

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY WASTEWATER AUTHORITY**

Approved

Board of Directors

August 13, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the South Orange County Wastewater Authority (SOCWA) Board of Directors was held in person and via teleconference on August 13, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. at their Administrative Offices located at 34156 Del Obispo Street, Dana Point, California. The following members of the Board of Directors were present:

MIKE DUNBAR	Emerald Bay Service District	Director
KATHRYN FRESHLEY	El Toro Water District	Director
BOB WHALEN	City of Laguna Beach	Director
RICK SHINTAKU	South Coast Water District	Alternate Director
FRANK URY	Santa Margarita Water District	Director
DAVE REBENDSOLF	City of San Clemente	Director [Arrived @ 8:35am]

Staff Present:

AMBER BOONE	General Manager
JIM BURROR	Deputy GM/ Chief Engineer
JACK BECK	Accountant
ANNA SUTHERLAND	Staff Accountant
DINA ASH	Human Resources Administrator
LYNDA MAY	Assistant Secretary
MATT CLARKE	Chief Technology Officer
RONI GRANT	Capital Improvement Program Manager
JAMES JONES	Superintendent of O&M
IAN LOSKA	Electrical/ Instrumentation Technician
ROBERT CULVER	Environmental Service Manager

Also Present:

ADRIANA OCHOA	Snell & Wilmer
BRAD NEUFELD	Varner & Brandt
KARI VOZENILEK	Kidman Law, LLP
ULISES ESCALONA	City of Laguna Beach
JOE MUELLER	South Coast Water District
DENNIS CAFFERTY	El Toro Water District
DUSTIN BURNSIDE	City of San Clemente
GRANT VILLAMER	City of San Clemente
RACHEL STRUGLIA	Dudek
RUSS BERGHOLZ	Dudek

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Bob Whalen called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Director Mike Dunbar

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

ACTION TAKEN

A motion was made by Director Dunbar and seconded by Director Shintaku to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted.

Motion carried: Aye 6 Nay 0, Abstained 0, Absent 0
Director Dunbar Aye
Director Freshley Aye
Director Whalen Aye
Director Ury Aye
Director Shintaku Aye
Director Rebensdorf Aye

(4A-4D)

- A. Minutes of Board of Directors Regular Meeting for July 9, 2026
- B. June 2026 Operations Report
Approved Action: Information Item; received and filed.
- C. Capital Improvement Construction Projects Progress and Change Order Report (July) [Project Committees 2 and 15]
Approved Action: Information Item.
- D. Capital Improvement Program Workplan
Approved Action: Information Item.

5. ENGINEERING MATTERS

- A. North Coast Interceptor Reach Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) [Project Committee 23]

An open discussion ensued on the mitigation measure within the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) on construction noise reduction, and the recent amendment regarding alternative back-up beeper alarm systems.

ACTION TAKEN

A motion was made by Director Dunbar and seconded by Director Whalen to take the following actions and make the following findings:

- 1) Find that the PC23 Board has independently reviewed and considered the amended Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program prepared and adopted by the City of Laguna Beach as Lead Agency for the North Coast Interceptor Reach 5 Replacement Project;
- 2) Find, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15074(b), that: (a) there is no substantial evidence, based on the whole record before the Board, that the Project will have a significant effect on the environment; (b) the Final IS/MND reflects SOCWA's independent judgment and analysis; and (c) the mitigation measures identified in the Final IS/MND have been incorporated into the Project;
- 3) Find that the Final IS/MND adequately addresses the environmental impacts associated with the approvals within SOCWA's jurisdiction, and that no comments received on the Final IS/MND, including the comment submitted by OC Parks regarding the Orange County Central and Coastal Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan addressed in Response to Comment A1, raised issues specific to matters within SOCWA's jurisdiction requiring separate SOCWA-specific mitigation beyond that already included in CLB's MMRP;

- 4) Condition the Board's approval on compliance with CLB's Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and direct staff to request that CLB provide SOCWA with compliance monitoring reports for mitigation measures affecting SOCWA-owned facilities, including MM-GEO-1 (ground vibration and settlement monitoring near the SOCWA Coastal Treatment Plant) and MM-HYD-1 (frac-out contingency plan);
- 5) Approve the City of Laguna Beach's proposed improvements to the SOCWA-owned North Coast Interceptor Reach 5;
- 6) Authorize the General Manager to execute all documents necessary to implement these Board actions and file a Notice of Determination with the County Clerk within five working days of Board approval, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15075(a);
- 7) Find that SOCWA's administrative record for the Project, including this staff report, the Final IS/MND, SOCWA-specific correspondence, and the Board's findings, will be maintained and made available for public inspection at SOCWA's offices, with the General Manager's office serving as custodian of the record.

Motion carried: Aye 2, Nay 0, Abstained 0, Absent 0
Director Dunbar Aye
Director Whalen Aye

B. JBL Engine System Service Contract Award to Northeastern-Western Energy Systems USA [Project Committee 2]

After an open discussion, the Board decided to defer the item until the next Board meeting in September and requested an analysis on the cogeneration system, cost comparisons, and other permitting risks affecting the plant. Staff agreed to include potential self-certification in the agenda.

6. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

- A. Resolution No. 2026-07: Making Additional Findings Required by Government Code Section 54953.8.6, Subdivision (e)(2), Regarding Continued Authorization of Teleconference Meetings for Eligible Subsidiary Bodies Pursuant to Senate Bill 707.

ACTION TAKEN

A motion was made by Director Ury and seconded by Director Dunbar to adopt Resolution No. 2026-07, making additional findings required by Government Code Section 54953.8.6, subdivision (e)(2), to continue authorization of teleconference meetings for eligible subsidiary bodies of SOCWA, or take other action as the Board may deem appropriate.

Motion carried: Aye 6, Nay 0, Abstained 0, Absent 0
Director Dunbar Aye
Director Freshley Aye
Director Whalen Aye
Director Ury Aye
Director Shintaku Aye
Director Rebensdorf Aye

B. Resolution No. 2026-08: Revised SOCWA Conflict of Interest Code

ACTION TAKEN

A motion was made by Director Ury and seconded by Director Dunbar to approve Resolution No. 2026-08, A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the South Orange County Wastewater

Authority Adopting a Conflict of Interest Code, which supersedes all prior Conflict of Interest Codes and Amendments previously adopted.

Motion carried: Aye 6, Nay 0, Abstained 0, Absent 0
Director Dunbar Aye
Director Freshley Aye
Director Whalen Aye
Director Ury Aye
Director Shintaku Aye
Director Rebensdorf Aye

C. General Manager's Report

Ms. Boone updated the Board on Madison AI's usage report, the CTP Facility Planning Schedule, and presented slides on the July 15, 2026, JBL Treatment Plant spill. A discussion ensued on the generator equipment's performance and the AQMD permit delays. The Board requested more data on outstanding permits and the generator's performance issues to bring to the next Board meeting in September.

This was an information item; no action was taken.

D. General Counsel's Report

Ms. Ochoa briefed the Board on the recent CASA conference, noting current legislation's efforts to regulate 'nexus waters' with SB 601, pending immunity from CERCLA's PFAS/PFOAS liability, and CASA's sponsored legislation on flushable wipes labeling.

This was an information item; no action was taken.

E. Government Affairs Report

Ms. Boone presented the Government Affairs report in Chad Wanke's absence, noting progress on the CTP access road repair.

This was an information item; no action was taken.

F. Upcoming Meetings Schedule:

- August 17, 2026 – Board of Directors Special Meeting
- August 20, 2026 – Engineering Committee Meeting
- September 15, 2026 – Board of Directors Regular Meeting

This was an information item; no action was taken.

The Board of Directors convened to Closed Session at 9:37 a.m.

7. CLOSED SESSION

The Board of Directors recessed to Closed Session to consider the following items:

Closed Session Conference Pursuant to Government Code § 54956.9(d)(4)
Conference with Legal Counsel
Initiation of Litigation: 1 Potential Case

Closed Session Conference Pursuant to Government Code § 54957.6
Conference with Labor Negotiator

Agency Designated Representative:
Unrepresented Employee:

Brad Neufeld, Labor Counsel, Varner & Brandt
Amber Boone, General Manager

The Board of Directors reconvened to Open Session at 10:22 a.m.

8. OPEN SESSION

Brad Neufeld reported the new employment agreement with Amber Boone, General Manager effective August 13, 2026.

ACTION TAKEN

A motion was made by Director Dunbar and seconded by Director Ury to approve SOCWA's new employment agreement for Ms. Boone reflecting a 7% salary increase, a \$10,090 contribution to her 457b plan, a four-year term, and one additional administrative day.

Motion carried:	Aye 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0, Absent 1
Director Dunbar	Aye
Director Freshley	Absent
Director Whalen	Aye
Director Ury	Aye
Director Shintaku	Aye
Director Rebensdorf	Aye

9. OTHER MATTERS

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Whalen adjourned the meeting at 10:24a.m. I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Minutes are a true and accurate copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the South Orange County Wastewater Authority Board of Directors on August 13, 2026, and approved by the Board of Directors of the South Orange County Wastewater Authority.



Lynda May, Assistant Secretary
SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY WASTEWATER AUTHORITY