Act is typically revised every two years. The next iteration is due in 2026.
- The ACWA Federal Affairs Committee is proposing to oppose a bill that would add additional requirement to qualify for a WIFIA loan.
- The Trump Administration has drafted a revision to the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).
- They are hoping to get a bill developed for Congress that would help with water rates for low income folks.
- The committee will also take a look at how tariffs may be affecting the cost of steel and aluminum needed for water projects.

- There is a National Water and Wastewater Conference. See <https://www.wef.org/utilitymanagement>.

December 3, 2025

The PFAStrrophe: A Legal Overview on What's New in PFAS Regulation, Legislation and Litigation

- The regulation of PFAS has evolved exceedingly rapidly.

Ken Sansone – Partner, SL Environmental Law Group PC

- They are based in San Francisco but they deal with contaminated water litigation nationwide. They represent 250 water agencies across the U.S.
- The firm started out on MTBE litigation.
- PFAS are fluorocarbons and they don't decompose in the natural environment.
- Aqueous Film-Forming Foam (AFFF) contains PFAS. Clothing, shampoo, dental floss, Teflon all contain PFAS. The predominant source of PFAS in groundwater in southern California is PFAS in wastewater.
- There are PFAS in some pesticides. Landfills tend to have high concentrations of PFAS.
- 3M invented PFAS.
- All PFAS litigation has been consolidated into a Multi-district Litigation (MDL). Water related litigation went to the front of the line in this MDL. Thus, water agency litigants may be the only folks to get paid by the chemical companies because those companies may run out of money to pay others.
- The contaminated water part of the MDL was settled on December 20, 2022.
- On December 20, 2022, 3M agreed to pay \$10.3 Billion in the settlement of the public drinking water supply part of the PFAS MDL.
- DuPont will pay \$1.2 Billion in the settlements.
- The EPA has established Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL) for two different types of PFAS.
- An agency can still get money in these settlements even if their water doesn't exceed the PFAS MCL.
- If your agency didn't specifically opt out, you are permanently enjoined from suing 3M, DuPont, etc.
- Even if you already had treatment for other contaminants, your agency can still get money under the settlements.
- Test every well. The settlement pays up to \$1,000 per well for testing. Testing must be done by January, 2026.
- There are two phases to the payout under the settlement.
- Deadlines:
 - Submit Testing Costs Claims Form - March 31, 2026: Municipalities must submit claims for reimbursement of testing costs incurred due to PFAS.
 - Submit Phase 2 Public Water System Claims Form - July 31, 2026: Public water systems need to submit claims for damages related to PFAS contamination.

- Submit Phase 2 Special Needs Claims Form - August 1, 2026: Claims for additional funding related to unexpected PFAS management expenses are due.
- The future involves treatment of PFAS in wastewater treatment systems. They are passive receivers of PFAS. If you have a wastewater treatment plant, you have PFAS. Then we are recycling that PFAS into the ground via biosolids.
- This makes M1W subject to CERCLA liability. Since you spread the PFAS contamination to others, those others may sue you under CERCLA.
- One part per billion is the “safe level” for PFAS in biosolids. PFAS is considered a hazardous substance.
- If you serve potable water that tests below the MCLs, claims against you will be dismissed per a California Supreme Court decision.
- There are several states that have banned (Maine, Connecticut) the use of biosolids in agriculture. If you cannot do land application of biosolids, your disposal costs will triple.
- Sale of biosolids is likely to be soon banned in several states.

Steve Cole – Assistant General Manager, Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency (SCVW)

- They were part of the class action PFAS litigation over contaminated drinking water.
- SCVW has 75,000 service connections and serve a population of 300,000.
- They were created on January 1, 2018 via a consolidation of multiple smaller agencies. Just a year or two later the PFAS contamination issue arose.
- They invested in the lab equipment needed to test for PFAS. They were just the third lab to be accredited to test for PFAS. The test equipment has improved very quickly in the past few.
- They built the third PFAS treatment facility accredited in California.

Andrew Gagen – Partner, Kidman Gagen Law LLP

- Orange County Water District serves about 2.5 million people.
- The City of Yorba Linda was incorporated on December 23, 1967 and has nine wells. It has a PFAS treatment plant. The Yorba Linda Water District was established on March 24, 1961.
- See the movie “Dark Waters”. Covers a toxic tort case about PFAS.
- Contingency law firms refer clients to law firms that handle specialty toxic tort cases.
- Yorba Linda put a surcharge on property taxes to cover the cost of purchase of outside water when they had to shut down their wells due to PFAS contamination.
- Orange County has spent more money on PFAS issues than anywhere else in the U.S.

The Role of Generative AI for the Global Water Sector

Gigi Karmous-Edwards, CEO, Karmous-Edwards Consulting, Co-Principal Investigator, Water Research Foundation's project, "The Role of Generative AI for the Global Water Sector"

- She hopes that AI can help small water agencies adapt to the use of digital tools.
- Claims that AI can enhance your job and do some of the less than enjoyable parts of your job.

- We must be careful about the adoption of AI.
- Executive Order 14179, titled "Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence," was signed by President Donald Trump on January 23, 2025. This represented a shift from legislative proposals to executive actions highlights a strategic move to enhance U.S. competitiveness in AI, focusing on deregulation and industry-driven growth. The new order reflects a significant pivot in federal AI policy, diverging substantially from previous administration approaches (U.S. Senate Bill 14179).
- For ongoing developments, it's important to monitor how these actions unfold and their impact on AI regulations in the U.S.
- 80% of an agency's data is disorganized – AI can organize it.
- Start with small measurable pilot experiments.
- Generative AI is affordable and accessible from day one.
- Purchase enterprise AI so that you get a fenced and secure version.

Region Program: Balancing AI Innovation and Cybersecurity for California Water Systems

Ty Justice – IT Manager, Sonoma Water

- The business side of their agency is more interested in the use of AI than the O&M side.
- They business side is using it for data management.
- They always require a man-in-the-middle with the use of AI.
- They spent 2-3 years cleaning up their data before they could apply AI to it. (Garbage in, garbage out.)
- There is a skill set involved in being good at using AI.
- They have tested bringing in a Large Language Model (LLM) to do their AI work versus using LLMs already embedded in services they use (such as CoPilot, ChatGPT, etc.). They have not found an LLM to bring in that they have liked.
- It is going to take a long time for them to trust AI to make operational decisions, in part because most AI is connected to the Internet.
- You should make sure that the IT cybersecurity training for your employees includes training on cybersecurity for AI.

Ranjiv Khush – Member, Board of Directors, Marin Municipal Water District

- The use of Chatbots must be carefully thought through because the Chatbot must not reveal PII inappropriately.
- One of the most frequently asked questions from customers revolves around their bills.
- A lot of agency records have not been digitized and are therefore unavailable to AI.

Mehul Patel – Executive Director of Operations, Orange County Water District

- They are working to determine where AI may fit into their operations. They have started small with data visualization in storm water capture.

- Your agency should have an AI policy, particularly on the potential use of personal AI in the workplace. You also need someone to stay on top of changes in AI technologies.

Hunter Sargent – Cybersecurity Risk Specialist, ACWA JPIA

- AI creates an additional avenue of attack against your IT and Operational Technology (OT) systems.
- AI is being used to do attacks, not just to steal data and demand ransoms but also to use SCADA systems to damage infrastructure or people.
- AI poisoning involves a hacker changing the appropriate prompts to something inappropriate.
- We have already seen Microsoft's Copilot AI being hacked and its data stolen.
- When you use a third party AI, you completely rely on their security for your prompts and the responses because they are stored in data repositories owned by the third party.
- It's not clear whether it's better to host data in appropriate cloud services or on your own servers. It depends on your specific circumstances.
- Make sure you are clear about what you want AI to do for your agency.
- Microsoft Copilot is probably the current lowest risk third party AI in terms of cybersecurity. ChatGPT and ClaudeCode are less secure, but sometimes do a better job at certain tasks.

Region 5 Membership Meeting

- ACWA Foundation Report – the Foundation has been focusing on supporting community college and other state universities to recruit students to careers in the water industry. See <https://www.acwa-foundation.org/>
- The Golden Mussel is an invasive species now established throughout the Delta area and moving south. Boaters are picking them up in the Delta and then taking their boats to lakes in the Sierras and spreading the mussels.
- A policy suggestion was made by a member of the audience to ask ACWA to support a reduction in the annual reporting requirements for a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA).
- Ara Azhderian advocated for regulatory streamlining for water projects.
- A director from Alameda County Water District (ACWD) wants ACWA to support a state-wide policy that would require an inventory of all fire hydrants and the replacement of outdated hydrants.
- Iron flow batteries were mentioned for storage of output from solar arrays. The assertion was made that iron flow batteries last longer than lithium ion batteries. Iron flow batteries operate on the principles of electrochemistry, where the energy is stored in liquid electrolytes containing iron salts. During discharge, the iron ions undergo a reduction reaction. Iron flow batteries typically have a long cycle life, often exceeding 10,000 charge/discharge cycles, which makes them a durable option for energy storage. Unlike some other battery chemistries, iron flow batteries are generally considered safer because they are less prone to overheating and do not involve volatile chemicals.

- The ACWA State Legislative Committee examined 60 proposed bills. Two were supported: SB 394 that addresses PFAS (awaiting signature) and SB 494 that also addressed PFAS (vetoed).
- The recent JPIA annual rate of return has been 8.05%.

December 4, 2025

Funding for the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

Lufti Kharuf – Partner, Best, Best & Krieger LLP (BB&K)

- Propositions 26 and 218 apply to certain actions that GSAs may take under SGMA.
- California Water Code Section 10730.2 – Fees for extraction of groundwater. There is a court case says that Prop 218 doesn't apply but there is other law that says it does apply.
- Groundwater extraction fees may not be used for general government purposes. Must be used in support of the goals of SGMA.
- There is some judicial deference to agency cost allocation to stakeholders
- Always have a cost-based reason for each rate that you establish.
- Tiered consumption rates are under continued scrutiny – make sure that there is a cost-based justification for each tier.
- Always show the work and calculations used to arrive at your rates. Be able to tell the story of this justification to a lay person or judge.
- Who must be notified, who gets to protest or vote and what law applies to the fee setting process depends on the purpose of the fee.

Lauren Layne – Partner, Baker, Manock and Jensen

- There is very little funding available from the State or Federal government for the implementation of projects needed to comply with SGMA.
- Some GSAs have been successful establishing regulatory fees to pay for administrative costs.
- Another source of funding is groundwater extraction fees.
- Costs to pay for actual mitigation projects must be established via Prop 218.
- There are land based assessments and volumetric fees. These are different from regulatory fees. The latter are easier to establish but must be used only for administrative costs, not projects.
- If you decide to regulate de minimis pumpers, you may be able to establish a fee on them, but you must be able to justify the fee either due to administrative costs or a benefit to the de minimis pumper.
- Rate or cost of service studies are very important to be done and done well. They provide the justification for the proposed fees.

Jeanne Zolezzi, Owner, Herum/Crabtree

- Authority to Impose Special Taxes for groundwater sustainment: Local agencies have the option to levy special taxes to fund activities related to groundwater management, specifically

targeting sustainability efforts. This authority is found in Section 10730.2B of the California Water Code.

- Some agencies have legal authorities outside of SGMA to impose groundwater extraction and other fees that can further the goals of SGMA.
- It's very important to have fee specific outreach to customers and stakeholders.
- Engage early and often with its stakeholders, property owners and water users.
- Communicate with real data.
- Surveys can be very helpful in gauging your water user's tolerance for fees.

Closing Keynote Address

Dr. Letitia Grenier – Director, Public Policy Institute of California

- The Federal Government is incredibly important to water issues in California. For example, it owns and manages half of the headwaters forests in California and provides a tremendous amount of water related data to the State.
- Here are the three important things you must do:
 - Measuring things;
 - Paying for things; and
 - Doing things.
- We need to significantly improve and modernizing water accounting in California. We need water information systems that can give the public an accurate understanding of reality.
- Good water accounting helped researchers understand that we should be focusing more on capturing more excess water flows in wet years rather than fighting over the very small amount of "environmental water" that must be allowed to flow to the sea in dry years.
- We need to do a better job educating the public on the real cost of water, especially what the cost of water will be in the future.
- The Public Policy Institute did a study related to SGMA in the San Joaquin Valley. It studied how much acreage must be fallowed to comply with SGMA. It also explored the impact of the sale of water rights between farmers. See <https://www.ppic.org/publication/managing-water-and-farmland-transitions-in-the-san-joaquin-valley/>.
- There is a new State Executive Order that allows the taking of flood water without a permit to be used for groundwater recharge.

Communications Media Training

Scott Summerfield – Principal, SAE Communication

- Hackers have been focusing their targeting on health care organizations and government agencies.
- Ask your IT the "what-if" question regarding cyberattacks. This informs your thinking about how you might have to respond in crisis communications.
- In crisis communications regarding a cyberattack, do not neglect your employees.

- A recent Public Records Act (PRA) request asked for all digital records at an agency containing two exclamation points.
- Water agency employees have gotten better at not writing embarrassing prose in email messages. But they have not done the same for text messages. And text messages are also subject to public records requests,
- First amendment auditors – the best way to handle them is to kill them with kindness. You must tolerate them in public areas of your offices, but you can prohibit them from marked staff areas.
- Today you must assume at ALL times you are being recorded on camera and that what you say will be on social media tomorrow.
- It is important to use empathy in agency communications.
- Clarity and conciseness is extremely important in today's communications.
- Press conferences are now being covered by a service that sends one person to film and then sells the live stream to hundreds of news outlets and social media.
- The new media environment:
 - There are more frequent crises involving government agencies.
 - The average attention span of people has significantly decreased.
 - There's increasing distrust of local government.
 - Media ownership consolidation has affected local coverage in particular.
 - There is a loss of local decision making in the media.
 - Many members of the media today are not necessarily journalists.
- Local government must be accessible to the media.
- In the 72 hours before a board meeting, the media cannot figure out what is important from a 200-page Board packet. There is too much information in those pages to be digested in just 72 hours. An unofficial, agency generated summary for each meeting written for the media could be very useful for clarity and accessibility.
- The New York Times published a list of about 75 words that, if used in agency communications, could jeopardize your agency's ability to get financial support from FEMA.
- Always have your "issue radar" turned on.
- Legal counsel is a critical part of the team approach to figuring out responses to disasters and critical incidents.
- Anticipate local media responses to regional and national issues.
- Educate the new journalists.
- How to communicate strategically:
 - Identify all important audiences and audience segments.
 - Craft the key points/messages
 - Develop an internal Q&A document to prepare for the news conference. Anticipate the questions from reporters.
 - Train the appropriate spokesperson.
 - Create a holding statement, i.e., a statement to use when you cannot answer a question from the media yet.
 - Never promise something you may not be able to deliver.

- What's Ahead:
 - Use of AI by staff, the media and the public.
 - More crisis of confidence in local government.
 - The public is impatient.
 - Pay attention to the evolving communications platforms: Nextdoor, Substack, Reddit, Bluesky, Facebook, Threads, Twitter/X.
 - Most moderation on X has been removed. Your government tweet could appear right next to some racist or neo-Nazi posting.