



Minutes of the Casitas Municipal Water District  
Board Meeting Held  
May 23, 2018

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held May 23, 2018 at the Casitas Municipal Water District located at 1055 Ventura Ave. in Oak View, California. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. President Word led the group in the flag salute.

1. Roll Call

Directors Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks and Word were present. Also present were Steve Wickstrum, General Manager, Rebekah Vieira, Clerk of the Board, and Attorney, Robert Kwong. There were three staff members and 13 members of the public in attendance.

2. Public comments (Items not on the agenda – three minute limit).

Eugene Rooke commented at the last meeting you said you support regional cooperation such as that described in the Three Sisters plan. The City of Ventura is the lead agency. Ventura is looking at the intertie for their own benefit. You said we need a solution other than the 24 inch line that the city wants. You said the project is ongoing right now. Mr. Word you said we are diligently pursuing with Calleguas, the City of Ventura and United. There are four parties not three. You said you would repeat your statements month to month as if that justifies your failure to act. Do you believe you are the only ones talking to these water districts? They are not talking, they are doing. They are not waiting for you. They tell us it will be done in two-three years. You will end up with nothing. Casitas will be the only district in southern California with no access to imported water. No access to state water and private brokered water. We will not have water security because of you. You say there is nothing you can do. Calleguas would welcome your participation. The money you earmarked is not for feasibility. You are not serious. What about the pipeline from Calleguas to Casitas they have proposed? In 2011 your urban water plan goal was to delay imported water as long as possible. It was restated in 2015. That is your plan as reported to the state. We hear you but you are not listening to us. You are still against imported water. You are chasing local water and praying for rain rather than securing access to imported water. After Mr. Wickstrum and Russ Baggerly met with Ted Moore you are willing to drill into Matilija formation for emergency water that may produce an unknown quantity of water. Emergency water is not

water security. You ignore Mr. Hajas and regional plans for cooperative plans and storage. You won't put the Three Sisters plan on the agenda. You won't act on it. You stonewall. You refuse to engage in or spend money for feasibility work. You won't even get involved with facilities to move water from Ventura up the hill to us. You work for us, your legal duty, responsibility and obligation is to plan and provide long term water supplies to us. Your sole water source is at historic lows. Your supply plan is no new facilities are needed to 2040. We hear you. Your policies are threatening us, kids, farms, business and quality of life in this district. Why are you doing this? What are you afraid of? Your focus, priority and commitment should be water security. You are doing nothing despite your words. This opportunity is fast expiring as other water districts tire of your delay and inaction. It is past time for you to act. We want permanent, reliable and secure long-term access to water now. Thank you.

Carrie Pearlman an Ojai resident asked who has first entitlement rights to available water and what are you doing to limit use for wholesale users.

Peter Straus thanked the board for the opportunity to address them. I have lived here for 30 years. I have a farm and an extensive collection of gardens and am reliant on Casitas for those needs. Two years ago I removed ¼ of the orchard and reduced water load by 25%. I planted cactus searching for a new crop. I tried to keep usage declining every month. It was stressing the trees. I am trying to act responsible and do what I can. I attended the Chautauqua. Ms. Bergen you made it clear that Casitas is gathering facts on the declining reservoir. Driving by, the fact is clear there is a declining amount of water. It is frightening to me. I don't hear or see the processes in place to amend the situation. I attended the meeting on Monday and got a kind of indifference, boredom, cynicism, assumption the public is stupid and you have the answers and I should be reassured that it is in your hands. That you have met the responsibility that we turn on the tap and get water but I get less. You have drought stages. If you get to stage 5 I lose my farm and my home loses value. I am worried you will leave me in a state where everything I have worked for is lost. In this age of computers it is easy to project how much water we need each year. Plug in the numbers and tell me when are we going to run out of water and what are you doing to put water in that lake. I need to know my future in this community is safe. You all make me feel like a layman. I see a fact – that lake is going down. There is a consensus something is wrong. Maybe climate change. We are not getting the rainfall; we may get 50 inches of rain next year. There is apprehension and fear in me that is not the case. Something is wrong. We need to address the problem with the best we have. You have the capability to solve this problem. This community does not believe you are doing that. The website is not up to date. You have not made it clear to the community of what you are doing. What is happening? Let me be the canary. Groups of people are meeting. Significant community members are meeting and who believe you do not have the skill set to get us out of the problem. They are building war chests for elections and consideration of recalls. People are gravely concerned and do not want to hit a drought 5 situation because you could not come up with a

solution. This is a clear indication on my behalf you are under pressure now and you need to come up with answers. Thank you for the opportunity.

3. General Manager comments.

Mr. Wickstrum informed the board that he received notification of a June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting at the City of Ventura regarding the Water Supply and Bond Act on the November ballot. Let us know if you are going so we can post a quorum notice.

We have offered assistance to Ventura River Water District on a leak where a line is splitting.

Well #6 in the Ojai yard, we found two holes in the pump bowl and are moving towards replacement of the motor and the pump. It has had low production. We got video today and there is a lot of wire at the bottom of the well head.

I will be meeting with United and Ventura Water regarding the California Water Fix and contract extension for state water and other meetings in June on the interconnection and progress with studies of Kennedy Jenks. We are meeting in a regular fashion. We hope next month to have an operations plan to bring to the board to provide more information and facts on how to move this through.

Director Kaiser asked who that means when you say we are meeting. Mr. Wickstrum replied the City of Ventura, United, Calleguas, all interested parties look at products developed by Kennedy Jenks. There are a lot of things in development. Meetings are as needed and as work products are produced.

4. Board of Director comments.

Director Hicks commented that it is ironic that two years ago you could not find a person in Ojai that said to hook up to state water. We heard you in 2016 you didn't want to hook up. You didn't want the growth. We are listening to you. Steve Bennett wrote a good letter to the editor about what is going on with this. There is a lot being worked on. It is never fast enough. We are doing what we can to get this solved.

Director Bergen added it is a big infrastructure project, and environmental analysis is needed. Casitas is providing input and is attending meetings. We are waiting for information from consultants. You are right, we need to do better with our webpage and communication. Mr. Wickstrum added as soon as we get the information we will make it available. If Lake Casitas can provide an emergency supply or insurance policy there are good efforts we can arrive at and end up with a pipeline to move water both ways in the county. There are lots of vulnerabilities on the state water project. We will stay together and work

together. We have had good meetings with Calleguas and we are working to do the right thing with everyone. It won't be fast. I have watched the lake for years. I lost sleep when it got to 50%. There is a meeting today with NMFS with the biological committee on the critical drought protection measure that may assist with Robles to move a bit more water to Lake Casitas when the river is flowing. We are trying to finish that and be in place for the next winter to achieve more diversions.

Director Word said he does not know where that information is coming from that we are not meeting with the other involved parties. My last conversation with them on the 15<sup>th</sup> does not bear that out. We will continue to visit with them and as products are presented we will continue to evaluate with them and they do understand our needs. We cannot speed it up as much as we would like.

Director Baggerly asked Joe Marsinco, Water Utility Manager for the City of Ventura if he had any comments. Mr. Marsinco explained his General Manager meets with Steve regularly. Everyone wants to see this project through. I have been there almost two years. There were a lot of people before that would not work with each other. Now we all have good working relationships. They meet all the time and talk about water issues. My opinion is we are a water utility. No one wants to run out of water. If there are emergencies we will help each other. Emergencies bring people together. I can't see you running out of water here. Work is going on with multiple agencies. Bringing water in is not an easy fix, there is a lot of red tape and environmental issues. The City never had a pipeline to get state water. We have to break down the barriers and have a way to get water in. We will work together to get water up here. There is normal bureaucratic work that has to be done. You have a lot of great professional people that know what they are doing and have great institutional knowledge. Communication for myself, I don't do a lot of it, I am busy with operations of a water system. I know that we are working routinely together to get state water pipeline in. Those things are going on. This is a specialized industry with wide based technical factors that go into the decisions. The bottom line is entities are all working together. I am very happy and proud to work with the City and with Casitas on this plan.

Director Baggerly handed out a memo to the board regarding a desire to obtain a comprehensive water resources plan and asked that this item be placed on the June 13<sup>th</sup> agenda.

Director Kaiser asked to add fiscal review and operational costs. Director Kaiser added what we are hearing from the public today seems to be the need for more contemporaneous information. It is also important to talk about what is coming from the state in upcoming years in water use. Mr. Wickstrum explained the state is going to develop more regulations on water use that will impact urban users. Moving from 55 gallons per capita per day to 49. Conservation is a way of life. Wasteful methods on urban use, those days are over. The State will move to develop new regulations and enforcements. They have been thinking

about this since 2015 and their water shortage emergency. Some of their rules were difficult to manage. They are taking care on develop rules with more consideration of water agencies.

5. Board of Director Verbal Reports on Meetings Attended.

Director Baggerly attended the Ojai Democratic Club Water Panel discussion on the 21<sup>st</sup>. It was lively and well attended.

Director Bergen attended the Upper Ventura River GSA meeting. The agency is in the process of formation. They have a grant to do the groundwater planning. The agency is developing standard operating procedures and quality control for data collection to figure out water balance in the basin. They are sharing office space and costs with OBGMA.

Director Hicks attended the AWA meeting and heard about SB 626 proposal to tax water districts will put a burden on rate payers to help people who can't get clean water. ACWA is opposed to this.

President Word also attended that meeting and the AWA special issues meeting. There was a report from Tom Fox, of Camarillo. They have been working on a desalter plant salt out of the aquifer for 14 years. It took 45 million to plan and \$35 million to build. It is an interesting project and they expect to replace 1,300 acre foot of imported water. It is incredible how long these projects take to get something done.

6. Consent Agenda.

APPROVED

- a. Minutes of the May 9, 2018 Board Meeting.
- b. Recommend approval of a purchase order to Great Western Recreation in the amount of \$30,307.50 for the Lake Casitas Recreation Area Teapot Playground Resurfacing.

The Consent Agenda was offered by Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Bergen and approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

7. Review of District Accounts Payable Report for the Period of 5/03/18 - 5/15/18.

APPROVED

Director Hicks questioned the payment for ACWA for benefits and why is it higher some months. Ms. Collin explained there are adjustments that are made every month. Director Hicks then questioned the windows for the garage. Ms. Collin explained we are making an area for utility personnel in the garage and

creating an office. Mr. Wickstrum explained that we now have six utilities personnel and we are repurposing this area to accommodate the employees.

On the motion of Director Hicks, seconded by Director Kaiser, the Accounts Payable Report was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

8. Request of Sharon Brown for reversal of Allocation Penalty, Consumption and reimbursement for Plumber Repairs. DENIED

Sharon Brown passed out a summary of bills that she had paid and stated she reported she was not getting her water bill and was ignored. She questioned the accuracy of the balance due on the bill saying she didn't get credit for money put into this account. Ms. Brown stated you put a new meter in my meter box without my permission. Since then my water consumption has doubled. You can see from May 2017 – Dec 2018 my water consumption doubled. The box you put on my water meter increased the amount of water that I used. You cannot for certain prove that I used the water. I think it was put on my meter to increase the water so you can get more money. I think that you know I'm angry about it. You can see where the water goes up. There was a bill passed in Congress in October of 2017 protecting the consumer from water districts doing what you did to me. You put a meter on my box without my knowledge. The bill says the fee for placement of that box is a voluntary fee. You are supposed to have a public meeting to tell us what it will do and function and save money and you did not do that. You have to have a town hall meeting telling everyone what it is for and how it will work. You can't sneakily put it on to a water meter without telling them. It is not right. You put that box on my water meter and that is why the water went up. I don't think I should pay any allotment charges. That \$156 is bogus. And I should not have to pay it.

President Word explained what was installed was an adapter to assist in reading the meters remotely rather than walking the streets. We also switched to monthly billing to help you control your water usage. This was the result of a leak that was repaired. We have no policy to relieve leak relief. Director Baggerly said that in our board letter we understand it to be because of a leak. Ms. Brown stated she will take it to a lawyer.

On the motion of Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Baggerly, the above request was denied by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

9. Consideration of action on Water Exchange between Casitas Municipal Water District, City of Ventura and San Geronio Pass Water Agency.

APPROVED

- a) Make the findings that the exchange of State Water Project Table A water is exempt from environmental review under California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Water Code section 1729, State CEQA Guidelines sections 15282(u), 15301, and 15061 (b)(3); and
- b) Approve the Agreement between San Geronio Pass Water Agency and the City of San Buenaventura and Casitas Municipal Water District for the exchange of 2018 State Water Project Table A water; and
- c) Authorize the General Manager to sign the Agreement and to make any nonmaterial changes to the final version of the Agreement, subject to review by legal counsel;
- d) Approve by resolution the Preliminary Assessment and direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption; and
- e) Authorize staff to develop and execute any agreements or documentation which may be required by the Department of Water Resources for this transaction; and
- f) Designate the monetary funds received by Casitas from San Geronio Pass Water Agency to a reserve account that is dedicated to Casitas' water security projects.

Mr. Wickstrum explained the benefits and process for the exchange of water and the board discussed that proceeds received from this exchange could be used to fund water security projects. Additionally, this agreement calls for a return of 40% of the water in the next ten years.

Robin Gerber questioned the budget for this. Mr. Wickstrum explained it will show up in our reserves for alternative water supplies. It will be earmarked and then drawn out of those reserves.

Eugene Rooke questioned how to get the water to us. Director Word explained that the interties will be more than just getting the water to Ventura. We are working to make sure we have access to water.

On the motion of Director Baggerly, seconded by Director Kaiser the above recommendations were approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Directors: Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word

NOES: Directors: None  
ABSENT: Directors: None

10. Recommend authorization to enter into professional services agreements for on-call engineering consultants for fiscal year 2018-19.

APPROVED

On the motion of Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Baggerly, the above recommendation was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Directors: Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word  
NOES: Directors: None  
ABSENT: Directors: None

11. Recommend approval of the change order to Consulting West in the amount of \$24,550 to add architectural and structural design services for Rincon Pump Plant Building Modification.

APPROVED

On the motion of Director Bergen, seconded by Director Hicks, the above recommendation was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Directors: Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word  
NOES: Directors: None  
ABSENT: Directors: None

12. Recommend approval of authorization of the General Manager to enter into professional services agreement with Rincon Consultants, Inc., Padre Associates, Inc., and Dudek for cultural resources on-call services for fiscal year 2018-2019.

APPROVED

On the motion of Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Baggerly, the above recommendation was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Directors: Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word  
NOES: Directors: None  
ABSENT: Directors: None

13. Presentation by Julia Aranda, Engineering Manager on Ojai Water System conditions.

Engineering Manager Julia Aranda provided a snapshot on the Ojai water system explaining there are over 2,800 customer connections, 44 miles of pipelines from 2-16 inches, six tanks, five booster pumps stations, six wells and an iron and manganese treatment facility to treat groundwater. Click [here](#) for a copy of the presentation.



14. Budget Workshop for Initial Review of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget including Revenue, Expenses and Capital Projects.

Mr. Wickstrum presented the proposed budget and discussed revenue, expenses and capital projects. The board made some suggestions and there was discussion regarding reserves. Any changes have to be by the end of the week. The final budget will be brought to the board at the last meeting in June for adoption. Click [here](#) to view the presentation slides.

15. Resolution scheduling a public hearing on June 27, 2018 to hear input from the public on the adoption of the proposed fiscal year 2018-2019 Budget. ADOPTED

The resolution was offered by Director Baggerly, seconded by Director Hicks and adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

16. Resolution canceling the July 11, 2018 Board Meeting. ADOPTED

The resolution was offered by Director Hicks, seconded by Director Bergen and adopted by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

17. LAFCo Ballot for the Independent Special Districts Countywide Oversight Board. APPROVED

Director Baggerly recused himself from the discussion. Director Hicks moved to support Russ Baggerly on the ballot which was seconded by Director Kaiser and approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSTAIN:	Directors:	Baggerly

18. Information Items:

- a. Lake Casitas Monthly Status Report for April 2018.
- b. Recreation Area Report for March 2018.
- c. Executive Committee Minutes.
- d. Finance Committee Minutes.
- e. Water Conservation April 2018 Report

- f. ACWA Spring Conference Report.
- g. Letter from the Department of Water Resources regarding Urban Water Management Plan Requirements Addressed.
- h. Investment Report.

On the motion of Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Hicks, the information items were approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Directors:	Baggerly, Kaiser, Bergen, Hicks, Word
NOES:	Directors:	None
ABSENT:	Directors:	None

19. Adjournment.

President Word adjourned the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

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Mary Bergen, Secretary