



Minutes of the Casitas Municipal Water District  
Board Meeting Held  
April 25, 2018

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held April 25, 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, John Mathews. There were three staff members and 35 members of the public in attendance.

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

Larry Yee mentioned the 18 members of the public who attended the water resources committee meeting yesterday. Why did we all come? We are concerned about the water situation and what you are doing about. We want to see first-hand who is responsible, we are losing confidence in your ability to plan for the future and you lack transparency. Water supply has only been on your agenda three times in the last months and it should be on every agenda to be discussed at length. In light of new climate and long term drought, the lake is at 30% and you will impose stage 4 in October and that means stage 5 will follow unless there is significant rain. The threat of stage 5 cannot be underestimated. You try to placate public concerns but given permitting obstacles plus the cost they are at best options we may realize only years down the line. You are our elected officials. Your general manager bears responsibility of leadership. It is imperative he act proactively. The way you have been operating simply is not working. It cannot be business as usual. I am asking you to make one simple action. Have the General Manager meet with Ojai Water Advisory Group to discuss the three sisters plan and then present a report of your management plan contrasted with three sister's plan and then make conclusions and a commitment to act. Please don't think the Water Advisory Group is only considering the three sisters plan. We are open to discussing other options to increase the water portfolio.

Bruce Kuebler, representing Ventura River Water District, presented a resolution their board passed on March 21<sup>st</sup>. The resolution resolved that the Ventura River Water District finds it essential that we have access to the State Water Project and the District hereby requests that the Casitas Municipal Water District adopt a policy now committing to obtaining a connection to the State Water Project and to work as expeditiously as possible toward that goal. I have no doubt about your sincerity to make the state water project work. Individually you are all on board but collectively, as a board, nothing has happened yet. I am not sure why you have not adopted a policy. It would be more comfortable for you to adopt a policy and move forward. I know you are doing a lot and trying to work it out.

Lois Rice thanked the board for having the open mic and asked for the boards commitment to the three sisters plan in writing and as an agenda item monthly so the public is updated on your progress.

George Galgas of Oak View expressed concerns over portable generators being transported from well to well and said that is not acceptable. He then said that sources through the Ventura River Water District understand that your general manger, Steve Wickstrum is going to retire. I want to know when he is going to retire. I saw it in the press today and want to know who is the individual who will take over?

Eugene Rooke discussed the vertical well Steve Wickstrum introduced last week and that you have picked a location on land you own and near a pipeline. I thought about that. Water is where it is, not where you want it to be. In the gas business you try to drill your way out of bankruptcy. What kind of studies and test has Steve done? Have you done any testing or geomorphological studies or any seismic studies that you would want to do before drilling a well? Have you done any water witching? I am skeptical. Before you drill the well I would like to see the studies that there is expectation of water, how much and how deep do you think that Matilija formation is. You need to have a commitment to getting state water. You reported you had meetings but Calleguas said you had one meeting with them and nothing else is scheduled. A report in the Star mentioned going to the City off Ventura and being told they are frustrated with you. People are saying adopt a policy. I want more. I want a policy and action. Now.

Ellen Sklarz stated that after the recession many agencies did not raise salaries and benefits and you have had the drought and lower water sales. Last year the 2017 rate study called for rates and salaries increased 12% a year for next five years. Why should people pay more for salaries and benefits? We have been asked to save and remove landscape and orchards. The Ojai Valley suffers while you can set salaries and benefits as you see fit. You set allotments and when they go over you get paid more. It damages our shared community. You should provide a single warning to offenders. Then, if excess water is used turn off the meters. To help the greater good, the extra money you collect from

over usage should not go to increases in salary and benefits, you should use the funds to convert solar power, installation of electric car charging and you should have more efficient, smart meters to see usage. I know there are more cost cutting actions you can take at Casitas. Join your customers in taking austerity more seriously.

Savelle Lowe resides in Meiners Oaks and just moved to the area expressed concerns that all of our investment and our future is in our house and property in Ojai. I don't see a solid plan for collecting state water. I don't see we can rely on groundwater supplies. We can't rely on it going to rain. There is no firm commitment to join state water. Our town will probably die. It has happened to other towns. When can we see a firm commitment in writing to join the state water projects?

Keila dos Santos, Ojai resident supported statements already made and requested a formal proposal and things in writing including a prioritized plan.

Carey Pearlman reminded the board of a letter she sent last weeks and expressed outrage that you are not operating in the interest of Ojai citizens and businesses. The board is mired in sluggish defenses and the inflated salaries and benefits are too high. Your inaction is deplorable and negligent. I asked you to immediately resign from your positions on the board.

Marilyn Mosley Gordania has resided in Ojai since 1974. I loves this valley so much. There were floods when I first came here. Oranges were floating down Ojai Avenue. It is clear we have an issue. I Serve on the Clinton Global Initiative in New York. We have an amazing opportunity to conserve our water. My water bill has gone down so much. There are so many innovative things we can do to conserve the water and make the difference to connect to state water.

Leslie Clark, a lifetime Ojai resident expressed support and encourages exploration of all the avenues, the three sisters plan, verbo and hobo, water conservation and permaculture etc. Please do something and let us know what you are doing. I don't see the evidence on your site. There is large scale panic as people are afraid of losing property values and businesses. Please help us.

### 3. General Manager comments.

Mr. Wickstrum thanks the public for attending the meeting adding that we are interesting times as the community was in 1951 with drought. One item I would like to ask to schedule a special Recreation committee meeting for next Monday to discuss the Wine Festival contract. The meeting is scheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:00.

Mr. Wickstrum then informed the board of a major shutdown tomorrow to do an inspection of the intake and outlet works that is required of us every three years. We have notified major users to curtail their use to keep water in the

tanks. Safety components are in place for confined space entry and we will be starting early tomorrow morning.

4. Board of Director comments.

Director Hicks mentioned he watched the Chautauqua meeting and he was surprised there was no reference to NMFS making us keep these water going down the river. You will get the most bang for buck to go to the Secretary of the Interior and Representatives and say we need relief on the diversion situation with the steelhead. That is where we can get some relief quickly. We can't do it. They won't let us pull the gates. We need to get to them and tell them what is going on here. We tried to rescue some fish a few years ago and they wouldn't let us. You can make the noise to help us. I have been for hooking up to state water. Mr. Spandrio asked for guidance on how to issue those complaints as there is a room full of people who will write letters. Director Hicks said he would be happy to provide that.

Mr. Mathews added that the board doesn't generally respond to public comments. They can later agendaize the items if they wish. When the board does their comments it is not a debate or action items. The board listens to you and hears your concerns and I am confident will respond to you.

5. Board of Director Verbal Reports on Meetings Attended.

Director Baggerly attended the Ojai Chautauqua event and there were by and large very good suggestions and ideas for this water shortage emergency and we should use all of them.

Director Kaiser reported on his attendance at the Chautauqua meeting and it provided necessary information from concerns and looking at diversifying as a valley and district to change our lifestyles. Climate change seems is here to stay. I appreciate the comments today regarding increasing the water security portfolio and prioritizing what to do first. A lot are already being handled in discussions with staff. It may work better for the public to have a private consultant provide contemporaneous information to the public so the public understands what is happening. Board members live here in the district and we address its concerns directly. We are your friends and neighbors making sure we provide for the whole district. We are not Metropolitan Water District living in an ivory tower up in Sacramento deciding who will get water and who isn't. Director Kaiser appreciates what Larry Yee said following the Chautauqua meeting regarding the Ventura County Star article. Larry said the reporter got it wrong. "Not a drop of state water would be put in Lake Casitas." In any case there is no guarantee of any state water. It may be 10% of 5,000 acre feet or it could be nothing. It is hard to say how long the in lieu swap would take to fill the lake. We need to make sure water security is here for the valley and the district on a continual basis. With the recent fire, a lot of professionals reported Ojai protected was because of Ag. If we bring in expensive state water to bring up

that lake it may take Ag away from this area. We have to look at this objectively and prioritize the options and have it happen in the most expeditious fashion. Do we have the same situation in recent years as Australia? This is unknown. Climate is changing. We are diligently working on these issues. And, we can improve on getting information out.

Director Bergen added that she was also at Chautauqua and she feels the main thing is we need to communicate more and better as there is a lot of mis-information going around.

Director Hicks added he attended the Ventura Chamber of Commerce yesterday and the only thing on their mind was the homeless situation and the recent stabbing. People are upset with the police and the city council. There are between 700-900 homeless in Ventura. This has been a problem since Governor Reagan closed mental institutions. There are a lot of people out there that are broke.

6. Consent Agenda. ADOPTED

- a. Minutes of the March 28, 2018 Board Meeting.
- b. Minutes of the April 11, 2018 Board Meeting.
- c. Recommend approval of a purchase order to AT&T in the amount of \$19,659.10 for upgraded fiber optic network connection between Lake Casitas Recreation Area and District Office and approval of a monthly service fee increase of \$359.00.
- d. Resolution requesting consolidation of the District General Election.
- e. Recommend approval of a purchase order to Legend Pump & Well Service Inc. in the amount of \$5,775 for removal and inspection of the Ojai Water System Mutual Well #6.
- f. Recommend approval of a contract with BC Rincon Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$56,350.35 for Lake Casitas Recreation Area and Water Treatment Plant Road Maintenance, Specification 18-399.
- g. Recommend approval of purchase of Allen Bradley Modules and PLC's in the amount of \$8,750.21.

The consent agenda was offered by Director Kaiser, seconded by Director Baggerly and adopted 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 4/05/18 - 4/18/18. APPROVED

The accounts payable report was offered by Director Hicks, seconded by Director Kaiser and passed by the following roll call vote:

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

8. General Manager's Verbal Update on Water Security Projects.

Mr. Wickstrum started by saying there will be more to come as we go forward but here are brief descriptions of where we are at.

State Water Intertie. The City of Ventura is the lead agency and a Notice of Preparation for the EIR asked for public comment through March 30. Kennedy Jenks is preparing the environmental document for the first phase. This is looking at a pipeline in starting in Spanish Hills and ending in Saticoy. It is projected to go through farm lands, it is good to move the project off of the main roadways. There is positive movement in design of the pipeline. This is in process and we expect the CEQA to be out in the next six months. We have held staff level meetings on the east/west interconnection with the City of Ventura. They were looking at it for their own benefit to take care of a large portion of the city within the Casitas district. There is opportunity and it has been expressed to others, there is opportunity to think of a county wide regional plan for emergencies and water deliveries. We are looking for something larger than what the city looked for as a 24 inch line. Kennedy Jenks is working with Calleguas for emergency supply and the potential supplies for west county to serve their populations with eyes on potential to use the Lake Casitas supply. This would act as a sort of insurance for Calleguas. For movement east to west and west to east we need to have a solution other than the 24 inch line that would be adequate for that type of operation. This project is ongoing right now.

Director Baggerly added that the City of Ventura is the lead agency of the interconnection project. Other partners are United Water Conservation District, Calleguas, Casitas and the City of Ventura. The three State Water Contractors have the following allocation of state water: 10,000 AF for the City of Ventura, 5,000 AF for United and 5,000 AF for Casitas. Director Baggerly suggesting providing all the information that Kennedy Jenks puts out and placing it on the water security platform page. This is in progress. Mr. Wickstrum added placing it in our board agenda so you all have the opportunity to read what is going on.

He then explained that state water is only available at 10% of allocation as of February 15<sup>th</sup> and 30% availability as of yesterday. For the City's 10,000 af of entitlement they would be able to receive 3,000 af. We would receive 1,500 af if we could receive it. Last year because of their major storms and damage at Orville dam what becomes available is article 21 water and opportunity to get water in excess of table A water. We are involved in state water contract negotiations and there are exchanges like what we are doing with San Geronio. We will receive 40% of the water they receive which will be available to us over the next ten years. There are contract negotiations with the Department of Water

Resources with contract extensions to 2085 and the California Water Fix and Tunnels projects.

Director Bergen added that Kennedy Jenks is working with staff of Calleguas, Ventura and Casitas in trying to find out the hydrology of 30 inch pipe or equivalent. Mr. Wickstrum responded let's call it a larger pipe without putting a dimension on it. They will determine what is the right pipe size to deliver the needed water. Director Bergen added those studies are ongoing and expect to be done within six months? Mr. Wickstrum added that Susan Mulligan said they are looking at 82 projects and 6-8 are viable options.

President Word added it seems like a conflict from what we are hearing from some folks. As of last Thursday the City told me they had had no contact on the intertie except us and Calleguas. They understand our need. Mr. Wickstrum continued by saying we are working with Kevin Brown and Susan Mulligan and think we are pretty much on the same page. This is a real good opportunity to do what we should have done back in 1990, to construct this so we are in the right place to provide water. President Word added a lot is happening for those who are saying nothing is happening.

Matilija Formation – Mr. Wickstrum reported that he has requested WREA and Jordan Kear of Kear Hydrology to prepare a proposal to drill straight down for an exploratory well. There are a lot of reports on the Matilija formation. Jordan Kear felt very confident that it is below our feet at Robles Diversion. We want to assess what is available and the quality of that water. I received an email and am trying to schedule a meeting with Poncho Smith to put data collectors in seeps to gain data on when they go dry. I hope in the next week we can meet with him. He had been contacted by his regional office regarding this. We had met with Julia Brownley's office regarding the inaction of the Forest Service to help us get the data. We need to have good solid data for environmental aspects. If we get proposals on vertical we hope we could drill this summer. Director Baggerly added that the request for proposal has gone semi viral and drillers are contacting Jordan Kear from all over. There is a great deal of interest in the project. Director Bergen asked if we can we get Jordan to give us a bibliography of references on the quality of the Matilija formation and why we believe there is water there. Mr. Wickstrum responded that he would ask Jordan to provide a presentation at the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, if he is available, on the Matilija formation and Ojai groundwater basin. Director Baggerly added at some point we might want to have Jordan's analysis of the vertical bore peer reviewed. We are not fooling around and we want to be as secure as possible.

Mr. Wickstrum then discussed the idea of a desalter for the Ojai wells. We could look at a desalter on Mutual well #6 and go after prop 1 funding for it. It may help the situation in the Ojai Basin. Director Bergen added there are marine sediments in our basin and when you go very deep you get salt water instead of drinking water. It would clean up the aquifer and get to another source of water.

Mr. Wickstrum added desalters are not inexpensive and they are costly to operate. This was within the water security study.

Mr. Wickstrum then informed the board that he met with Angelo and Alex Kim with Michael Flood also in attendance. The Ojai Valley Inn is an economic machine in Ojai. There are several opportunities in implementation of projects so they can remain viable without loss of green and loss of guests which keep Ojai Valley alive. With grant funding through IWRM could they create a lake. Simi Hills golf course put underground piping to collect water and balance out of it. Another project could be the use of wastewater for turf irrigation. This would be similar to the wastewater treatment plant that Thatcher School has. Water could be injected back into the Ojai groundwater basis. There would need to be the removal of sludge out of that facility. This could provide some supply to be used for turf irrigation aspects. These are ideas and thoughts that we are sharing and there will be more to come with major economic engines of Ojai Valley. Results are supporting the entire community to maintain the business life in Ojai Valley.

We are putting together list of elements for prop 1 grant funding. We have been successful in getting grant funding. Matilija Dam has \$88 million for dam decommissioning.

We can plan ahead. We have thought of what do we do to get water into Oak View or Rincon area. There were other comments and ideas in 1990 with some of the meetings that occurred with state water importation. One was go through 150 to upper Ojai and back feed. Another option is to find a site for a pump plant and for a reservoir. When do you build it? On the front side, you can get rented pumps and/or tanks or build them and mothball them until you need to use them to move water from south to north. It needs to be planned out. We visited with Lake Cachuma regarding their barge in order to get the last amount of water out of the lake.

The board discussed various options. Director Bergen mentioned the agreement with San Geronimo and there may be more opportunities for water trading to assist with costs. She also expressed concern of costs adding that Ag is sensitive to cost. She said there are different opportunities for us to get it done at a cost we can afford but we have to do it carefully.

Mr. Wickstrum added that we are now that about ten months from when we took over the Ojai System. There were many inefficiencies in that operation. We will be bringing forward next meeting a request to consider further assessment of the well field area and correct the ills of that area. Casitas delivered 600 AF to City of Ojai related to inefficiencies of their system and delivered water out of east to west. The water basin is 65% of its capacity. We will be looking to implement conjunctive use with groundwater basin and coordinate those deliveries. Good goal to set to conserve water when there is water under foot in Ojai. Mr. Wickstrum also mentioned the miles of 1929-1932 pipeline. The Scada has come a long way and projects are being put in design



and construction next year and the following year. We will run out of available bond funding and then will pay as you go.

President Word offered that you outlined six or seven projects for actions that are being taken now. None of those are mutually exclusive. We are working on all of them at once. I can't see any of these we would not want to pursue. Director Baggerly added if you want to get it done it has to be in the budget. Director Kaiser added there has to be timelines associated with this.

George Galgas stated that negotiations with Ventura are at a stall. They want to take water and put in the lake and dip out of the lake that is why the state water project is at an impasse that is what I understand. He stated we are still paying for Lake Casitas bond. Mr. Wickstrum explained that payment was finished three-four years ago. What you see on the tax rolls now is the state wide bond for the state water project.

Angelo Spandrio provided a handout with his comments. What will it take to get State water up the hill? On November 8, 2016, Casitas submitted to the City of Ventura its input to the Kennedy/Jenks Scope of Work East-West County Interconnection. Included in that input was a request that the Scope of Work include two conditions, one of which was "the condition in which Lake Casitas is dry condition..." On November 29, 2016, Shana Epstein, the General Manager of Ventura Water at the time, sent their response to the above Casitas request. That response is attached to the hand-out you received along with your original request. That response says, in part, that the Casitas request to include in the scope of work moving water up the hill from Ventura is denied for the sale of "keeping this project streamlined" as stated in the Epstein E-mail dated 11-29-16. My point is its time to get this portion of your original request activated. Ventura Water has stated in the attached response that they are "conducting a separate study to look at infrastructure improvements to transport water from the eastside of the City to the West". I asked Calleguas, who has also hired Kennedy/Jenks, the following question on March 17, 2018: "Does Kennedy/Jenks, that is doing your current study, know about Ventura CIPs 73079 and 73084 to install around 20,000 feet of new 30" line running East-West across Ventura?" This was their answer on March 19, 2018: "Yes, Calleguas is studying the results of that analysis to determine how much excess capacity might be available in that pipe if Calleguas were able to store water in Lake Casitas and get it out during a 6 month outage of imported supply. We authorized that work two weeks ago top Kennedy/Jenks." So it is obvious to me that one piece missing from this puzzle is getting water back and forth between Ventura and the Casitas system. Mr. Baggerly, you stated yesterday at the Water Resources Committee meeting that you are now in favor of State water. Mr. Hicks, you have stated at previous board meetings that you favor State water and have fears about the lake going dry. Gentlemen, I urge you to take action today to get the Casitas request to move water up the hill from Ventura moving. You have a statement of work attached that you generated 18 months ago. Let's get that statement of work to

Kennedy/Jenks for a quote. That effort will cost you nothing in the way of staff time at Casitas or fees from Kennedy/Jenks. In short, this move is free and will demonstrate progress toward a goal that many of us have about getting State water connected to the Ojai system.

Director Baggerly responded that Angelo's request is impossible to do. It has to be on the agenda per the Ralph M Brown Act to be acted on. Mr. Mathews added that the requests for action today cannot be done as it is not agendaized. If the board or the General Manager wants it to be on an agenda they can put it on a future agenda.

Richard Hajas addressed the board and said I know some of you are really irritated by all of this. The citizen group Ojai Flow worked its tail off for eight years to help you acquire Golden State Water and that improved your revenue base and you have plans to improve uses of groundwater basin and have real voice for planning for the basin. That is the result of a few people that worked hard for eight years. Don't be disturbed by it. Everyone has a passion, we are trying to help. Help has been given in the past has worked out well. There is misinformation and your board is as guilty as the public. You don't have the information to provide. I have heard comments of board for costs that have no basis. Be careful on spreading information that may not be positive. I am happy to hear what is going on. This was good discussion on this issue. There are three projects and a group of ideas. You have the Hobo project, vertical project, state water project, the Water Efficiency and Allocation conservation plan. The vertical well may take three - four years. State Water Project looks like it would be four-five years to complete. The WEAP is complete and Stage 4 is imminent. Over next five years, we have five years supply and it is reasonable that we will get some inflow in that five year period. If we don't we may see Stage 5. Neither of the projects that are sort of projects have detailed project descriptions. There is nothing solid to look at yet. You are working on that. Direct staff to develop project schedules for each plan with clear milestones and actions to be taken by your board. Use these schedules to review progress and update schedules at future meetings. It is a simple way to know the progress and update the public. Overlay each scheduled with current and projected lake levels for the end of the year so we can see if we are gaining or losing ground. Ask staff to prepare this to keep the public informed and give us benchmarks on how we are doing.

A member of the public asked about the financial aspects of negotiations and if there is a budget for legal counsel, do you have an attorney to do the negotiations. President Word responded it will be vetted by our counsel and theirs and we have already approved an amount to use to help for the study. Mr. Wickstrum explained the concept is Calleguas would like to have insurance policy to get water from the west side, Lake Casitas or Mound Basin, should there be a major catastrophe. They could have a less than six month supply. Our state water allotment could be wheeled through Met and Calleguas and

brought to the City of Ventura for use in lieu of the City of Ventura purchasing water from Casitas. Calleguas could pay for it to get to Ventura. The shuffle that occurs is Calleguas begins to build insurance policy. There are several variations and one is close to the WAG and the way the three general managers see that working. President Word added it is not water that is pumped into the lake.

9. Recommend approval of an application for Federal Assistance SF-424 (New USBR Grant) for Recreation Facility Upgrades and Quagga Mussel Control. APPROVED

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

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

10. Information Items:

- a. Executive Committee Minutes.
- b. Finance Committee Minutes.
- c. Water Conservation February 2018 Update.
- d. County of Ventura's action to approve a Bona Fide Water Exchange.
- e. News Articles.
- f. Investment Report.

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

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

11. Adjournment.

President Word adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

---

Mary Bergen, Secretary