

**Linden County Water District
Regular Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
June 19, 2025**

Directors Present: President Lawrence Knapp, Vice President Steven M. Lagorio, Director Elaine Reed and Director Douglas E. Smith

Board Secretary Barbara Kascht, General Manager Joe Chaves and District Consultant John Villierme were also in attendance

Directors Absent: Director Myron Blanton

Public Comment: None

Agenda Items:

1. Closed Session as Provided by the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54957, Personnel Matters.

Upon coming out of closed session, President Larry Knapp explained that at the prior meeting where Joe Chaves salary was discussed, it was decided he would be promoted to General Manager Step A, which is \$36.00 an hour. Subsequently, Joe accepted but then did some math and figured out that's equivalent to what he's making currently with overtime, so he wouldn't really be seeing a bump up in pay for taking on new responsibilities. As a result of that, the Board reconsidered and decided to go to Step C, which is \$39.60 an hour, which calculates out to \$82,368.00 that is a salaried position at that rate. The Board will revisit the General Manager's salary schedule after one year of employment and go to Step D if the Board approves. General Manager Joe Chaves accepted the offer.

2. OLD BUSINESS

a. Front & Ione Street Water Main Replacement Project. General Manager Joe Chaves reported that he and Frank with WGA have been trying to contact Campbell Construction for the last two weeks with no response. Today, Chaves contacted Frank, who finally received a reply from Campbell, who indicated he has all that is needed to finish the painting. Tomorrow he is doing the stop bar and stop on Ione and will finish the fog line and all other lines by the end of next week. The County has approved everything except the lines. Payment of the retention can be made upon approval of a Resolution accepting work on the project.

b. Sustainable Groundwater Management. Director Doug Smith reported on the June 11, 2025 ESJGWA meeting. They will be voting on a new Executive Director and also the 2025-26 budget at their next meeting. Linden's cost allocation is \$10,133.00. Groundwater accounting framework is being developed. It will eventually give each GSA a deficit number for groundwater, which becomes active when wells fall below a critical level and then a reduction in pumping will be required. John Villierme advised that both of the District's wells are set at 190 feet. At the ESJGWA meeting there

was discussion and concern about the lawsuits. Per an email from District Legal Counsel Dean Ruiz, there has been significant law and motion practice (motions to dismiss followed by amended complaints). In the meantime, DWR has completed its review of the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan for compliance with SGMA and has determined that the Plan is in compliance. Therefore, we believe CSPA's action is now moot. Thus, the cooperating defendants have filed another motion to dismiss based on the position that case is now moot. That motion will be heard on July 16 in Stanislaus Superior Court.

- c. **Water Loss.** General Manager Joe Chaves said there's nothing new at this point but they will be doing a report next month and there have been a couple leaks, which may account for some water loss.

3. **NEW BUSINESS**

Director Doug Smith asked about flushing the sewer pipes. General Manager Joe Chaves explained they flush the sewer lines as preventative maintenance so grease and solids do not accumulate and back up.

4. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Steven Lagorio moved to approve the consent calendar as follows:

- a. Minutes – May 15, 2025
- b. Warrant Listing
- c. Financial Reports
- d. Operations Reports
- e. Compliance Log
- f. Correspondence
- g. Water Usage Reports

seconded by Doug Smith. **AYES:** 4 **NOES:** 0 **ABSTAIN:** 0 **ABSENT:** 1 Motion carried.

5. **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Director Doug Smith asked about the District's plan in the event Barbara is ill and out of the office. General Manager Joe Chaves is learning the Utility Billing program and John Villierme is also able to help out in the office. Barbara said there is an office manual, which needs to be updated. President Larry Knapp asked to put the updated office manual on the July agenda as new business.

Director Doug Smith also commended Brayden Fredricksen for going above and beyond to assist caller who had no water. After asking the address (which we did not serve), Brayden found out she was from Lynden, Arizona and looked up the correct water district and number for her to call.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.