

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 9, 2026

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) was called to order by President LaMar at 5:00 p.m. on March 9, 2026 at the District offices, 15600 Sand Canyon Avenue, Irvine.

Secretary Swan announced that pursuant to California Government Code Section 54953, Director Ferons will participate in the meeting remotely via teleconference. He will be participating from 1605 Royal Pine Court, Lealand, North Carolina 28451. The agenda was posted at the front door of that location 72 hours in advance of the meeting for any member of the public to review and participate remotely if desired per the Affidavit of Posting from Director Ferons. Secretary Swan said that all votes this evening will be taken by a roll call vote.

Directors Present: Ferons (via teleconference), Reinhart, Withers, and President LaMar.

Directors Absent: Swan.

Oral and Written Communications: None.

Items too late to be agendized: None.

Also Present: General Manager Cook, Executive Director of Finance and Administration Adly, Executive Director of Technical Services Burton, Executive Director of Operations Chambers, Executive Director of Water Policy Weghorst, Director of Water Resources Nye, Director of Water Quality Colston, Director of Human Resources Mitcham, Director of Maintenance Operations Manning, Director of Information Technology Kaneshiro, Director of Financial Planning and Data Analytics Smithson, Director of Safety and Security Choi, Engineering Manager Moeder, Environmental Planning Analyst Le, Consultant Newell, Mr. Dick Reed of IBEW, General Counsel Collins, Secretary Swan, members of the staff, and public.

PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE STATUS OF VACANCIES AND RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION EFFORTS OF THE IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT IN COMPLIANCE WITH AB 2561

President LaMar declared this to be the time and place for a hearing in accordance with Government Code Section 3502.3 regarding the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts undertaken by the District. He asked the Secretary to report the manner by which the Notice of Hearing was given.

Secretary Swan said that the Notice of the hearing was noticed by electronic posting on the IRWD website and by physical posting at the District office on February 23, 2026. She then presented the Affidavits of Posting for the Board to receive and file.

On MOTION by Reinhart, seconded by Withers, and unanimously carried by a roll call vote (4-0) Ferons, Reinhart, Withers and LaMar voting aye, the AFFIDAVITS OF POSTING PRESENTED BY THE SECRETARY WERE RECEIVED AND FILED.

President LaMar requested staff to describe the nature of the proceedings, explain the purpose of the hearing, share information and identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures, and recruitment activities that may be hampering hiring.

PUBLIC HEARING (CONTINUED)

General Manager Cook reported that every month, an Employee Population and Retention Report is presented to the Finance and Personnel Committee. The report is being presented to the Board to meet the requirements of Assembly Bill 2561. AB 2561 requires that public agencies hold at least one public hearing per fiscal year to discuss vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts.

President LaMar asked the Secretary whether there have been any written communications. She said there were none.

President LaMar asked if there was anyone present who wished to address the Board to provide comments, or if there were any questions or comments from the members of the Board. Mr. Dick Reed from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers addressed the Board. He thanked the District for its continued transparency of reporting vacancies and recruitment efforts.

On MOTION by Withers, seconded by Reinhart, and unanimously carried by a roll call vote (4-0) Ferons, Reinhart, Withers and LaMar voting aye, THE HEARING WAS CLOSED, AND THE BOARD RECEIVED AND FILED THE REPORT.

PRESENTATION

LONG TERM CAPITAL FINANCING STRATEGY

Using a PowerPoint Presentation, Director of Financial Planning and Data Analytics Smithson presented the District's capital funding strategy, consolidated capital overview and associated bond funding strategy, the replacement fund policy alternatives, and next steps.

Director Ferons reported that this item was reviewed by the Finance and Personnel Committee, and the committee supports the staff strategy. The Long Term Capital Financing Strategy was RECEIVED AND FILED.

CONSENT CALENDAR

On MOTION by Reinhart, seconded by Withers, CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS SIX THROUGH TWELVE WERE APPROVED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE (4-0) FERONS, REINHART, WITHERS AND LAMAR VOTING AYE, AS FOLLOWS:

6. BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Recommendation: That the minutes of the February 9, 2026 Regular Board meeting be approved as presented.

7. JANUARY 2026 TREASURY REPORT

Recommendation: That the Board receive and file the Treasurer's Investment Summary Report, the Summary of Fixed and Variable Rate Debt, and the Disclosure Report of Reimbursements to Board members and staff, approve the January 2026 Summary of Payroll ACH payments in the total amount of \$2,805,550 and approve the January 2026 accounts payable disbursement summary of warrants 453087 through 453596, Workers' Compensation distributions, ACH payments, virtual card payments, wire transfers, payroll withholding distributions, and voided checks in the net total amount of \$52,126,139.

CONSENT CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

8. TECHNOLOGY DRIVE AND ADA RECYCLED WATER PIPELINE REPLACEMENT FINAL ACCEPTANCE

Recommendation: That the Board accept construction of Technology Drive and Ada Recycled Water Pipeline Replacement, authorize the General Manager to file a Notice of Completion, and authorize the payment of the retention 35 days after the date of recording the Notice of Completion for Project 12979.

9. RELOCATION OF 12-INCH DOMESTIC WATER PIPELINE AT I-5 SEGMENT 1 AND SAND CANYON AVENUE BUDGET INCREASE AND CONSTRUCTION AWARD

Recommendation: That the Board authorize a budget increase in the amount of \$125,000, from \$500,577 to \$625,577, for Project 13205, and authorize the General Manager to execute a construction contract with T. E. Roberts, Inc. in the amount of \$333,640 for the Relocation of 12-Inch Domestic Water Pipeline at I-5 Segment 1 and Sand Canyon Avenue, Project 13205.

10. IRVINE BUSINESS COMPLEX PHASE 3 APPURTENANCE RELOCATIONS BID REJECTION

Recommendation: That the Board reject the bid received from Ferreira Construction Co. and authorize staff to re-bid the Irvine Business Complex Phase 3 Appurtenance Relocations, Project 12827.

11. 2026 PROJECT MANUAL UPDATE

Recommendation: That the Board adopt a resolution by title, subject to non-substantive changes to the documents:

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 – 1

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT
ADOPTING REVISED STANDARD FORM
CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT DOCUMENTS AND
RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO. 2022-7

12. SANTIAGO CANYON AREA PROJECTS UPDATE

Recommendation: That the Board authorize a budget addition in the amount of \$2,700,000 for engineering design and construction of the Modjeska Harding Pipeline Improvements, Project 13525.

ACTION CALENDAR

Staff requested for item number 13 to be reviewed following Closed Session, and to proceed with the balance of the agenda.

14. SYPHON RESERVOIR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PERMITS AND BUDGET FOR OFF-SITE MITIGATION AREA

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Engineering Manager Moeder provided the Board with an overview of the Syphon Reservoir Improvement Project. He highlighted the completion of the access road improvements and the next steps.

Director of Water Resources Nye chronicled the Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement requirements and compensatory mitigation requirements to proceed with the Syphon Reservoir Improvement Project. She showcased the on-site and off-site mitigation areas and provided details regarding the security and funding of escrow accounts for each mitigation area.

Environmental Planning Analyst Le reported on the full compensatory mitigation for Crotch's bumble bee (a candidate special status species under the California Endangered Species Act), the conservation easement to be placed on the property, and the requirement of the District to fund an endowment for the preservation and long-term management of the conservation easement.

Following questions and comments from the Board, on MOTION by Ferons, seconded by Withers, and unanimously carried by a roll call vote (4-0) Ferons, Reinhart, Withers and LaMar voting aye, THE BOARD AUTHORIZED THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE LAKE AND STREAMBED ALTERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AND IRWD; AUTHORIZED THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE GRANT DEED AMENDMENTS AND ESCROW FUNDING AGREEMENTS IN AMOUNTS NOT TO EXCEED \$30 MILLION WITH THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE FOR ESTABLISHING ON-SITE AND OFF-SITE MITIGATION AREAS REQUIRED BY THE LAKE AND STREAMBED ALTERATION AGREEMENT; AUTHORIZED THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONSERVATION EASEMENT AND ASSOCIATED AGREEMENTS REQUIRED BY THE INCIDENTAL TAKE PERMIT, INCLUDING ESTABLISHING AN ENDOWMENT FOR LONG-TERM PRESERVATION AND MAINTENANCE OF IRWD'S IRVINE LAKE NORTH PROPERTY IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$2 MILLION; AND AUTHORIZED THE ADDITION OF PROJECT 13519 TO THE BUDGET IN THE AMOUNT OF \$20,000,000 FOR THE SYPHON RESERVOIR OFF-SITE MITIGATION AREA PROJECT.

15. PROPOSED 2026 DEBT REFUNDING AND REISSUANCE

General Manager Cook reported that staff, along with the District's municipal financial advisor Public Financial Management, has evaluated opportunities to refund IRWD's 2016 General Obligation Bonds and 2016 Certificates of Participation, similar to what was done in 2025 with the 2010 Build America Bonds.

Executive Director of Finance and Administration Adly reported that based on the current economic conditions, refunding both the 2016 General Obligation Bonds and 2016 Certificates of Participation could net the District a combined savings of \$27.4 million.

Director Ferons stated that this item was reviewed by the Finance and Personnel Committee, and that the Committee supports the staff recommendation.

ACTION CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

On MOTION by Ferons, seconded by Reinhart, and unanimously carried by a roll call vote (4-0) Ferons, Reinhart, Withers and LaMar voting aye, THE BOARD AUTHORIZED STAFF TO CAUSE THE ISSUANCE OF FIXED AND/OR VARIABLE RATE GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION IF MARKET CONDITIONS WILL GENERATE SAVINGS AND PROVIDE SUFFICIENT VALUE TO REFUND THE 2016 GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND 2016 CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION; CAUSE THE ISSUANCE OF FIXED AND / OR VARIABLE GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$228 MILLION TO REIMBURSE CERTAIN PAST CAPITAL EXPENDITURES; AND TO RETAIN UNDERWRITERS, BOND COUNSEL, AND DISCLOSURE COUNSEL AS NEEDED FOR THE ISSUANCE AND LETTERS OF CREDIT.

OTHER BUSINESS

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

General Manager Cook reported that the Groundwater Banking JPA has executed a Purchase and Sale Agreement for the South Enns Property, which is across Stockdale Highway from the IRWD's water banking property. Due diligence is now underway, along with discussions on how to best integrate the property into the Kern Fan Project.

RECEIVE ORAL UPDATE(S) FROM DISTRICT LIAISON(S) REGARDING COMMUNITIES WITHIN IRWD'S SERVICE AREA AND INTERESTS.

Mr. Newell complimented District staff by stating that agenda item 12 on the consent calendar was presented at the Engineering and Operations Committee and was well done.

DIRECTORS' COMMENTS AND MEETING REPORTS

Director Ferons reported on his attendance at the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary Board meeting; the Urban Water Institute 2026 Spring Conference in Indian Wells; and the monthly WACO meeting via teleconference.

Director Withers reported on his participation in the NWRI Board of Directors Meeting via teleconference, his attendance at the OCWA Monthly Industry Insight Meeting and Luncheon; the "Beyond Drought Monitoring: Assessing Water-Resource Vulnerability" Webinar; the Urban Water Institute 2026 Spring Conference in Indian Wells; the ISDOC Executive Committee meeting via teleconference; and the monthly WACO meeting via teleconference.

Director Reinhart reported on his attendance at the MWDOC Administration and Finance Committee meeting; the OCWD Water Issues Committee meeting; the OCWD Administration / Finance Issues Committee meeting; the MWDOC Board Meeting; the Urban Water Institute 2026 Spring Conference in Indian Wells; the MWDOC Planning and Operations Committee Meeting via teleconference; the MWDOC Workshop Board meeting with the MWD Directors via teleconference; the OCWD Communications and Legislative Liaison Committee meeting via teleconference; and the WACO Monthly meeting via teleconference.

President LaMar reported on his NOAA briefing and flight with Atmospheric River Crew from Portland; the Community Tour Preparation meeting with District staff; the California Water Commission meeting via teleconference; the OCBC Government Affairs Committee meeting via teleconference; the IRWD Community Tour at the Michelson Water Recycling Plant and San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary Board meeting; the Monthly Discussion of District Activities with

OTHER BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

the General Manager; the IRWD Advocacy meetings in Sacramento; the CFEE Abundance Forum in Sacramento; the CCEEB Water, Chemistry, & Waste Project meeting via teleconference; the California Chamber of Commerce Initiative Presentation to CCEEB via teleconference; and the WACO Monthly meeting via teleconference.

CLOSED SESSION

President LaMar convened the meeting into Closed Session at 6:27 p.m. with General Counsel Collins announcing the following items to be discussed:

- A. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS – Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6 to discuss employee compensation, salary schedules, and modifications to the District’s compensation structure.

Agency Designated Representatives: Paul Cook, General Manager, and
Tiffany Mitcham, Director of Human Resources

Employee Groups: International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
(AFL-CIO) Local #47 for the General Unit and the Non-Exempt
Supervisor Unit

- B. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS – Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6 to discuss employee compensation, salary schedules, and modifications to the District’s compensation structure.

Agency Designated Representatives: Paul Cook, General Manager, and
Tiffany Mitcham, Director of Human Resources

Employee Group: Managers, Supervisors and Confidential Employees

OPEN SESSION

Following the Closed Session, the meeting was reconvened in Open Session with Directors Ferons, Reinhart, Withers, and President LaMar present. General Counsel Collins announced that there was no action to report as specified under the Ralph M. Brown Act.

ACTION CALENDAR

13. IRWD TRIENNIAL SALARY SURVEY RESULTS, COMPENSATION STRUCTURE REDESIGN, STEP DIFFERENTIAL DETERMINATION, MERIT INCREASE FRAMEWORK, AND PROMOTIONAL INCREASE GUIDELINES

General Manger Cook introduced the District’s Triennial Salary Survey, and complimented staff and Ralph Andersen & Associates for conducting a comprehensive salary survey, ensuring the salary range assignments are internally equitable and competitive with the employment markets.

Director of Human Resources Mitcham reported on the findings of the survey and staff recommendation of a 4% step differential.

Director Ferons reported that this item was thoroughly reviewed by both the Finance and Personnel Committee and the Board and made a motion supporting the staff recommendation.

Prior to taking a vote, General Manager Cook requested to read into the record, pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(c)(3), prior to taking final action on changes to salary

ACTION CALENDAR (CONTINUED)

schedules that include salary ranges for local agency executives, an oral summary of the recommended action before the Board under Item 13 is required.

He said the recommended action for the Board's consideration is adoption of a resolution changing the District's Schedule of Positions and Salary Rate Ranges for all positions, superseding resolution No. 2025-12; approving the District transitioning to a new step-based compensation structure with the step differential at 4 %; and approving the revised merit increase framework and standardized promotional increase guidelines.

Mr. Dick Reed from the International Brother of Electrical Works then requested to address the Board. He stated that the Irvine Ranch Water District is an exceptional agency and thanked the Board for recognizing the need to retain a high caliber of employees.

On MOTION by Ferons, seconded by Withers, and unanimously carried by a roll call vote (4-0) Ferons, Reinhart, Withers and LaMar voting aye, THE BOARD RECEIVED AND APPROVED THE RESULTS OF THE TRIENNIAL SALARY SURVEY, WHICH INCLUDE THE SALARY GRADE CHANGES RECOMMENDED; APPROVED THE TRANSITION FROM THE CURRENT SALARY RANGE STRUCTURE TO A STEP-BASED COMPENSATION STRUCTURE; DETERMINED A 4% STEP DIFFERENTIAL; APPROVED THE REVISED MERIT INCREASE FRAMEWORK TIED TO PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS; APPROVED THE STANDARDIZED PROMOTIONAL INCREASE GUIDELINES; AND ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION BY TITLE:

RESOLUTION NO. 2026 – 2

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT ADOPTING REVISED SCHEDULES OF POSITIONS AND SALARY RATE RANGES FOR ALL CLASSIFICATIONS AND SUPERSEDING RESOLUTION NO. 2025-15

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:25 p.m., President LaMar adjourned the Board meeting.

APPROVED and SIGNED this 13th day of April 2026.

President, IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT

District Secretary,
IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Claire Hervey Collins, General Counsel
Hanson Bridgett LLP