

**PANOCHÉ WATER DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
and  
PROPOSITION 218 GROWERS' WORKSHOP  
March 28, 2023, at 9:00 A.M.**

A special meeting of the Board of Directors and Growers' Workshop was held at 52027 West Althea Ave., Firebaugh, CA 93622. Those present for the meeting were:

- Directors Present: Beau Correia, Vice-President  
Steve Fausone, Secretary  
Wayne Western, Director  
Neill Callis, Director
- Directors Absent: None
- District Staff Present: Ara Azhderian, General Manager  
Juan Cadena, Water Resources Manager  
Lorena Chagoya, Ethics & Compliance Officer  
Sandra Reyes, Watermaster
- Others Present: Philip Williams, General Counsel  
Aaron Barcellos, A-Bar Ag Enterprises (unposted telephonic)  
Bill Soars, Bennett Ranches  
Steve Creighton, Sran Family Orchards  
Will Gleason, West Hills Farm Services  
Mitch Coit, Coit Family Farms  
Steve Smith, Turlock Fruit  
Jessica Bertao  
Shawn Ketcher  
Jay Mahil  
Stacey Olivera

**PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54952.3, Water Code sections 34740 and 34741, and the District's Bylaws, Vice-President Correia announced that Board members may receive either: \$100.00 as compensation or a stipend for participation in today's meeting and for each day's service rendered as a Director, not to exceed a total of \$600.00 in any calendar month, or, as an Executive Officer of the District, \$500.00 per month as compensation or a stipend for their service to the District.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice-President Correia called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**REVIEW OF AGENDA**

There were no changes to the Agenda.

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## **ROLL CALL**

A quorum of the Board and presence of the District's Officers were confirmed.

## **POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts were reported.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **2023-24 LAND-BASED RATE PROPOSAL AND PROPOSITION 218 GROWERS' WORKSHOP**

Vice-President Correia called the Workshop to order at approximately 9:04 a.m.. General Manager Azhderian presented the 2023-24 Land-Based Rate Proposal. He reported the purpose of the workshop was to provide information and respond to questions. He explained the Board began examining land-based rates in 2021 and that many scenarios have been considered. Azhderian said the rate proposal being presented today focuses on activities that are related to the District's Central Valley Project water service contract and provide enduring value, such as the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority's activities to promote and protect the CVP contracts, and the District's repairs and maintenance costs. Azhderian presented the proposed 2023-24 water and land-based rates and explained the public comment period would conclude with a public hearing to be held on April 18<sup>th</sup> and that the opportunity to protest the proposed rates would end at that time. He then reviewed the formal protest form and explained the form must be received at the District office by mail or delivered in person and that scans or facsimiles could not be accepted. At the end of the presentation, Vice-President Correia requested public comment and held the workshop open for questions through three minutes of silence prior to closing at approximately 9:21 a.m.. There was no public comment.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

General Counsel Williams announced that the Board would meet with legal counsel in closed session to confer on anticipated litigation pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9, Subdivision (d), Paragraphs (1), (2), or (3); with labor negotiators pursuant to Section 54957.6; and regarding recruitment for the position of General Manager pursuant to Section 54957(b)(1).

*At approximately 9:22 a.m., Vice-President Correia called the closed session to order.*

*At approximately 10:11 a.m., Vice-President Correia adjourned the closed session.*

## **CLOSED SESSION REPORT**

General Counsel Williams reported the Board met with legal counsel in closed session and no reportable action was taken.

## **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

General Manager Azhderian updated the Board on the 2023 CVP water supply forecast, reporting that Reclamation was expected to be increasing the CVP south-of-Delta allocation from 35% to somewhere between 50 and 75%. He also reported that current forecasts indicated San Luis Reservoir would likely fill around April 20<sup>th</sup> and that discussions were underway with Reclamation to discuss spring operations and avoiding the potential loss of 2022 rescheduled water. Lastly, Azhderian said that following the fill of San Luis, Reclamation would likely make Section 215 water available. He explained that some growers had indicated an interest in receiving 215 water but recommended against it because under Reclamation's Rescheduling Guidelines, the receipt of 215 water would increase the risk of losing

rescheduled water. He said if Reclamation made 215 water available, staff would bring a contract to the Board for formal consideration.

**FUTURE MEETING DATES**

No special meeting was scheduled. The next regular meeting of the Board was adjourned from 9:30 a.m. on April 11<sup>th</sup> to 9:30 a.m. on April 18, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business on the agenda, President Barcellos adjourned the meeting at 10:49 a.m.



Aaron Barcellos, President



Steve Fausone, Secretary