# SAWA MEETING MINUTES

December 19th, 2024
Meeting Location:
1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C
Riverside, CA 92507
9:00 A.M.

## BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Mills called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.

**II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Maria Arellano – SAWA; James Law – SAWA; Brian Brady – SAWA; Melody Aimar – SAWA; Jennette El Morsy – SAWA; Kerwin Russell – RCRCD; Kimberly Kuznicki – SAWA; Sheryl Parsons – OCWD; Mandy Parkes – IERCD; Brett Mills – SJBRCD;

**III. PUBLIC INPUT** – Oral communication from the public audience on any subject matter within SAWA's subject matter jurisdiction. There was no public input at this time.

**IV. CONSENT CALENDAR**

a. Approve Minutes for October 24, 2024
b. Approve Special Meeting Minutes for November 21, 2024
c. Approve Financial Statement for October 2024
d. Approve Financial Statement for November 2024

Director Parsons moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Director Russell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 4-0

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| Parkes | Aye | Russell | Aye | Parsons | Aye |
| Mills | Aye | Biancardi | *Absent* | | |

**V. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

a. ILF Project – Brian Brady

Mr. Brady reported that Laurie Monarres and Mike Sweesy have developed a comprehensive memoranda and attachments that have been sent to Corice Farrar. What they asked for from Cori is that she assign a project management individual to look into SAWA's proposals for wrapping up the ILF. Staff are hopeful that she will give SAWA a name before the end of the year or beginning of the next. As a reminder for the board, staff are working with Riverside Parkes to buy into their mitigation bank at a cost of about $1.4 million, leaving money available for tother mitigation work.

b. Treasurer's Report – Mandy Parkes

Ms. Parkes reported that there was not anything too significant and added that there are a few A/R past 30 days and a few past 60 days.

**VI. ACTION ITEMS**

a. Discussion and Possible Approval of Proposed Budget for 2025

Mr. Brady reported on the proposed operating budget for 2025 prepared for Board review. The proposed budget contains full revenue and expense accounting for SAWA departments and Member Agency programs. Mr. Brady also provided the Board with a presentation of the Proposed Budget for 2025.
For a copy of Mr. Brady's presentation, "SAWA Proposed 2025 Budget" please contact Ms. El Morsy at jennette@sawatershed.org or (951) 780-1012 ext. 101.
Director Russell moved to approve the proposed budget for 2025 as presented. Director Parsons seconded and the motion passed, unanimously 4-0

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| Parkes | Aye | Russell | Aye | Parsons | Aye |
| Mills | Aye | Biancardi | *Absent* | | |

b. Discussion and Possible Approval of SAWA Holiday and Board Meeting Calendar for 2025
Mr. Brady reported that the SAWA Employee Handbook requires that the holiday schedule be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors annually. Mr. Brady also reported that the SAWA Bi-laws specify monthly general meetings and the meeting at which the Officer elections will take place. The calendar was presented to the Board specifying holiday dates which SAWA will observe and be closed for business and the dates on which the Board will conduct its general meetings and hold officer elections for 2025.
Director Parkes moved to approve the SAWA holiday and Board meeting calendar for 2025. Director Russell seconded the motion passed, unanimously 4-0

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| Parkes | Aye | Russell | Aye | Parsons | Aye |
| Mills | Aye | Biancardi | *Absent* | | |

**GENERAL ITEMS**

**VII. SAWA PROJECT REPORTS**

a. Brian Brady, Executive Director – SAWA
Mr. Brady reported SAWA staff provided a full analysis of current OCWD funds held by SAWA (as restricted funds) for future OCWD-directed project work. The funds, in the amount of $329,863.17, have since been transferred to OCWD. SAWA staff is currently integrating the recently developed planning metrics into the 2025 budgeting process. SAWA management staff has completed the development of the 2025 operating budget for Board consideration. SAWA staff is partnering with the City of Murietta to submit a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Application with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Ms. Parkes left the meeting at this time.

b. Kerwin Russell – RCRCD
Mr. Russell reported that were wasn't anything out of the ordinary, just waiting for some rain to fall.

c. Sheryl Parsons – OCWD
Ms. Parsons reported OCWD got permission from the Corps to be able to remove some of the Arundo that's on their property using OCWD's Arundo funds. OCWD is going to put their RFP for their cowbird trapping. It should be coming out January 16th. OCWD will send that over to SAWA and will hopefully have a decision by February 20th and to start in March.

Ms. Biancardi joined the meeting at this time.

d. Teri Biancardi – Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD
Ms. Biancardi reported that going into 2025 TEAMRCD is going to be looking at cannabis grants with Mr. Law. Ms. Biancardi wants to try to enhance their mitigation capacity.

e. Mandy Parkes – Inland Empire RCD
*Absent*

f. Brett Mills – San Jacinto Basin RCD
Mr. Mills reported working on getting cannabis grants as well as working with TEAMRCD and SAWA. Mr. Mills is also working with David Hernandez and the IECF crew and trying to get some grant funding there and do some fuel mods and fire mods. A lot of sites are getting to that point where in the spring they will need some fuel mods and clean up from James' crew.

g. Jennette El Morsy, Administrative Services Manager – SAWA
Ms. El Morsy reported on A/R October invoice total of $281,345.07 and November A/R invoice total of $382,429.43. Employee health benefits open enrollment. 2025 Financial budget. Filed 2023 tax return. Closed out USFWS old grant. Converted MSHCP email hosting to Microsoft Outlook. Staff Holiday Luncheon at Canyon Crest Country Club. End of the year financials. Working on purging files according to SAWA Document Retention Policy. Hired new HRS Technician – Joe Bentancourt. Hired new MSHCP Field Biologist – Leah Dann (returning). Employee Sexual Harassment Prevention Training. Annual sprinkler inspection for all warehouse units.

h. James Law, Habitat Restoration Services Manager – SAWA
Mr. Law reported on ILF placement – memo is completed and being submitted soon and new proposal – City of Murrieta and IECF Mapping Project. Mr. Law also reported on other work within individual member agencies' jurisdictions:

- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: The HRS dept. conducted treatments to: TEAMRCD – Riv. Flood projects and homeless monitoring.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: The HRS Dept. conducted treatments at the following: SBVMWD – Old Ranch, Anza, Anza Extension, Lower Hole Creek and Riv. Flood – SAR.
- Inland Empire RCD: The HRS Dept. conducted treatments at: SBVMWD – Hidden Valley Creek, Waterman Riparian, Waterman Alluvial and Cactus Basins
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: No treatments have been conducted since the last board meeting within this district. Mapping of San Jacinto Wildlife Area and Potrero creek completed.
- Orange County Water District: The HRS Dept. conducted treatments at: IECF – Prado – Fall 24 and OCWD – Prodo – Fall 24.

i. Melody Aimar, Biological Programs Manager – SAWA
Ms. Aimar reported on MSHCP Dept. Monthly WRC MSHCP Management and Monitoring Coordination Meetings. Presentation(s): 11/14 - "*For the Pines they are a-changin': Forest Dynamics of a Montane Hardwood-Conifer Forest*." by Marko Spasojevic, UCR Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology. 12/12 - "*Impacts of Effluent and Invasion in the Santa Ana River.*" by Dr. William Ota, Michigan State University. 2023 Report edits from RCA are being addressed, still waiting for some reports. New Biologist start date 12/16. Ms. Aimar gave a presentation at the *National Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition* annual meeting in Palm Springs on 12/10. Mr. Campanella managing remote workflow. Monthly Leads meeting via Zoom for project updates. Ms. Aimar attended monthly RCA Managers Meeting. Ms. Aimar/ Mr. Campanella submitted monthly report to RCA. Staff completed Sexual Harassment training Biologists completed Animal Tracks training on 12/5. Biologists installed a HOBO data logger unit at In Quino habitat MSR on 11/19. Staff attended CDFW UXO training on 11/15. Leads are training for the transition to ArcGIS Pro. Staff attended open enrollment meeting on 11/7. Ms. Aimar also updated on other MSHCP work including:

- Rare plants: 2024 Report in progress. 2025 survey prep.
- California Gnatcatcher (USGS regional): 2024 Report in progress.

- California Gnatcatcher (Nesting): 2024 Report in progress.
- Grasshopper Sparrow: 2024 surveys – Report in progress.
- Mammals: SR 60 Undercrossing camera trap – in progress. Anza Knowls Guzzler camera trap – in progress.
- Clinton Keith Overcrossing: Final report – in progress.
- Herps/Fish: 2024 Drift fence camera surveys – Biologist preparing poster. 2024 Spadefoot surveys – Report in progress. 2024 Arroyo Toad surveys – Report in progress. 2024 Pond Turtle Trapping – Report in progress.
- Quino Checkerspot Butterfly: 2024 surveys - Report in progress.
- Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly: 2024 surveys – Report in progress.
- Vernal Pools: 2024 surveys – Report in progress.
- Data/GIS Analysis: 2024 Data QC – in progress.

Ms. Aimar reported on WHMS Dept. LBVI/BHCO – Annual Report Draft completed. BHCO – Winter traps in San Jacinto, Prado, Lake Elsinore open. Trap repairs in progress. IEUA 2023-24 WBS/BBS – complete, report in progress. March-Meridian BHCO – Report complete. Cielo Vista – Report complete. Regulatory Reporting – in progress (CNDDB, 45-day reports). 2025 Access permit renewals – in progress. Manager attended SAR Homeless Solutions Collaborative meeting. Federal recovery permit and Scientific Collecting Permit renewals – in progress. SBVMWD Riparian Bird Surveys in Upper SAR. Draft Report complete. Annual presentation – in progress. Ms. Aimar coordinating WFA recertification for all staff. Ms. Aimar completed 2025 Work Plan/Budget. Ms. Aimar attended SAWA Managers Meeting. Staff completed Sexual Harassment training. Staff attended open enrollment meeting on 11/7. Ms. Aimar also updated on other work within individual member agencies' jurisdictions:

- Inland Empire RCD: Goose Creek LBVI monitoring – Report completed. San Timoteo LBVI monitoring and BHCO - Report completed (final year). Ms. Aimar in collaboration with IERCD on future projects.
- Orange County Water District: No work this month.
- Riverside-Corona RCD: No work this month.
- San Jacinto Basin RCD: No work this month.
- Temecula-Elsinore-Anza-Murrieta RCD: No work this month.

**VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Mills thanked SAWA staff for all their hard work and wished everyone Happy Holidays.

**IX. NEXT MEETING** – January 23, 2025 will be held at the SAWA Headquarters, 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507 and remotely via Zoom.

**X. ADJOURN** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 A.M.

**Notice: All open session agenda materials will be available for inspection by members of the public at the SAWA office located at 1835 Chicago Avenue, Suite C, Riverside, CA 92507. Please contact Maria Arellano at (951) 780-1012 x106 for this information (Government Code Section 54957.5). In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Government Code Section 54954.2, if special assistance is needed to participate in a Board meeting, please contact the Administrative Services Manager at (951) 780-1012 x101. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to meeting time will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility at the meeting.**

Please post 72 hours before meeting