MEINERS OAKS WATER DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Location: 202 W. El Roblar Drive, Ojai, CA 93023

AUGUST 18, 2026, at 6:00 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

   The Board President, Mike Etchart, called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. The meeting was also available via teleconference.

2. **ROLL CALL**

   Present: Board President, Mike Etchart; Board Directors: Christian Oakland, James Kentosh, Joe Pangea, and Christine Cooper. Staff Present: General Manager, Justin Martinez, Board Secretary, Summer Ward. Attorney Present: Stuart Nielson

   Absent: None.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

   Approval of July 21, 2026, Regular Board Meeting and August 6, 2026, Special Board Meeting minutes.

   Director Cooper moved to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2026, and August 6, 2026, meetings. Director Oakland seconded the motion.

   No Public Comment.

   Cooper/Oakland

   (5) Ayes – M/S/C

4. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

   Approval of Payroll and Payables from July 16, 2026, to August 15, 2026, in the amount of:

Payables:	$ 100,549.90
Payroll:	$ 64,302.65
Total:	$ 164,852.55

Director Cooper moved to approve Payroll and Payables for July 16, 2026, through August 15, 2026. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

No Public Comment.

Cooper/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

No comments.

The Board went into CLOSED SESSION at 6:08 PM.

6. **CLOSED SESSION: The Board of Directors held a closed session to discuss litigation, pursuant to the attorney/client privilege, as authorized by Government Code Sections §54957, 54956.8, 54956.9, and 54957.**

- CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION
  (Paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of Gov. Code §54956.9)
  Name of case: *Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v State Water Resources Control Board, et al.,*
  Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 19STCP01176

- Discuss threats to critical infrastructure controls, cybersecurity information, and security of essential public drinking water systems.
  (Gov. Code §54957(a))

  Title: Cybersecurity & Billing Data Security Policies

- Public Employee Performance Evaluation
  (Gov. Code §54957(b))
  Title: General Manager and Assistant General Manager/Board Secretary

The Board ended CLOSED SESSION at 7:08 PM

Attorney Nielson reported that the Board discussed closed-session agenda items and that there are no actions to report.

7. **<u>BOARD DISCUSSION/ACTIONS</u>**

a) **Approve incentive/merit pay for the General Manager and the Assistant General Manager/Board Secretary, based on the July 2025-June 2026 performance evaluations.**

Director Oakland gave a hearty thank-you to General Manager Justin Martinez. Director Oakland gave a hearty thank-you to Assistant General Manager & Board Secretary Summer Ward, stating she has been indispensable and really stepped up this past year. Director Etchart reported that the Board is granting Justin Martinez, General Manager, a $3,000 lump-sum merit bonus, and to Summer Ward, Assistant General Manager & Board Secretary, a $3,000 lump-sum merit bonus and a 4% merit pay increase, effective July 1, 2026.

Director Oakland moved to approve a $3,000 lump-sum merit bonus for the General Manager, a $3,000 lump-sum merit bonus and a 4% merit pay increase for the Assistant General Manager/Board Secretary, effective July 1, 2026. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

<u>No Public Comment.</u>

Oakland/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

b) **Authorize the Assistant General Manager to initiate recruitment for the Administrative Coordinator position and recruit and hire a qualified replacement, including authorization for a limited period of employment overlap, if necessary, to support training, transition, and continuity of District operations.**

Ms. Ward reported that the current Administrative Coordinator has given the District notice that she is planning to move out of the area and is in the process of selling her house. After discussion with the Executive Committee, given that the District has not been given a definite timeline, it is recommended that recruitment begin. Further, the Executive Committee and Management request authorization for a limited period of employment overlap, if necessary, to support the training, transition, and continuity of operations.

The board was in consensus that the Assistant General Manager is authorized to initiate recruitment and hire a qualified replacement for the Administrative Coordinator position, and short-term employment overlap if necessary.

<u>No Public Comment.</u>

<u>No Motion.</u>

c) **Discussion and possible action regarding a trial process for Meter Size Change Requests and development of a related policy statement for the New Meters & Expansion of Services Policy.**

Mr. Martinez stated that because of the new rate structure, staff has received a few inquiries about down-sizing meters. Staff developed a draft policy statement and related worksheets to help evaluate requests. This draft was presented to the New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee. The Committee had some modifications and recommended a pilot program to evaluate the process.

Director Kentosh stated this is similar to our Allocation Program process used to develop the program policy. Additionally, he ran statistical models to examine meter size and water consumption and feels the District is in a good position to test this pilot program. Director Cooper asked if the District would charge for the labor. Mr. Martinez stated that at this time the answer is no; a typical meter change-out takes a few minutes, so the customer will only be paying for the meter and endpoint.

Director Kentosh moved to authorize a pilot program for the Meter Size Change Request process. Director Pangea seconded the motion.

<u>No Public Comment.</u>

Kentosh/Pangea

(5) Ayes – M/S/C

d) **Review and consider Resolution 20260818: Adoption of District Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual, including new and updated Financial, Administrative, Cybersecurity, Records, Grant, Debt, Payroll, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Surplus Property, Billing Data Security, Fixed Assets, and Unbilled Receivables Policies and Procedures.**

Ms. Ward reported that she proposes an action to approve the District's first comprehensive Administrative Policy & Procedure Manual, including both updates and new policies and procedures intended to fill gaps, formalize current practices, and provide clearer Board-level directions. Overall, the documents are intended to modernize policy language, clarify roles and responsibilities, improve documentation and review requirements, strengthen fiscal and operational controls, and better reflect current legal, financial, administrative, and cybersecurity expectations. The manual includes policies recently approved, including the Conflict of Interest, Purchasing Goods & Services, and Reserve Funds policies. Ms. Ward noted that approving the new and updated policies and procedures will reduce reliance on informal practices by establishing written guidelines for core functions.

Director Etchart appreciated the tremendous amount of work that Ms. Ward put into this manual. Director Kentosh also noted the great work and stated that he would recommend bringing this back at the next regular meeting to allow more time to read each policy and procedure.

Ms. Ward to include on the September 15 board meeting agenda.

No Public Comment.

No Motion.

8. **GENERAL MANAGER'S DISTRICT OPERATIONS REPORT**

Mr. Martinez reported that the Casitas Lake level is at 96.7% as of August 12. Wells 2, 4a & 7 are running. Well 1 replacement: pump, motor, and wellhead have been ordered, with an estimated rehab start date of September 1. Mr. Martinez provided an update on the Riverview Trailhead culvert repair. The County provided a draft letter regarding the repair, which is currently being reviewed by Attorney Nielsen. The Zone 2 HydroTank replacement pump and motor are in hand, and staff will be installing them. Oilfield Electric completed the work with the electrical contractors in the power panel. Good progress has been made with the recommended actions for the Chlorine Safety and CalARP program requirements. The next meeting with Resource Compliance is scheduled for October 15. Lead and copper samples with reporting completed. SWRCB drought reporting completed. Mr. Martinez reported a water main break near 202 S. La Luna. The section developed a crack due to poor bedding, and we are awaiting the Toro repair invoice. Well levels and nitrate levels are holding steady.

No Public Comment.

9. **BOARD SECRETARY'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Ms. Ward provided a summary of key activities completed or underway in August 2026. Ms. Ward submitted a request for information from LAFCo by the New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee regarding inclusion of 2 APNs that are not currently served by MOWD. The EyeOnWater App is now available for customers with Smart Meters; customer letters were mailed out on August 3. Additionally, Ms. Ward reported that progress is being made regarding the District's updated Cybersecurity controls and hardware. The District is awaiting award announcements for the Bureau of Reclamation for the application related to purchasing 520 5/8" AMI meters and endpoints, submitted on June 1. Ms. Ward reported that she and Mr. Martinez met with the So. Cal Bureau of Reclamation Environmental Compliance team on July 21 regarding the Tank 2 project, and she subsequently submitted the grant application on July 27. The initial draft annex section of the Ventura County MHMP was submitted on July 30, with additional revisions expected by the end of August. The full draft plan will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval. Ms. Ward has completed the new water rate structure and rates in the billing software, as well as updates to the billing statement template to improve readability. Ms. Ward stated that the District's 2017 Canon copier is at the end of its service life and has been replaced with a leased model as of August 30. The 2017 copier was listed on

GovDeals for auction August 11, closing August 25. Ms. Ward prepared and made Executive Committee-recommended revisions to the proposed Administrative Policy & Procedure Manual. The District received four public record requests, all of which were responded to appropriately within 7 days. The District is on track to complete the FY25/26 financial audit for presentation to the Board in October. As of August 12, the District had three 4-year seats up for election, of which three qualified candidates completed nomination paperwork; the one 2-year seat did not have a candidate, so the District will need to appoint a short-term Director to the open seat. Ms. Ward reminded the Board that the new Fiscal and Financial Training is available on the Target Solutions platform.

No Public Comment.

10. **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency: Met 8/13, already discussed.
- Executive & Personnel Committee: scheduled for 8/6 & 8/11, already discussed.
- Allocations, New Meters & Expansion of Services Committee: Met 7/30, already discussed.
- Budget/Rate Committee: No report.
- Grants: Met 7/24, grant application submitted 7/27/2026.
- Emergency Management Committee: Scheduled to meet 9/11.
- Treatment Plant Design Ad Hoc Committee: No report.

11. **OLD BUSINESS**

- State Water: No report.
- Matilija Dam Removal Update: No report.

12. **DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS**

- Director Kentosh: No report.
- Director Oakland: No report.
- Director Pangea: No report.
- Director Cooper: No report.
- Director Etchart: No report.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be held on September 15, 2026, at 6:00 PM, at the District Office. Since there was no further business to conduct, Board President Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 7:46 PM.

Board Secretary **Board President**