

**Alameda County Special District Association (ACSDA)
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday September 18, 2024

8:00 A.M.

Hosted by: Castro Valley Sanitary District (CVSan)

Presiding: Roland P. Williams, Jr., President

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Roland P. Williams, Jr., ACSDA President, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1.2 President Williams welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Shelia Young, Vice President for helping to run the meeting at the Castro Valley Sanitary District (CVSan) office so that he was able to attend the meeting via Zoom.

2. SELF INTRODUCTIONS

2.1 The attendees introduced themselves and provided highlights about their summer.

3. SPEAKERS

3.1 Welcome by CVSan General Manager Roland P. Williams, Jr.

Mr. Williams welcomed members back to CVSan's office. He noted that they are excited about the progress being made with the construction of their new Operations & Engineering (O&E) Building Project (Project). He also reported on a lease agreement with Alameda County Fire Department to use CVSan's office building for the next three years.

3.2 Presentation East Bay Dischargers Authority (EBDA) General Manager Jacqueline Zipkin. Overview of the new Watershed Permit for Nutrients in San Francisco Bay.

Ms. Zipkin introduced herself as the EBDA General Manager and Chair of Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) and noted they were working to enhance the science of the water industry. She referred to the agenda in her slide presentation and stated she will be providing a background about nutrients in the Bay, then review the 2022 Algal Bloom, and the new Watershed Permit and what the next steps will be for managing nutrients in the Bay. She stated both nutrient and nitrogen will be used in her presentation and essentially, they are both food in a body of water, and when at the right amount, they support life and when too much, they promotes algae over-growth which leads to nutrification, and this depletes and generates harmful chemicals and is toxic to species in the Bay. She stated San Francisco Bay has been resilient to nutrients but that this is

changing and they are now looking into reasons why. She stated one source of nitrogen is from our urine and each wastewater treatment plant is like a unique snowflake, different in the range of flows and dry season nitrogen loads in treatment. She noted there have been other sources of nitrogen as well but that most comes from humans and wastewater treatment plants were not designed to treat for nitrogen. She provided information about the regional management of nutrients with Watershed Permit 1, from 2014 – 2019; she noted they were required to start monitoring effluent, do an analysis of loading trends via an annual report, have San Francisco Estuary Institute support scientific studies to find what can be done to remove nitrogen and how to optimize and upgrade facilities. She stated the next Nutrient Watershed Permit 2 covers 2019 – 2024 and includes both influent and effluent monitoring, as well as increased support for and more scientific studies. She also explained that studies show that nitrogen reduction can be improved with nature-based solutions via recycled water. Ms. Zipkin continued with an explanation about the major algal bloom of 2022, which caused the water to turn red and lots of fish died. She stated that science had predicted this but that it happened sooner than was expected and was bigger than predicted. Now, scientists are working on a study of how it all suddenly went away. She stated that while nitrogen was not the cause, it was the fuel and something else triggered the event, and in 2023, the same organism was found but it was less severe and so far in 2024, there has not been an event.

Ms. Zipkin stated the new Nutrient Watershed Permit 3 was adopted by the Regional Water Quality Control Board on July 10, 2024 and is effective October 1, 2024. For this they will monitor total inorganic nitrogen (TIN) limits and reduced TIN is needed. She noted these are really complex jobs and nutrient reduction will need to be a regional effort and there are opportunities for multi-benefit projects. She explained that EBDA is made up of six plants and that Union Sanitary is the third largest load to EBDA. She explained EBMUD is focusing on optimization and noted they had been able to use excess tanks during dry weather and were successful in removing nitrogen, and other agencies are hoping to learn more from this. Ms. Zipkin noted that the Oro Loma/Castro Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant Nutrient Optimization Project implemented in 2020 has been effective as well and they are ahead in infrastructure improvement and dropping nutrient levels. Ms. Zipkin provided some progress information for more districts and shared that San Leandro is planning a treatment wetland as well as other things, Hayward is in the process of a \$400 million project that is expected to reduce nitrogen by 30 – 50%, Union Sanitary District expects a 50% reduction in nitrogen from their Enhanced Treatment and Site Upgrade Project, and Livermore – Amador Valley Water Management Agency (LAVMA) has a recycled water program to support a healthy San Francisco Bay.

In the next steps for the Watershed Permit, the wastewater community will need to advocate for more time and wastewater and water agencies will need to work

together. Ms. Zipkin reported that they are working on ways to find more time for agencies and BACWA has had some really productive meetings with the Regional Water Board.

ACSDA Treasurer Georgan Vonheeder-Leopold, thanked Ms. Zipkin for the great presentation, and asked if she would share the presentation slides with ACSDA.

Hayward Area Recreation and Park District Board of Director Peter Rosen asked if the 40% nitrogen reduction target applied to all districts the same, or if it meant the Bay as a whole needed to hit the 40% target but all districts would need to upgrade in different amounts.

Zone 7 Manager of Government Relations Carol Mahoney asked a question about capacity and if there was a technical barrier issue with more institutional and financial challenges. East Bay Regional Park District Board Member Dee Rosario noted that wastewater agencies were being asked to fund the science. Ms. Zipkin acknowledged these issues and stated all hands are needed on deck. Fairview Fire Protection District Board Member Mark McDaniel added that population is increasing. Alameda County Water District Board Member Paul Sethy asked a question about the type of fertilizers being used and then more discussion ensued. Mr. Williams noted that the power of the group discussion is that there are opportunities to work together.

3.2 Presentation from Waste Management of Alameda County (WMAC) by Public Sector Manager Virginia Harrington and staff.

Ms. Harrington presented with WMAC Recycling Education Representative Perla Paredes Miramontes. Ms. Harrington stated they work from the Oakland office where trucks launch from each morning at 3:00 a.m. She provided a brief explanation of their operations which includes five franchised municipalities, a Davis Street Resource Recovery Complex & Transfer Station, and the Altamont Landfill and Resource Recovery. Ms. Harrington next described Senate Bill (SB) 1383 and noted there were educational requirements for jurisdictions and their hauler partners to assist customers with minimizing organics in the garbage; She noted that StopWaste has been a great resource and partner they work with. Ms. Miramontes described training programs for multi-family dwelling (MFD) and commercial customers and explained there is also a waiver application available for those who produce minimal organics waste and WMAC helps customers with filling out the waiver and tracks the progress of applications. Ms. Miramontes stated their focus on education and the strategies they use can vary by jurisdiction, but noted information they provide can include everything from bill inserts and direct mail, bus stop and DMV ads, videos and more. She shared some samples of the communication they use which included what goes where guides and holiday recycling tips. Ms. Harrington stated they also go to community events and engage with the community with tabling, learning games and giveaways; she noted it is helpful to speak with customers and answer their

questions. California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Bay Area Network Field Representative Colleen Haley asked why there were differences between districts and if there were any mandates for consistency. Ms. Harrington noted that Alameda County has been ahead of the game with implementing activities before SB 1383, and she gave the example of color compliant carts being required in all areas by 2036; she noted that eventually there will be more consistency with language and labeling requirements across districts. East Bay Regional Park District Board Member Dee Rosario asked if there was special outreach for apartment complexes and Ms. Harrington acknowledged there was. Zone 7 Manager of Government Relations Carol Mahoney asked if there was any information available about the success of the StopWaste Resource app, and Ms. Harrington stated their Public Outreach Specialist may have more information on that.

Castro Valley Sanitary District Zero Waste Supervisor Naomi Lue stated they had toured the Davis Street Transfer Station in the past and asked more about the current operations at that facility. Ms. Harrington stated an Organics Materials Recovery Facility (O-MRF) had been built specifically for the City of Oakland per their contract with them. She briefly explained how the O-MRF extracts organics from the garbage using machines and that people at the end of the line do quality control. Ms. Lue noted that materials are cleanest when they are source separated and asked how clean the organics were when separated at the O-MRF. Ms. Harrington acknowledged that extracting materials from the trash can mean there is lower quality product.

4. UPDATES

4.1 Report about California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Annual Conference.

Mr. Rosario reported he had won an award for Board Member of the Year and stated the conference was very well done. He also shared information about an award for cybersecurity and noted the deadline was February 7th.

Ms. Mahoney reported that she had attended sessions on apprenticeships and learned that nontraditional programs can receive federal funding.

Alameda County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) Chapter Representatives: Ralph Johnson, Mariellen Faria, Georgean Vonheeder-Leopold and Executive Officer Rachel Jones.

Mr. Johnson stated they were renegotiating the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the County of Alameda and noted they hope to have more independence from the County but still use their services.

4.2 East Bay Regional Park District Park Advisory Committee Chapter Representative: Roland Williams, Jr.

Mr. Rosario stated EBRPD was starting their Master Plan process. He also shared that a memorial service is planned for Director Ellen Corbett at Assumption Parrish

in San Leandro on Saturday at 10:30 a.m.

4.3 East Bay EDA Chapter Representative: Ryan Clausnitzer

There was no update.

4.4 CSDA General Updates: Colleen Haley

Ms. Haley stated she will be taking maternity leave in November and CSDA Senior Public Affairs Field Coordinator Dane Wadle will fill in for her.

Ms. Haley reported that on August 31st all bills on the Governor's desk were being wrapped up. She explained that CSDA takes position on hundreds of bills but has a Take Action section where members can see what bills may be important for them to weigh in on and their feedback was important. She reported that federal legislators had reconvened and noted that one of the bills allows special districts to participate and be recognized.

Ms. Haley also reported upcoming trainings being offered which included the Board Secretary Conference in San Diego and Special District Leadership Academy in San Rafael.

5. BUSINESS

5.1 Approval of July 2024 ACSDA/CCSDA Joint Membership Meeting minutes

Ms. Palmer moved approval of the minutes, and Ms. Vonheeder-Leopold seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

5.2 Financial Report: Georgean Vonheeder-Leopold, Treasurer

Ms. Vonheeder-Leopold reported that the amount for dues has not changed and they will keep the price of the Annual Dinner in March at \$50 per person, although the actual cost is about \$80, and that ACSDA will continue supplementing the cost from its reserves. She announced they have also hired Brian Copeland to perform at the dinner.

Ms. Vonheeder-Leopold reported there was about \$10,000 in the bank. Ms. Young stated they could consider a donation to CSDA. Ms. Palmer stated they could consider supporting apprenticeship programs.

5.3 Approval of 2024/25 ACSDA Budget: Roland P. Williams, Jr.

Paul Sethy moved approval of the budget, and Ms. Vonheeder-Leopold seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

6.1 Wednesday, November 13, 2024.

Host: Oro Loma Sanitary District

Topic: Sea Level Rise

6.2 Wednesday, January 8, 2025.

Host and Topic: TBD

Location: CVSan Office

6.3 Thursday, March 13, 2025

Annual Dinner: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Wedgewood at Redwood Canyon Golf Course

Ms. Lue noted the dates for meetings did not match with the day of the week. Alameda County Water District Board Member John Weed and Paul Sethy noted that meetings usually happen on Wednesdays and asked why they had been moved to a different day of the week. Ms. Young stated the Annual Dinner Meeting in March was always scheduled on a Thursday night, but that it had to be moved up a week since the venue was not available on the usual date in 2025. Castro Valley Sanitary District Executive Assistant to the General Manager/Clerk of the Board Purvi Solanki stated she would look into the dates and provide more information.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.