

**Record of the Minutes of the  
Beaumont Basin Committee Meeting of the  
Beaumont Basin Watermaster  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, August 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 11:00 a.m.*

**II. Roll Call**

<i>City of Banning</i>	<i>Art Vela</i>	<i>Present</i>
<i>City of Beaumont</i>	<i>Dustin Christensen</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 was present as engineer for the Beaumont Basin Watermaster (BBWM).*

*Thomas Harder was present as hydrogeologist for 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:*

*Brittany Lim, South Mesa Water Company  
Joyce McIntire, Yucaipa Valley Water District  
Brett Granlund, Yucaipa Valley Water District  
Jennifer Ares, Yucaipa Valley Water District  
Lance Eckhart, San Geronio Pass Water Agency  
Kevin Walton, San Geronio Pass Water Agency  
Emmett Campbell, San Geronio Pass Water Agency  
Mark Swanson, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District  
Robert Rasha, Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District  
Mr. Rose*

**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

**IV. Public Comments:** None.

**V. Consent Calendar**

A. Meeting Minutes

- a. June 5, 2024 Regular Meeting
- b. July 10, 2024 Special Meeting

- B. Status Report on Water Level Monitoring throughout the Beaumont Basin through July 23, 2024
- C. A Comparison of Production Rights versus Production through June 2024

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

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

## **VI. Reports**

- A. Report from Engineering Consultant – Hannibal Blandon, ALDA Engineering  
*No report.*
- B. Report from Hydrogeological Consultant – Thomas Harder  
*No report.*
- C. Report from Administrative Consultant – Steve Stuart, Dudek – *Mr. Stuart advised that feedback is being sought from Committee members on use of the Beaumont Basin Data Management System (DMS). Matt Palavido has provided instructions on uploading data to the system.*
- D. Report from Legal Counsel – Thierry Montoya – Frost, Brown, Todd  
*No report.*

## **VII. Discussion Items**

- A. Update on Safe Yield Redetermination Technical Report (tabled from 7/10/2024 meeting)

Recommendation: For information and discussion.

*Tom Harder of Thomas Harder & Co. reminded that a draft Technical Memorandum / report was submitted for review last May summarizing the updated safe yield. Forty-one comments were received from Dudek and all were addressed, most have been incorporated into the draft final report in the agenda packet. Those not addressed are noted in the comment letter, and supporting information was provided to address those comments that were not incorporated into the report. He said his understanding was that the draft final report would also be submitted to the overlies for review.*

*Mr. Harder reminded the Committee of the request to look at how the new safe yield of 7,100 acre-feet per year for the next 10-year period would be proportioned in terms of allocation, and presented a table showing Overlying Parties Production Rights.*

*There is a question about the when the Safe Yield calculation time periods are applicable, Harder noted, and asked about submittal of the draft report to the overlayers. Mr. Jagers said he would work to get a package together to go out Monday, August 12.*

**B. Update on Revising the BBWM Rules and Regulations**  
Recommendation: For discussion purposes only

- *Section 2.13 Interveners*

*Steve Stuart reminded the Committee about discussion at the June 5 meeting and the recommendation to strike Section 2.13 Interventions and to examine the last sentence. Member Zoba noted that interveners are covered in the Judgment and would be addressed by a legal document filed with the Court, not with the Watermaster. Following recommendation from Legal Counsel Montoya of not having procedures relative to interveners, as the Watermaster cannot legally dictate that process, it was decided to strike Section 2.13 from the Rules and Regulations.*

- *Section 4.3 Losses or Spills from the Basin*

*Mr. Stuart pointed to the last sentence and asked about loss of supplemental recharge water loss prior to loss of native groundwater. He reminded that it was agreed that Basin losses and flow needed to be better understood. He noted the last sentence will remain.*

*Mr. Jagers added that the original overlayer allocation considered an opportunity without replenishment for the first 10 years to pump a hole in the Basin and create an opportunity for storage. He noted that BCVWD has been balancing through conjunctive use, but which water was pumped first could become muddied by the nuances of extraction vs. replenishment. He suggested finding a solution that would balance the health of the Basin with replenishment and assuring water for the future. He discussed water flow and suggested further discussion on Basin losses.*

*Chair Vela wondered why the designation of which water was lost first was important, and if it impacted the Safe Yield calculation. Mr. Stuart said it did not; the question is about the physical movement of water through the Basin and the effects when working through a policy on accounting for Basin losses. Mr. Jagers added that there was thought about storage in the Basin and which entity might lose water first, making sure that the players of Basin are not adversely affected.*

- *Definition of "stored water"*

*Mr. Stuart reminded about the suggestion to include new yield water in the definition and said it will be revised accordingly.°*

- *Revision of Watermaster forms*

*Mr. Stuart indicated he sent out recommended revisions on June 19 and requested feedback.*

- *Timeline*

*Mr. Stuart indicated that the goal was to have a revised document for review and approval by the end of the year. This is a document that will be constantly reviewed and revised, but this is the first deep dive that has been taken in a number of years, he noted. He requested feedback.*

*In response to Chair Vela regarding Section 6.4.2, Mr. Stuart explained it is not creating a new process, it is a revision of a form related to an application for extraction for the purpose of clarity.*

*San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency General Manager Lance Eckhart commented on carefully working through the basin losses item, pointing to the pumping of supplemental water, previous years' unused operating safe yield, and temporary surplus water. He cautioned about economically disincentivizing from importing water and retaining a few years' supply that can be referenced in Urban Water Management Plans and keeps the Basin overall healthy.*

*Eckhart discussed Basin optimization, noting that stable water levels are being seen and those indicate the water is hanging around. He recommended performing an analysis of how long water remains in the Basin, similar to what has been done for a neighboring basin.*

*Member Jagers added that Basin optimization includes not only conjunctive use but mechanical activities such as moving wells and siting recharge facilities in other areas. He noted proximity of BCVWD facilities that could provide water without pumping to YVWD.*

C. Revisions to the **2013** Annual Report and Revisions to the **2023** Consolidated Annual Report and Engineering Report

Recommendation: Approve the Revisions to the Final 2023 Consolidated Annual and Engineering Report or Delay Finalizing the Report until the Beaumont Basin Safe Yield for the 2023-32 Period is Approved and a Corresponding Resolution is Adopted

*Hannibal Blandon pointed out that the 10-year periods of the Safe Yield redetermination are inconsistent with the annual reports since 2013. Based on Section VI, Article 5Y of the Judgment, the Safe Yield shall be redetermined at least every 10 years beginning 10 years after the date of entry of the judgment (February 2004). He explained that the first redetermination should have been applicable in 2014, but was adopted with Resolution 2015-01 for the period 2013 to 2022, which does not match the calculations in the annual report and resulted in a discrepancy of 1,950 acre-feet. He recommended revisions to the 2023 annual report adopted in June 2024 to be consistent with the Safe Yield analysis conducted in 2013, or delay finalizing the report until the 2023-2032 Safe Yield is adopted. He also recommended amendment of Resolution 2015-01 to render the previous annual reports correct regarding unused overlying water.*

*Mr. Blandon responded to questions from Member Zoba, noting that the 2023 annual report could be corrected in the 2024 report to reflect the Safe Yield of 7,100 af. Zoba posited that it may not be possible to be retroactive, as what is contained in an annual report occurs in that year. He suggested there is compliance with the judgment which says Safe Yield redetermination at least every 10 years but is silent about the application of the redetermined Safe Yield. He recommended stating in the next resolution the effective date of the new Safe Yield.*

*Mr. Blandon responded to questions from Member Jagers, who concurred with some statements from Member Zoba. Legal Counsel Montoya stated the Watermaster has been acting consistent with its obligations under the judgment and within its discretion. Going back in time can be done, but there has been reasonable reliance on the information, he said. It can be corrected going forward, which is within the tenor, spirit, and restrictors of the judgment, and is consistent with the Watermaster's discretion, he advised.*

*Chair Vela emphasized consistency with the judgment and said he would rather correct in the upcoming year rather than muddy the record. He agreed with the identification of an implementation period in the resolution adopting the new safe yield.*

*Mr. Blandon concurred that the judgment is silent on applicability. He concluded, and Mr. Montoya stated, that the 2023 Annual Report will stand as approved.*

D. Discussion on Basin Losses (tabled from 7/10/2024 meeting)  
Recommendation: for information and discussion

*Mr. Harder referred to earlier discussion at this meeting and at the June meeting and reminded that Basin losses have been evaluated in the past,*

*and establishing a policy to address those losses had been considered. It has been recommended that those losses be accounted for, as it is a part of the water balance.*

*He reminded about the different hydrogeologic conditions on the east side and west side of the Basin and differences in change in storage and other aspects. He recommended retaining the information as a reference and later considering a formal management area.*

*Natural Basin losses are accounted for in the Safe Yield estimates but imported (owned) water stored in the Basin is not, Harder continued. He reviewed the model information and discussed scenarios. He recommended the technical team revisit the 2018 basin loss analysis to see how it dovetails with the model analysis stress test and revise the scope of work to include a loss analysis policy for consideration and make recommendations.*

*Member Zoba supported the suggestion but added that he was uncertain that the temporary surplus existed for SMWC and YVWD in the westerly portion of the Basin. How would this have been done right from the start, and how does it move forward, he asked.*

*Member Jagers acknowledged the imbalance in Basin storage, and advocated a consistent approach to management with all opportunities on the table and across boundaries. The health of the basin is the most important thing, and agencies must work together more and more as water supply is subject to whiplash hydrology, he stated.*

*Member Armstrong emphasized it is an adjudicated Basin with storage accounts, and advised caution amid talk of Sustainable Groundwater Management Act types of activities.*

*Chair Vela acknowledged this is a complicated analysis and there are solutions. He pointed to variables and differences in agencies' production activities. It is the right thing to do to develop the loss policy, he stated.*

*In response to a question from Jagers, Harder indicated there are currently no undesirable results in the Basin and the groundwater levels are relatively stable in most areas. The model is a planning tool for information and asking "what if," he noted.*

*Jagers emphasized reasonable balance in the Basin, and understanding where weaknesses are in order for the producers and overlayers to be able to support them. He offered examples of management. Harder concurred and emphasized reasonable, plausible, and not unrealistic.*

*Mr. Eckhart pointed out the model will become more sophisticated with time. He advised caution in making decisions with some of these tools. He noted in another area that focus was placed on groundwater monitoring, and advised that the body of knowledge can change over time.*

*Eckhart pointed out that many overliers are on the west side of the Basin, and unused production is pumped on the west and east. There is potential to balance the basin by doing just a few things such as looking at the overliers pumping, or moving water from the mound area by partnering with corresponding agencies. He suggested doing things that encourage bringing water in on a consistent basis to get through drought periods and examining whether recharge water is needed if the model shows it is getting squeezed out. He suggested that SGPWA would like to participate in some of the BBWM workshops to help carefully and thoughtfully work through some of the technical issues.*

*Mr. Rose offered public comment. He cautioned about use of modeling to establish policy and suggested assuring that no policy would be implemented until the community verifies the information and all the questions of all participants are answered. He encouraged accountability for losses and over purchasing / over expenditures, and said fiduciary penalties should never occur to those who would be picking up the slack for the inefficiencies of a governing body. He commented on overpaying for technology with no real outcome.*

E. Discussion on Evaluating Future Hydrogeologic Scenarios Using the Model (tabled from 7/10/2024 meeting)

Recommendation: None.

*Mr. Harder discussed management of the basin to avoid undesirable outcomes and reminded about the scope and cost to provide straw man scenarios that stress test the Basin. The purpose would be to use the groundwater flow model to develop a plausible range of hydrogeological conditions to stress the Basin and determine environmental results. The goal would be to establish a basis for identifying significant and unreasonable conditions that would be considered undesirable results. This would be a planning tool for future projects and management actions such as those suggested by Mr. Eckhart.*

*Mr. Harder described the proposed scope of work with recommended incorporation of the loss analysis.*

*Member Zoba clarified the scope of work in that this will be combined with the Basin Losses scope of work in one proposal, and Member Jagers discussed scenarios and management actions for consideration. Chair Vela*

*pointed to recycled water production and potential for supplemental extraction. Mr. Harder noted these are ways to optimize the basin, and the consultants had not envisioned inclusion, but later evaluating varying ways of managing. He noted this work can be included if desired; Jagers spoke in favor of including some elementary concepts.*

*Chair Vela commented on regional management strategy and agencies working together as key. He suggested creating different scenarios later as policy decisions change based on the regional approach. Mr. Eckhart recommended fine tuning the monitoring program and data wrap up before doing any modeling runs.*

*Eckhart suggested consideration of period of drought and local hydrology in addition to imported water delivery capability. He encouraged the current management actions and noted those along with a good monitoring program is where the Watermaster needs to be. He offered assistance and data from the SGPWA.*

*Director Kevin Walton of the SGPWA expressed concern that this meeting appears to show the consultants are the "tail wagging the dog." He said he hoped the Committee is looking at it from the perspective of the public who is paying for this work, and suggested spending money wisely.*

*Member Zoba assured that the Committee is frugal and cost effective. It is easy to do only the reports required by the judgment, but the Committee is turning the corner by looking at managing future water supply and the Basin. The Committee looks at the consultant work and makes sure that value is obtained. With the State Water Project reliability at 44 percent, there are other places to look where money is being spent on the SWP with no return to this area.*

*Member Armstrong concurred, noting there is a lot of information already, and his goal is to assure SMWC funds are being spent wisely. Although he sometimes feels the action is not going in the right direction, the BBWM is doing the right thing and collaboration is important, but to the Committee must be careful about expenditures of the agencies' money.*

*Jagers reminded that the members had been siloed, but things are getting better. He said he was encouraged by the outlooks and action, and does not feel it is high cost. At the end of the day, all want the community to have an assured water supply over time and it is important to memorialize the Committee's discussions and actions to assure the next members have a roadmap.*

*Chair Vela agreed it is important to parcel out the things that the BBWM is required to do (annual report) and those that the Committee is electing to*

*do (modeling and analysis) in order to have the right information to make data-driven decisions. The costs are split among the members, he added.*

**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
H	Discussion on Policy to Document and Account for Emergency Potable Water Transfers from Appropriator to Overlying Party (Tabled from 4/17/24 meeting)	4/17/2024

**IX. Comments from the Watermaster Committee Members:** None.

**X. Announcements**

2024 Meeting Dates:

Wednesday, September 4 at 11 a.m.	Special Meeting
Wednesday, October 2 at 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting
Wednesday, December 4 at 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting

**XI. Adjournment**

*Chair Vela adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m.*

Attest:



Daniel Jagers, Secretary  
Beaumont Basin Watermaster