

**Record of the Minutes of the
Beaumont Basin Committee Meeting of the
Beaumont Basin Watermaster
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, February 7, 2024**

Meeting Location:

Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
560 Magnolia Ave., Beaumont, CA 92223

I. Call to Order

Chair Art Vela called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m.

II. Roll Call

<i>City of Banning</i>	<i>Art Vela</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>City of Beaumont</i>	<i>Robert Vestal</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District</i>	<i>Dan Jagers</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>South Mesa Water Company</i>	<i>David Armstrong</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>Yucaipa Valley Water District</i>	<i>Joseph Zoba</i>	<i>Present</i>

Hanibal Blandon and Thomas Harder were present as engineers for the Beaumont Basin Watermaster (BBWM).

Thierry Montoya was present as BBWM legal counsel.

Steve Stuart of Dudek was present as BBWM administrator.

Members of the public who registered and / or attended:

Thaxton Van Belle, City of Beaumont
Allison Edmisten, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Joyce McIntire, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Mike Kostelecky, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Erin Anton, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Jennifer Ares, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Madeline Blua, Yucaipa Valley Water District
Lance Eckhart, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
Kevin Walton, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
Matt Howard, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
Emmett Campbell, San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
Brittany Lim, South Mesa Water Company
John Covington, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Daniel Slawson, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
James Bean, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Mark Swanson, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Robert Rasha, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Lynda Kerney, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Kevin Lee

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Public Comments: None.

V. Consent Calendar

A. Meeting Minutes

- a. December 6, 2023 Regular Meeting
- b. January 10, 2024 Special Meeting

B. Status Report on Water Level Monitoring throughout the Beaumont Basin through January 22, 2024

C. A Comparison of Production Rights versus Production in Calendar Year 2023

It was moved by Member Zoba and seconded by Member Armstrong to approve Consent Calendar items A, B and C.

AYES:	Armstrong, Jagers, Vela, Vestal, Zoba
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	None
STATUS:	Motion Approved

VI. Reports

- A. Report from Engineering Consultant – Hannibal Blandon, ALDA Engineering
Mr. Blandon reported a potential metering problem with a well at the Tukwet golf course.
- B. Report from Hydrogeological Consultant – Thomas Harder, Thomas Harder & Co.
Mr. Harder advised that the report on compliance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was almost complete.
- C. Report from Administrative Consultant – Steve Stuart, Dudek
Mr. Stuart reported that information is still being sought on well survey results. Dudek will be addressing the Topics for Future Discussion one by one.
- D. Report from Legal Counsel – Thierry Montoya - Frost, Brown, Todd
Mr. Montoya reported that he has completed a motion to address the vacancy for the City of Beaumont with the appointment of member Dustin Christensen. The hearing date is 45 days out.

VII. Discussion Items

- A. Reorganization of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster Committee - Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer

Recommendation: Either reaffirm the existing officers or conduct nominations for the appointment of new officers of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster

It was moved by Member Jagers and seconded by Member Zoba to reaffirm the current slate of officers for 2024:

Chairperson	Art Vela	City of Banning
Vice Chair	David Armstrong	South Mesa Water Company
Secretary	Dan Jagers	Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District
Treasurer	Joseph Zoba	Yucaipa Valley Water District

and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Armstrong, Jagers, Vela, Vestal, Zoba
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None
STATUS: Motion Approved

- B. Consideration to Retain Dudek to Provide Professional Services to Review and Update the Rules and Regulations of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster

Recommendation: That the Watermaster Committee contract with Dudek for Services to Review and Update the Rules and Regulations of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster for a sum of \$15,000 and send invoices to each Watermaster Committee member for 20% of the approved amount

Member Jagers recalled a brief discussion at the last meeting and the recommendation of legal counsel to revise and modernize the Rules & Regulations.

Mr. Stuart concurred and said current sections need update, and new sections are needed. He recommended a full review. Chair Vela said he would like to see Dudek’s list of recommendations.

Member Jagers reminded about the obligation to send draft rules to the overlies and provide information to all parties in the judgment.

It was moved by Member Jaggars and seconded by Member Zoba to contract with Dudek for Services to Review and Update the Rules and Regulations of the Beaumont Basin Watermaster for a sum of \$15,000 and send invoices to each Watermaster Committee member for 20% of the approved amount and approved by the following vote:

AYES:	Armstrong, Jaggars, Vela, Vestal, Zoba
NOES:	None
ABSTAIN:	None
ABSENT:	None
STATUS:	Motion Approved

C. Potential Incorporation of a Process and Categorization of Water Production for the Annual Report

Recommendation: That the Watermaster Committee consider engaging Dudek to revise the Rules and Regulations to include a process and categorization of Water Production for use in the annual reports

Mr. Stuart presented the categories of water production and posited that there does not appear to be a benefit to assigning categories for accounting for the "buckets" of water.

Member Zoba agreed and suggested it would be helpful to include it in the Annual Report. Chair Vela said he was uncertain of any benefit to assigning categories, as it is still a net zero. It may lead to unintended consequences, he noted.

Member Jaggars pointed out additional sources of water which are tracked and help understand the health of the Basin. In the long term, the information is modeled in but seeing this can provide detail on TDS which helps visualize what is happening in the Basin.

Member Zoba added that the detailed data tells the story of what is happening in the Basin and provides transparency.

Chair Vela suggested that if the New Yield items are already included in the policy, then leave them in the tables, but if not then leave them out pending further discussion by the Committee. Mr. Stuart advised that it is defined in the Judgment and is part of the equation for the Appropriators' production rights, so plays a role in comparing production vs. production rights. Member Jaggars suggested a footnote to identify new sources examples that are not conclusively limiting.

Member Armstrong said he was apprehensive about how far this may go. Mr. Stuart assured these are the parameters / characteristics of water usage that go into calculating the value to compare against annual production. Basically, there is only one bucket and that is the storage account, and there is really no benefit in categorizing.

Creating a policy to classify might be a slippery slope, Chair Vela stated. Member Armstrong said he would hate to see a negative effect on those who have planned ahead and built up their storage accounts.

Mr. Blandon pointed out that all information presented here is already represented in the annual report. He suggested defining the annual appropriator production right and incorporating it into Table 3-8 of the annual report. Member Zoba concurred with adding to the annual report, along with a narrative to address the concerns.

Zoba pointed to the Judgment language on the use of temporary surplus, and suggested addressing in the annual report how it is being accounted for. A possible unintended consequence may be that the value of the water is equal to the current value of the SGPWA purchase price; however, this water in storage is more valuable than State Project Water, he suggested.

Member Jagers suggested each agency examine and recommended to table this to the next meeting. Member Zoba suggested directing consultants to include it in the draft annual report, as it can be removed if desired.

Mr. Blandon said he will work with Mr. Stuart to revise tables and present a draft at the March meeting. Chair Vela said he would like to look at it before deciding to include it in the annual report.

There is also a recommendation to revise the Rules and Regulations to accomplish this, which could deal with some of the concerns raised, Chair Vela said.

Member Jagers discussed the impacts of conservation mandates.

D. Update on the Safe Yield Reset of the Beaumont Basin

Recommendation: No recommendation

Mr. Harder reviewed the requirement for redetermination of the safe yield and provided history. He discussed calibration of the model, assumptions, and forecasts, and advised that the preliminary recommendation is 7,000 to 7,100 acre-feet for the next 10 years.

Mr. Harder pointed out that almost all overlier wells are on the west side of the Basin, and most recharge is occurring on the east side. He questioned what the safe yield of the east or west might be and proposed division of the Basin at the central Beaumont Plains fault.

Member Zoba said he agreed with the analysis, stating that 7,100 af is a 6 percent increase and seems reasonable; Chair Vela concurred.

In response to Chair Vela and Member Vestal, Mr. Harder provided detail on the projections based on the projected assumptions.

Member Jagers pointed out the use of a 97 percent State Water Project allocation. Mr. Harder said the source of that data was the historical period from 2003 onward. Member Jagers pointed to other sources in the SGPWA portfolio, and Mr. Harder said they were either not included or were buried in the data.

Member Jagers noted that the effects of the Making Conservation a Way of Life regulations: the Safe Yield increases with pumping. He discussed Basin management and strategies and suggested reaching out to overlies for an opportunity to comment.

Mr. Campbell noted there is a 16,000 af deficit from the last 10 years based on the Safe Yield calculation. He pointed out that there has been a dry period, yet the Safe Yield is going up. All previous models may be less accurate, Member Jagers noted and asked if there was a level of confidence in the reliability of the current model. Mr. Harder discussed the model.

Mr. Eckhart added some factors for consideration: there is a new groundwater sustainability agency on the east side of the Basin that depends on the underflow component, and the water portfolio has expanded and there will continue to be an active pushing of water into the east side of the Basin. Collaboration will be required to hold onto water the SGPWA is actively trying to harvest and store.

Modeling is complete, and it is now a matter of determining a number, Mr. Harder stated, and reiterated the recommendation. Member Jagers reiterated the recommendation of contacting the overlies. Mr. Harder said a Technical Memo was being prepared and would be sent out as a draft with the 7,100 af safe yield.

E. Basin Management Scenarios

Recommendation: No recommendation.

In response to a question from Member Zoba about estimates of the leakage from the Basin toward Cabazon, Mr. Harder said there is a loss paper dated 2017 but does not include a specific number. Chair Vela pointed out the development of a policy or plan to calculate losses is listed in Topics for Future Meetings.

Mr. Harder reminded about discussion about significant and unreasonable Basin conditions and provided potential examples. The goal would be to establish a basis for identifying significant and unreasonable conditions, and provide a planning tool to avoid those. He said he would send scenarios to the Committee members to provide input.

Member Jaggars noted that other agencies have storage accounts in the Basin and should likely be included.

Mr. Harder further detailed potential scenarios. Following the process of identifying significant and unreasonable Basin conditions, then projects and management actions would be identified to help stay out of that condition. At the next meeting, he will present a scope and cost to run the scenarios.

At the request of Mr. Harder, the members discussed the potential of establishing Basin management areas. He reminded that the original vision was to put together a plan, and this model and these analyses would inform the plan. Chair Vela concurred, adding that the idea was to determine how to better manage the Basin as a whole, but it is two separate systems.

After substantive discussion, Member Zoba recommended pumping the brakes on this discussion and taking a fresh look at the next workshop. Chair Vela agreed on delaying the modeling until it is determined where this is to go.

F. Update on Development of Data Management System

Recommendation: No recommendation.

Chair Vela tabled this item to the March 6, 2024 meeting.

VIII. Topics for Future Meetings

	Item	Date Listed
A	Development of a Recycled Water Policy	3/27/2019
B	Development of a return flow accounting policy	3/27/2019
C	Development of a methodology and policy to account for groundwater storage losses in the basin / groundwater management	3/27/2019
D	Procurement Policy including thresholds for RFP process	8/17/2021
E	Incidental discharge	10/6/2021
F	Monitoring of future west side well sites and methodologies, and potential collaboration with USGS	10/5/2022
G	Discussion on what to do when an Appropriator goes negative	10/4/2023 and 11/1/2023

IX. Comments from the Watermaster Committee Members:

Member Jagers noted there was good dialogue today, and he looks forward to further sophistication in understanding and management of the Basin.

X. Announcements

2024 Meeting Dates:

Wednesday, March 6 at 11 a.m.	Special Meeting
Wednesday, April 3 at 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting
Wednesday, June 5 at 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting
Wednesday, August 7 at 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting
Wednesday, October 2 at 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting
Wednesday, December 4 at 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting

XI. Adjournment

Vice Chair Armstrong adjourned the meeting at 1:09 p.m.

Attest:

Daniel Jagers, Secretary
Beaumont Basin Watermaster