

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

March 09, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Indian Wells Valley Water District was called to order by President Kicinski at 4:30 p.m. in the Board of Directors Hearing Room, 500 West Ridgecrest Boulevard, Ridgecrest, California. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mallory Boyd. **PLEDGE**

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** President Ronald R. Kicinski  
Vice President David C.H. Saint-Amand  
Director Charles D. Griffin  
Director Stan G. Rajtora  
Director Mallory J. Boyd **ROLL CALL**

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:** None.

**STAFF PRESENT:** George Croll, General Manager  
Jim Worth, Attorney  
Renée Morquecho, Chief Engineer  
Tyrell Staheli, Chief Financial Officer  
John Svika, Operations Manager  
Isabel Tejada, Recording Secretary

**AGENDA DECLARATION**  
Recording Secretary, Isabel Tejada, reported that the agenda for today's Regular Board Meeting was posted on Thursday, March 5, 2026. **AGENDA DECLARATION**

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION**  
Director Griffin declared he would be removing himself from closed session regarding Item E **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION**  
None. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

With no further Board or Public comments, President Kicinski recessed the meeting and adjourned to Closed Session at 4:32 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**  
The meeting was reconvened in Closed Session at 4:35 p.m. **CLOSED SESSION**

Closed Session was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened to Open Session at 6:06 p.m.

No action was taken which would require disclosure under the Brown Act.

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

The Board heard public comment from Judie Decker, Mike Neel, Evan Zurn, Mike Sinnott, Rene Westa-Lusk, and Arianna Nava.

**PUBLIC  
COMMENTS**

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

MOTION: was made by Vice President Saint-Amand and seconded by Director Griffin approving the Minutes of the February 09, 2026, Regular Board Meeting, February 24, 2026, Special Board Meeting, and Payment of Accounts Payable totaling \$738,887.34. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Griffin, Kicinski, Rajtora, Boyd. Nays: None. Absent: Saint-Amand.)

**CONSENT  
CALENDAR**

**PLANT & EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE**

The District is working with the IWVGA on consolidating the Stark Street Mutual water system. Renee Morquecho explained a part of the process is complying with CEQA. Certain projects can be exempt from CEQA, many of the District's pipeline projects qualify for exemption. Staff asked the committee for authorization to file Notice of Exemption, the committee recommends the Board approve the authorization.

**NOTICE OF  
EXEMPTION**

MOTION: was made by Director Boyd and seconded by Vice President Saint-Amand authorizing staff to file Notice of Exemption. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Griffin, Kicinski, Rajtora, Saint-Amand, Boyd. Nays: None. Absent: None.)

The District purchased a gooseneck trailer in December for projects, last month there were issues with the truck used to haul the trailer. Ty Staheli explained repairs to the truck would cost about \$30,000 it is a 2008 F450 and the cost would outweigh the benefit. Currently the District has the opportunity to purchase new trucks without applying the electric vehicle mandate. Mr. Staheli reported the District would be reallocating funds that were budgeted for other projects to cover the costs of the trucks. The District received three bids with the lowest being Jim Charlton Ford for right under \$160,000. Staff is asking Board approval to purchase F350 Crew Cab and a F350 Regular Cab.

**TRUCK  
PURCHASE**

The Board heard public comment from Judy Decker.

MOTION: was made by Director Rajtora and seconded by Director Griffin authorizing the purchase of two trucks. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Griffin, Kicinski, Rajtora, Saint-Amand, Boyd. Nays: None. Absent: None.)

George Croll presented a list of projects that staff identified as priority, staff is look for Board authorization to seek grant funding to complete these projects.

**GRANT FUNDING**

The Board heard public comment from Mike Neel.

MOTION: was made by Vice President Saint-Amand and seconded by Director Boyd authorizing staff to seek grant funding. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Griffin, Kicinski, Rajtora, Saint-Amand, Boyd. Nays: None. Absent: None.)

**COMPREHENSIVE ADJUDICATION**

The Safe Yield Trial is still set for June 1. Jim Worth reported the expert depositions should conclude in the next week.

The Board heard public comment from Mike Sinnott, Renee Westa-Lusk and Mike Neel.

**COMPREHENSIVE  
ADJUDICATION**

**INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (IWVGA)**

Director Boyd attended the last meeting in place of Director Saint-Amand, he announced the nomination of April Keigwin as the new General Manager of the GA. The Board discussed items on the Agenda for the upcoming meeting on March 11, 2026.

**IWVGA**

President Kicinski presented a list of questions for Director Saint-Amand to ask the IWVGA.

The Board heard public comment from Judy Decker, Mike Neel and Mike Sinnott.

**General Manager Update**

George Croll asked to move up item E.7 Review of Connection Fee Policy, the Board agreed. Renee Morquecho explained that the Sales and Service manual currently has connection fee policies that specifically exempt certain Assessment Districts and other outdated agreements from paying some connection fees. The Board had follow up questions and discussions about assessment districts. Director Rajtora requested more information to review before further discussion is had.

**GENERAL  
MANAGER  
UPDATE**

Renee Morquecho explained staff would like ADU's (Accessory Dwelling Units) to have their own meters however there are a lot of complex regulations on what fees can be charged for ADU's which is why staff would like Legal to review and update the policy. The Board agreed they would like to review the potential policy.

Mr. Croll highlighted and congratulated some employees who are taking college courses. The Board agreed to add the District's name to a list of Water Districts supporting AB 35 which is a bill that would simplify the process of receiving Proposition 4 funding. Mr. Croll announced the District will be participating in two public outreach events this month; Conservation in the IWV and the Home and Leisure Show.

George Croll presented a report sent by the state that shows the District is in compliance with the objectives set by Conservation as a Way of Life until 2040.

The Board heard public comment from Evan Zurn and Mike Neel.

**Engineering Update**

Water Systems Consolidations:

- o Inyokern CSD: The State will be planning the next public meeting, no official update at this time.
- o Dune 3: Mr. Worth sent the final legal agreement to the owner, the District is still waiting to hear back from him to finalize and sign the agreement. Mrs. Morquecho reported the District is still waiting on approval from the State Water Resources Control Board to proceed with bidding.

**ENGINEERING  
UPDATE**

- o Stark Street: Once contractor is on board for Dune 3 the plan is to change order the contract to cover the work needed. The work for Stark Street will be covered by the GA grant. Staff and Legal are working with LAFCO to encompass this area in the District's boundaries. Jim Worth is still reviewing the Reimbursement Agreement that was approved last month, he is working on language that ensures the District is not responsible for finishing work by a certain date.
- o Rademacher Way: The GA has hired a third party to get the final easements needed for the project. The Division of Drinking Water gave the District and official letter approving plans for Phase 2.
- o Hometown Water Association: The District is waiting for approval on the request to extend the beginning and end date of the project.

Renée Morquecho presented some photos of the work being done on Brady Street. The crew is going to finish up the work on the pipeline for this year, they will be flushing and disinfecting the line to get it back in service. Mrs. Morquecho gave praise to the construction crew and the construction inspector for a job well done. **BRADY STREET**

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk.

#### **Financial Update**

Ty Staheli reported the District is behind on consumption this year compared to last. Mr. Staheli gave an update on Solar Site security; all cameras are up and functioning. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Mr. Staheli reported year-to-date actual revenue of just over \$12 million which is down about \$500,000 which is due to grant reimbursements. Expenditures to date are just over \$11.6 million which is \$1.1 million below budget. The District has paid \$3.7 million in extraction fees and \$15,803,170 in replenishment fee. Mr. Staheli also reported the bond rating company S&P did update the District's rating from A+ with stable outlook to A+ with negative outlook due to concern that the District will have to purchase water in the future.

Staff provided an update on meter installations; delinquent account turn offs and WaterSmart alerts.

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk.

#### **Operations Update**

John Svika reported there were no new valves turned, staff focused on flushing. There were 216 USA North locates which brings the year to date to 2,342. There was 1 USA South locate bringing the year to date to 4. There were 14 flushes for NO DES which brings the total to just under 10 million gallons year to date. There were 6 after hours calls, 4 service lateral repairs, 5 replacements and a hydrant replacement. **OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Mr. Svika reported the water supply department has been draining tanks getting them ready for anniversary inspection. There was a coil that went out on Well 17 that staff repaired. Mr. Svika updated the Board on fence damage occurring at Well 30 that is being repaired. Staff is prepping area where the steal building will be going up.

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk.

**BOARD COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Director Boyd complimented staff for their hard work.

Director Rajtora commented the GA is not in compliance with their bylaws and he would like to have discussion at a future meeting. Director Rajtora would also like Board to discuss using the initiative process to eliminate the replenishment fee.

**DATE OF NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

The date of the next Regular Board Meeting is Monday, April 13, 2026.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Isabel Tejada  
Recording Secretary

**APPROVED: April 13, 2026**

**BOARD  
COMMENTS/FUTU  
RE AGENDA  
ITEMS**

**DATE OF NEXT  
MEETING**

**ADJOURNMENT**