



**MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING – 6:00 PM
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2022**

In response to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Soquel Creek Water District’s September 20, 2022 Board Meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

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

President LaHue called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm via Zoom.

0. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Board Members Present:

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

District Counsel

Joshua Nelson, District Counsel

Staff Members Present:

Ron Duncan, General Manager
Shelley Flock, Conservation and Customer Service Field Manager
Taj Dufour, Engineering Manager
Leslie Strohm, Finance Manager
Traci Hart, Human Resources Manager
Nate Gillespie, Operations & Maintenance Manager
Melanie Mow Schumacher, Special Projects-Communications Manager
Rebecca Rubin, Public Outreach Coordinator
Emma Western, Executive Assistant/Board Clerk

Others Present:

3 members of the public

1. CLOSED SESSION

- 1.1 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

- 1.2 Conference With Labor Negotiators
Agency designated representative(s): Traci Hart
Employee Organization: Management Group

At 6:01 pm, President LaHue announced that the Board will meet in closed session to discuss Items 1.1 and 1.2.

One public comment was heard.

CONVENE TO CLOSED SESSION – 6:01 pm

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – 6:25 pm

President LaHue adjourned the closed session and returned to open session at 6:25 pm.

President LaHue reported that the Board discussed Items 1.1 and 1.2 in closed session. No reportable action was taken.

2. PUBLIC HEARING – None

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

Director Daniels requested that Item 4.4 be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

President LaHue requested that Item 4.6 be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

President LaHue removed Consent Agenda Items 4.4 and 4.6.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Director Jaffe requested an item be presented at a future meeting to discuss the Santa Cruz Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Countywide Water Service and Sphere Review, which was included in the Management Update. Vice-President Christensen agreed.

MOTION: Director Daniels; Second: Vice-President Christensen; To approve Consent Agenda Items 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.5. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Director Lather absent.

- 4.1 Approval of Minutes
4.1.1 September 6, 2022 – Regular Meeting Minutes
Action: Approved
- 4.2 Extend Resolution 21-21 and Re-Authorize Virtual Public Meetings in Accordance with AB 361
Action: Approved
- 4.3 Production Reports
Action: Approved
- 4.4 Management Update
Action: Removed from Consent; Discussed at the end of Administrative Business

4.5 Approve Best Best & Krieger's Proposal for Professional Legal Services to Support the Pure Water Soquel (PWS) Project
Action: Approved

4.6 Receive the District's Fall 2022 Community Water Report
Action: Removed from Consent; Discussed at the end of Administrative Business

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>

One public comment was heard.

6. **REPORTS**

6.1 District Counsel – Oral Report

General Counsel Nelson provided an update on Assembly Bill (AB) 2449, which will take effect on January 1, 2023. This bill only permits Directors to remotely attend meetings from a private location for "just cause" or emergencies. However, as long as the State remains in a declared emergency due to COVID, then remote board meetings are permitted through January 2024.

7. **ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

7.1 Conditional and Unconditional Will Serve Letters – *None*

7.2 Consider Approval of Operations & Maintenance Department Reorganization

Ms. Hart reviewed Item 7.2, stating that staff recommends reestablishing the two-supervisor management model within the Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Department. She explained that the Board approved an O&M reorganization in January 2020, which combined two supervisor positions into one. Since then, staff has worked together to evaluate the effectiveness of the one-supervisor model, and it has been determined that the workload for one supervisor is not sustainable. Therefore, staff recommends returning to the two-supervisor model in O&M.

Vice-President Christensen stated that she believes it is the right time for the O&M reorganization.

Director Jaffe confirmed that the return to the two-supervisor model is workload driven. Ms. Hart and Mr. Duncan confirmed the recommendations are based on workload and oversight capabilities.

In response to a question posed by Director Jaffe, Ms. Hart confirmed that she will correct the mid-management positions in the Engineering Department shown in the proposed organizational chart.

Directors expressed interest in having an organizational chart that includes staff names and photos.

MOTION: Vice-President Christensen; Second: Director Jaffe; To approve the proposed changes to the District 2022-23 Organization Chart, which authorizes not filling a staff-level vacancy (Distribution Operator I/II), and replacing it with a mid-management position (Operations & Maintenance Supervisor). Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Director Lather absent.

- 7.3 Present the Pure Water Soquel Mini-Documentary and Adopt Proclamation 22-01, Celebrating the International Launch of this Film

Ms. Mow Schumacher shared the Pure Water Soquel Mini-Documentary, which was presented by the International Water Association and produced by BBC StoryWorks. The film is part of the docuseries, "Beneath the Surface of Water: The Journey of Water Series," which profiles innovations and innovators who are advancing positive change toward water sustainability. Pure Water Soquel is one of just 16 worldwide projects featured in this series.

President LaHue read aloud Proclamation 22-01, Celebrating the International Launch of the Pure Water Soquel Mini-Documentary and Commending the International Water Association and BBC StoryWorks.

One public comment was heard. Ms. Mow Schumacher responded to public comment.

Mr. Duncan reflected on how this film recognizes Pure Water Soquel as an environmental project for our community.

Directors expressed support.

MOTION: Director Daniels; Second: Vice-President Christensen; To adopt Proclamation 22-01, celebrating the international launch of the Pure Water Soquel Mini-Documentary and commending the International Water Association and BBC StoryWorks. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Director Lather absent.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA – ITEMS REMOVED FOR DISCUSSION**

- 4.4 Management Update

One public comment was heard.

Director Daniels requested additional information on recent water theft cases. Mr. Duncan and General Counsel Nelson confirmed that staff will follow up with the Board.

Director Jaffe reiterated his interest in a future item to discuss the Santa Cruz Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Countywide Water Service and Sphere Review.

- 4.6 Receive the District's Fall 2022 Community Water Report

One public comment was heard.

Directors provided feedback and made the following suggestions:

- Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency: Emphasize that the Pure Water Soquel Project is the key component of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP).
- Water Transfers: Rearrange language (move last sentence first); modify language "aim to purchase" to be "interest to purchase;" include concerns about potential water quality and compatibility issues as challenges.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

President LaHue adjourned the meeting at 7:33 pm.

SUBMITTED:



Emma Western, Board Clerk

APPROVED:



Dr. Tom LaHue, President