Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority

Post Office Box 151
Bakersfield, CA 93302
Tel: (661) 616-6500
Fax: (661) 616-6550

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES

Date: *Thursday, February 5, 2026*
Time: *1:30 P.M.*
Location: *Rosedale-Rio Bravo WSD, 849 Allen Road, Bakersfield, CA 93314*

DIRECTORS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT
Roy Pierucci and Zach Smith, Rosedale-Rio Bravo WSD
Rob Fanucchi and Steve Teglia, Kern Delta WD
Chad Carroll, Semitropic WSD
Ben Wilson, Shafter-Wasco ID
Robert Holtermann and David Hampton, North Kern WSD
Dennis Johnston and Jeevan Muhar, Arvin-Edison WSD
Michael Blaine, Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa WSD

DIRECTORS AND ALTERNATES ABSENT
Charlie Riddle, Henry Miller WD
Skye Grass and Andrew Hart, Kern-Tulare WD
Jeff Siemens and Jim Nickel, Olcese WD
Jason Gianquinto, Semitropic WSD
Kris Lawrence, Shafter-Wasco ID
David Nixon, Arvin-Edison WSD
Neil Durham, Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa WSD

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS ABSENT
Morgan Campbell, Westside Water Quality Coalition
David Halopoff, David Ansolabehere, Cawelo Water District Coalition
Tim Ashlock, Buena Vista Coalition

OTHERS PRESENT
Nicole Bell, KRWCA Manager
Ryan Dodd, P&P
Steve Torigiani, General Counsel, Young Wooldridge, LLP
Jana Marquez, Kern Delta WD

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   The meeting was called to order by Chairman Blaine at 1:30 PM.

2. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF QUORUM**
   Chairman Blaine announced a quorum.

3. INTRODUCTIONS

None.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

5. BOARD MEETING MINUTES

APPROVAL of November 6, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes* Director Dennis Johnston moved to approve the regular Board Meeting Minutes of November 6, 2025. Upon second by Director Rob Fanucchi, the vote was taken with no abstentions and was unanimously carried.

6. TREASURER/FINANCIAL REPORT

November and December 2025 and January 2026 Accounts Payable/Receivable Ratification*
Manager Bell reviewed the Financial Reports with the Authority Board. It was reported that Treasurer Johnston has reviewed all financial reports and recommends ratification. Director Zach Smith moved to ratify the November and December 2025 and January 2026 Financial Reports. Upon a second, by Director Ben Wilson a vote was taken with no abstentions and was unanimously carried.

7. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS*

Director Robert Holtermann moved to approve the recommended slate of officers. Upon second by Ben Wilson the vote was taken with no abstentions and was unanimously carried.

a. President: Charlie Riddle
b. Vice President: Zach Smith
c. Treasurer: Dennis Johnston

8. ADMINISTRATIVE

Manager Bell reported on the following:

a. Set Meeting Date and Time*, Director Robert Holtermann moved to maintain the current meeting schedule of First Thursday of the month at 1:30. Upon second by Dennis Johnston the vote was taken with no abstentions and was unanimously carried.
b. Lease Renewal*, The Manager noted that a new KRWCA office subleasing opportunity was recently brought to her attention after the posting of the agenda. Since the potential sublease would be with KRWCA's member, Arvin-Edison Water Storage District (District), the District's director (Dennis Johnston) and alternate director (Jeevan Muhar) recused themselves from consideration of this matter and left the room. After discussion, Director Ben Wilson made a motion to table consideration of the proposed lease on the agenda, to add consideration of a sublease with the District, as a matter arising after posting of the agenda and in need of consideration prior to the next regular Board of Directors' meeting of the KRWCA, and to approve KRWCA negotiating and entering into a sublease with the District on terms and in a legal form acceptable to the Chair, Manager, and General Legal Counsel. The motion was seconded by Director Michael Blaine and unanimously approved with no abstentions and Director Johnston and Alternate Director Muhar absent. After approval of the motion, Director Johnston and Alternate Director Muhar returned to the meeting.

c. Form 700, Due April 1, 2026. A reminder was provided to submit the Form 700 by April 1, 2026, electronically and hard copy to KRWCA, per attorney recommendation.

9. KRWCA MANAGER REPORT/ILRP PROGRAM UPDATE

Manager Bell reported on the following:

a. Administrative:
   i. Member Reporting Update, deadline is March 1, 2026.
   ii. CVRWQCB Compliance, CVRWQCB is sending letters for non-reporting and non-enrolment.

b. Outreach and Education:
   i. Winter Outreach Meetings, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM: Zoom January 13, 2026, in-Person January 15, 2026, were successful.

10. NITRATE CONTROL PROGRAM MANAGEMENT ZONE

Manager Bell reported on the following:

a. Kern Water Collaborative (KWC) Update:
   i. Application, Well Test and Water Delivery Update: 16 households received water.
   ii. FMZP/EAP, submission deadline 2/16/2026.
   iii. Community Outreach and Engagement https://KWCMZ.org. The Boardis encouraged to visit the KWC website.

b. SGMA Coordination:
   i. NGO/Non-Profit Coordination Meetings: No update
   ii. KMEC Member: No recent meetings

11. REPORT OF PROVOST & PRITCHARD CONSULTING GROUP

a. General Program Updates: Mr. Dodd provided an update on the Second California Agricultural Expert Panel on nitrogen. The panel roster and summary of hearings were presented. A summary of recent grant activities was provided with a focus on the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Water Efficiency Technical Assistance (WETA) grant that provided groundwater protection trainings and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) that provides free irrigation and nitrogen management planning services to qualified growers. Groundwater Protection and Integrated Irrigation and Water Management Trainings were provided under the WETA grant in January 2026. A total of 79 people attended, including 19 at a training event in Bakersfield. Attendees that participated in trainings in 2025 and 2026 were surveyed and resulted indicated improved satisfaction year-over-year. A status update for the free Irrigation and Nitrogen Management Planning Assistance indicated that approximately five Kern County growers have been identified for participation. The Southern San Joaquin Valley (SSJV) Management Practice Evaluation Program (MPEP) website was reported to be redesigned to improve the overall layout, to include a new resource library for management practices, an events calendar, tools, and project descriptions. The website is available at agmpep.com. New management practices fact sheets available for growers were highlighted.

12. CV-SALTS www.cvsalinity.org

Manager Bell and Land IQ represent KRWCA at the Monthly CV-SALTS Meetings. Information related to CVSALTS is available at www.cvsalinity.org.

13. OLD OR NEW BUSINESS

None.

14. ATTORNEYS REPORT

Legal Counsel, Steve Torigiani, noted that Agenda Item 15.a. could be removed from the next agenda as this litigation is no longer pending. Mr. Torigiani also briefed the Board of Directors on new requirements, effective January 1, 2026, applicable to KRWCA, members of its Board of Directors, and its Manager, including: AB 707 requiring KRWCA to provide each of the members of the Board with a copy of the Brown Act; SB 827 requiring financial and fiscal training and expanding the local agency officials required to have AB 1234 ethics training to include (in addition to members of the Board) "department heads and similar administrative officers"; and SB 852 requiring the filing of Form 700 Statements electronically with the FPPC for "public officials who manage public investments," which electronic filing is a current requirement for GSA board members and executives as a result of former AB 1156. Mr. Torigiani told the Board he would provide the members of the Board and the Manager with additional information regarding these new laws, including information about available fiscal and financial training which KRWCA must provide to its local agency officials annually under SB 827.

15. CLOSED SESSION Start 2:38 PM, End 2:54 PM

a. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation/Significant exposure to litigation- Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2). One item.
b. Public Employee Performance Evaluation Government Code Section 54957*:
    i. Position: Manager, January 1

16. RECONVENED and REPORT from CLOSED SESSION - Gov't. Code section 54957.1.

Vice President Smith reported that the Board evaluated the Manager's performance in closed session and asked for a recommendation for any increase in the Manager's compensation. After discussion, Director Wilson recommended and made a motion to increase the Manager's base salary by 5%, with 2.5% of the 5% increase constituting a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and the remaining 2.5% constituting a merit adjustment. The motion was seconded by Director Johston and unanimously carried with no abstentions.

17. KRWCA & KWC MEETING ATTENDANCE HIGHLIGHTS – INFORMATION ITEM

a. 11/7, ILRP Coalition Leads Meeting
b. 11/12, MZ and CVSALTS Workshop
c. 11/13, CVSALTS/CVSC Meetings
d. 11/17, CVGMC Meeting
e. 11/19, 2nd Expert Panel Meeting
f. 12/12, KWC Board Meeting
g. 12/12, 2nd Expert Panel Meeting

h. 12/16, All CV ILRP Coalition's Meeting
i. 12/16, KMEC Meeting
j. 12/17, 2nd Expert Panel Meeting
k. 12/23, MZ Leadership Meeting
l. 1/5, KWC Budget Small Group Meeting
m. 1/7, SSJV MPEP/CVSALTS Meeting
n. 1/9, KWC Board Meeting
o. 1/12, CVGMC Meeting
p. 1/13, MZ Leaders Meeting
q. 1/13, Winter Outreach Meeting, Zoom
r. 1/14, 2nd Expert Panel Meeting
s. 1/15, CVSALTS/CVSC Executive Committee Meeting
t. 1/15, Winter Outreach Meeting, In-Person
u. 1/20, Meeting with CVRWQCB-Modesto Resolution
v. 1/21, 2nd Expert Panel Meeting
w. 1/23, MZ Leadership Meeting
x. 1/27, MZ DMS Development Meeting
y. 1/29, Meeting with CVRWQCB-Modesto Resolution
z. 1/29, 2nd Expert Panel Meeting
aa. 1/30, Meeting with CVRWQCB-Modesto Resolution
bb. 1/30, PEOC Meeting
cc. 2/4, SSJV MPEP/CVSALTS Meeting with CVRWQCB
dd. 2/4, Meeting with CVRWQCB-Modesto Resolution

18. NEXT MEETING*

Next regularly scheduled meeting is May 7, 2026.

19. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM

"*" Notates an action item (Approval/Ratification)