

April 16, 2025
Special Meeting
5:01 p.m.

The Board of Directors of the San Benito County Water District convened in special session on Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 5:01 p.m. at the San Benito County Water District office at 30 Mansfield Road, Hollister, California. Members present were: President Doug Williams, Vice President Mark Wright and Directors Sonny Flores and John Freeman. Director Joe Tonascia arrived late. Also present were General Manager Dana Jacobson, Assistant General Manager Brett Miller, Senior Engineer David Macdonald, and Executive Assistant/Board Clerk Barbara Mauro. District Counsel Jeremy T. Liem and Jeff Cattaneo participated via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER

President Williams called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

President Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

b. Roll Call

Mrs. Mauro called roll. Members present were: President Williams, Vice President Wright and Directors Flores and Freeman; Director Tonascia was absent.

c. Approval of the Agenda

With a motion by Director Flores and a second by Director Freeman; the agenda was approved by 4 affirmative votes, Williams, Wright, Flores and Freeman. There was 1 absence, Tonascia.

d. Speakers will be limited to 5 minutes to address the Board

There were no public comments.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Discuss and Consider Conditional Notice to Proceed (NTP) for the West Hills Water Treatment Plant (WHWTP) Expansion

(Director Tonascia arrived at 5:03 p.m.)

Mr. Jacobson stated that on December 9, 2024, the Board approved a contract with C. Overaa but it did allow for mobilization for the project. CEQA has been submitted, but the District is still waiting on the ITP (Incidental Take Permit). This permit is for the “taking” of any endangered species for the area in the project. The District has received a letter of incomplete for the ITP and asked for additional environmental review, so the application has been resubmitted.

On March 18, 2025, the District received another letter of incomplete and it is unknown when staff can expect approval. Verbally, the District has been told it would be acceptable to move forward under certain conditions. Because of the time sensitivity for the Grant from DWR (Department of Water Resources), this risk operating without the permit would be if there was an accidental “take” there could be up to \$25,000 in fees and up to \$50,000 in fees if it was discovered to be on-purpose.

Mr. Jacobson stated staff is of the opinion that the risk is fairly low. He further gave examples of what would be acceptable actions to do until the ITP has been approved and received. He further stated the risk of losing the grant funding is greater.

Since the packet went out, there has been 1 sentence added to the Conditional NTP, which Mr. Jacobson reviewed. He added, once the ITP is approved, he will issue a full NTP.

Director Freeman asked if a meeting with HDR and Overaa has been scheduled for pre-construction. Mr. Cattaneo replied no it hasn't, but both parties are working to get it scheduled.

Mr. Liem, participating remotely, stated the concern is for the risk and it appears the risk is low as the work would be done in the same areas as were disturbed during construction of the treatment plant.

President Williams asked, once started, when would be the completion date. Mr. Jacobson replied approximately 490 days.

With a motion by Director Flores and a second by Director Freeman, the Board of Directors approved the Conditional Notice to Proceed (NTP) for the West Hills Water Treatment Plant (WHWTP) Expansion by 5 affirmative votes, Williams, Wright, Flores, Freeman and Tonascia.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Minutes were approved at the April 30, 2025 Board meeting and signed by the presiding board member.

/s/Doug Williams
Doug Williams, President

/s/Barbara L. Mauro
Barbara L. Mauro, Executive Assistant/Board Clerk