



**MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2023**

**AGENDA 6:00 PM  
CLOSED SESSION**

**Recorded Meetings:** Recorded meetings are available on the District's website:  
<https://www.soquelcreekwater.org/AgendaCenter>

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

President Christensen called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm at the Capitola City Council Chambers.

**Board Members Present:**

Carla Christensen, President  
Dr. Bruce Jaffe, Vice-President  
Dr. Bruce Daniels, Director,  
Dr. Thomas LaHue, Director  
Rachél Lather, Director

**District Counsel**

Joshua Nelson, District Counsel

**Staff Members Present:**

Ron Duncan, General Manager  
Shelley Flock, Water Resources Manager  
Taj Dufour, Engineering Manager  
Leslie Strohm, Finance Manager  
Traci Hart, Human Resources Manager  
Nick Emmert, Operations and Maintenance Manager

**Others Present:**

1 member of the public

**2. PUBLIC HEARING – *None***

**3. BOARD MEMBERS' OPPORTUNITY TO REMOVE ITEMS FROM CONSENT AGENDA**

None removed.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

One public comment was heard.

MOTION: Director LaHue, Second: Director Lather; To approve Consent Agenda Items 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5. Motion passed unanimously.

- 4.1 Approval of Minutes
  - 4.1.1 May 2, 2023 – Regular Meeting Minutes

4.1.2 May 16, 2023 – Regular Meeting Minutes  
**Action: Approved**

4.2 Board Planning Calendar  
**Action: Approved**

4.3 Special Board Assignments Status Report  
**Action: Approved**

4.4 Management Approve Amendment to Agreement for General Counsel Legal Services by Best Best and Krieger  
**Action: Approved**

4.5 Approve Allocation from OCR to Fund Emergency HVAC Unit Replacement for Headquarters Building  
**Action: Approved**

5. **ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS** (*items not on the Agenda*)

Written communications addressed to the Board are available on the District's website:  
<https://www.soquelcreekwater.org/AgendaCenter>

Board and staff discussion ensued regarding the opportunities and challenges related to water transfers between the City of Santa Cruz and the District.

6. **REPORTS** – *None*

7. **ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

7.1 Conditional and Unconditional Will Serve Letters – *None*

7.2 Adopt Draft 2023/24 Budget

Ms. Strohm presented the 2023/24 Draft Budget. The presentation is available on the District's website: <https://www.soquelcreekwater.org/AgendaCenter>

President Christensen stated that the draft fiscal year (FY) 2023/24 Budget was presented and reviewed by the Board on the May 2, 2023.

Director LaHue questioned if the District's annual performance trends consider outside variables.

Director Daniels recognized that the District is currently conducting its 2023 Water Rate Study and considered the relationship between rates, the District's budget, and the overall economy. Ms. Strohm responded, explaining that the District's water consumption is the main driver when setting rates.

One public comment was heard. Vice-President Jaffe responded to public comment.

MOTION: Director LaHue; Second: Vice-President Jaffe; To adopt the Draft 2023/24 Budget as final. Motion passed unanimously.
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7.3 District Staffing and Reorganization – FBS Customer Service/Billing unit

Ms. Hart presented the details of the proposed staffing reorganization, which includes the following:

- Revisions to and title changes for outdated job descriptions for the Customer Service Representative I-II, and the Customer Service Supervisor.
- Proposes reclassifying a vacant position in the Finance and Business Services Department to a new staff-level classification – Contract and Customer Billing Specialist.

Ms. Strohm asked if a correction is needed for the second motion to correct the title from “Technician” to “Representative.” Ms. Hart confirmed that a correction is needed to make this language change.

MOTION: Director LaHue; Second: Vice-President Jaffe; To authorize the establishment of the new Contract and Customer Billing Specialist job classification and approve the revisions/title changes to the existing classifications for Customer Service and Billing Technician I-II and Utility Billing and Customer Service Supervisor. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Director LaHue; Second: Vice-President Jaffe; To authorize the following salary allocations on the 2023 Field and Office salary schedule, including the noted Revisions:

- (New) Contract and Customer Billing Specialist - Step 1/\$5,486 – Step 9/\$7,761
- (Revised) Customer Service Field ~~Technician~~ Representative I - Step 1/\$4,737 – Step 9/\$6,702
- (Revised) Customer Service Field ~~Technician~~ Representative II - Step 1/\$4,974 – Step 9/\$7,037.

Motion passed unanimously.

## 8. **CLOSED SESSION**

- 8.1 Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section §54956.9(d)(1)  
Steinbruner vs. California Coastal Commission, et al., San Francisco County Superior Court Case No. CPF-20517119; CA First District Court of Appeals Case Nos. A163079, A163199  
Steinbruner v. Soquel Creek Water District, et al. Santa Cruz County Superior Court Case No. 21CV01517  
Steinbruner v. Soquel Creek Water District, et al. Santa Cruz County Superior Court Case No. 21CV02699; CA Sixth District Court of Appeals Case No. H050093
- 8.2 Conference With Labor Negotiators  
Agency designated representative(s): Ron Duncan, Traci Hart, Melanie Mow Schumacher, Leslie Strohm  
Employee Organization: Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
- 8.3 Closed Session Pursuant to California Government Code Section 54597(b)  
Personnel Session to Evaluate Performance of General Manager
- 8.4 Conference With Labor Negotiators  
Agency designated representative(s): Carla Christensen  
Unrepresented Employee: General Manager
- 8.5 Conference With Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation  
Significant Exposure to Litigation Pursuant to Paragraph (2) of Subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9: 1 Case (Claim of Bernt Barbera)

At 6:37 pm, President Christensen announced that the Board will enter closed session to discuss Items 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5.

**CONVENE TO CLOSED SESSION – 6:37 pm**

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – 6:53 pm**

President Christensen adjourned the closed session and returned to open session at 6:53 pm.

President Christensen reported that the Board discussed Items 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4 and 8.5 in closed session. No reportable action was taken on Items 8.1-8.4. For Item 8.5, the Board voted unanimously to deny the claim.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

President Christensen adjourned the meeting at 6:54 pm.

SUBMITTED:



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Emma Western, Board Clerk

APPROVED:



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Carla Christensen, President