

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

MINUTES OF August 8, 2023
12:00 p.m.

President McDonald called the Strategic Planning Workshop of the Board of Directors to order at 12:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Melody McDonald, President
Robert Stewart, Vice President
David E. Raley, Director
Richard Corneille, Director
John Longville, Director (Arrived 12:30 p.m.)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Betsy Miller, General Manager
David Cosgrove, District Counsel
Milan Mitrovich, Land Resources Manager
Athena Laroche, Administrative Specialist

GUESTS PRESENT:

Ellen Cross, Strategy Driver
Maria Pascoal, Strategy Driver
David E. Smith, East Valley Water District
Randy Do, PCTronics

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

President McDonald announced this as the time for any persons present, who so desire, to make an oral presentation to the Board of Directors. Hearing none, the meeting continued with published agenda items.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were none.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

Ms. Miller introduced this item for discussion. Ms. Cross and Ms. Pascoal reviewed the strategic planning update process, schedule, and workshop agenda using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Cross requested that the approval of the final Goals and Objectives be added to the September 13 Board meeting.

The updated Goals are listed as follows:

1. Goal 1: Water Supply Reliability through Groundwater Recharge - Maximize all water capture and aquifer recovery for the benefit of our communities' water security and support of a healthy watershed.
2. Goal 2: Infrastructure Expansion and Operations Optimization - Design, construct, maintain, and optimize facilities to maximize adaptability for a changing climate, and transform and expand our assets for future generations of water supply.
3. Goal 3: Natural Resource Stewardship and Environmental Enhancement - Protect, manage, and rewild natural areas to promote the thriving health of our ecosystems and local and regional communities.
4. Goal 4: Community Engagement and Education - Engage, educate, and partner with our diverse community to promote water security and protect valued habitat and open space as assets critical to our collective vitality.
5. Goal 5: Collaborative Partnerships - Create and actively maintain local, regional, state, and national partnerships that are mutually beneficial, accelerate the District's Vision and Goals, and foster the District's Values.
6. Goal 6: Fiscal Commitment and Accountability - Ensure the District's stability and longevity through sound financial strategy, planning, transparency, and execution.
7. Goal 7: Sustainable Organization & Governance - Invest in our most valued assets, our team and the communities we serve, through exceptional leadership.

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Vice President Stewart to approve the Goals as presented. The motion carried 5-0 with all Directors present voting in the affirmative.

President McDonald: Yes

Vice President Stewart: Yes

Director Longville: Yes

Director Raley: Yes

Director Corneille: Yes

Director Corneille stated that the Objectives as presented are too lengthy and asked for details on how the sub-bullets were intended for use under the Objectives. Ms. Cross reviewed the method for how the objectives and sub-objectives were developed. Director Corneille requested that they be simplified. Director Raley asked if there was a method for evaluating success in meeting the Strategic Plan objectives. Ms. Cross said that this is often done in tandem with budget approval or in progress updates in the monthly General Manager reports. Ms. Miller said that these objectives would form the basis of the annual Board Priorities, and noted the importance of tracking success. She requested feedback from the Board on their preferred tracking method, and indicated that software is available for progress tracking. Discussion ensued on how to simplify the wording of the objectives. Ms. Cross indicated that based on Board feedback she will work to condense the objectives by retaining the specific action while removing details on the “why”.

Ms. Pascoal reviewed the definitions for Goals and Objectives as follows:

Goals – The overarching direction or achievements the organization wants to accomplish that may be considered long-term outcomes.

Objectives – The specific actions need to happen to achieve the long-term outcome.

Ms. Pascoal and Ms. Cross reviewed the draft Objectives as included on package page 11 through 20. Proposed revisions and draft wording are as follows:

- Goal 1 – Water Supply Reliability through Groundwater Recharge
 - 1A – Actively manage existing groundwater spreading basins and maximize recharge capacity.
 - 1A – i – Evaluate future use of reclaimed aggregate mines to provide recharge capacity and habitat restoration sites.
 - 1A – ii – Evaluate feasibility of expanded recharge service within the LAFCO boundary and sphere of influence.
 - 1A – iv – Increase capacity to capture and store water during “atmospheric river” storm events to help withstand long periods of exceptional drought.
 - 1A – iii – Evaluate potential partnership with regional recharge projects on both District and non-District lands.
 - 5L – Maintain a productive intergovernmental working relationship with San Bernardino County Flood and Water Conservation District to achieve mutual goals (e.g., PERC, Woollystar Preserve Area).
 - 1B – Coordinate with partners to identify and recharge new additional water supply sources to maximize water available for recharge (i.e., recycled water, imported water), without flooding risks.
 - 1A – v – Support the Enhanced Recharge Project Phase 1B in collaboration with WMWD and SBVMWD to increase current recharge capacity by up to 80,000 AF/year of groundwater. Moved from 1C.

- 1D – Modernize recharge facilities to next generation of technology for metering and monitoring. Moved to Goal 2.
- 1A – Advance PERC projects for potential joint use of flood management facilities for recharge.
- Goal 2 – Infrastructure Expansion and Operations Optimization
 - 2A – Recharge the aquifer as effectively and efficiently as possible by adaptively managing our operations to capture and recharge the maximum available water.
 - 2A – i – Continue to evaluate operations and maintenance for maximum recharge in changing climate and fire scenarios.
 - 2A – ii – Evaluate emerging technology to improve operations and advance efficiency.
 - 2A – iii – Leverage drought periods to maintain/construct facilities during dry conditions to be ready for wet years.
 - Add 6I – Develop a cost benefit ratio process to balance maximum recharge against basin maintenance cost.
 - Delete 2G
 - 2B – Formulate facility-wide maintenance assessments and implement strategies to assure long-term operational readiness.
 - 2C – Continue our PERC partnership to increase our ability to recharge the local aquifer to its full potential through state-of-the-art engineering.
 - Delete 2B – ii
 - 2C – i – Complete feasibility studies on higher-probability locations with cost-benefit analyses; and implement top PERC priority projects for design, permitting, construction, and operation.
 - 2C – ii – Integrate PERC projects into the master operations plan to include climate scenario analyses.
 - 2D – Obtain and maintain permits as required. Monitor for compliance through a comprehensive tracking database.
 - 2F – Pursue opportunities to consolidate land ownership near District facilities as appropriate to expand our ability to recharge groundwater and provide buffer for conservation of habitat.
- Goal 3 – Natural Resource Stewardship and Environmental Enhancement
 - 3 B – i – Implement our plan and identify funding to partner with cities, the County, and local non-profit outreach organizations to resolve unauthorized occupancy and provide referrals for temporary and permanent housing and wellness programs as a solution.
 - 3B – Work with local and regional partners to limit unauthorized human activities on District owned and managed properties, including trespass, illegal dumping of debris, and the establishment of unauthorized encampments to minimize safety risks such as fire, to humans and habitat.
 - 3C – Collaborate with the SBV Conservation Trust to meet our permit requirements and demonstrate our land conservation and stewardship values to elevate conservation science.

- 3C – I – Leverage District expertise and knowledge to lead establishment and implementation of endangered species programs (e.g., San Bernardino Kangaroo rat monitoring and habitat quality characterization, slender-horned spineflower restoration).
- 3D – Move to Operations and Maintenance.
- 3F – Implement the Community Mitigation Program (CMP) to provide land mitigation and habitat for easements for community benefit.
- 3G – Integrate with 2D; rewrite.
- Delete 3H
- 3I – Coordinate with neighboring landowners and conservation programs for effective regional management and cooperation (e.g., Wash Plan and River HCP actions with Woollystar Preserve area).
- ADD – Identify District-owned disturbed lands and retired facilities and assess potential to rewild to natural habitat.
- Goal 4 – Community Engagement and Education
 - Create and implement communication, engagement, and education priorities that elevate the District locally, regionally and beyond.
 - ADD 4B – iii – Present at local community organizations.
 - Director Longville asked that the Strategic Plan include reference to historically owned land of San Manuel Indians, current role and recognition of their stewardship; document should reflect the importance of their role.
 - 4E – i – Evaluate branding updates to promote our leadership role in serving the symbiotic relationship between habitat conservation and groundwater recharge.
 - 4E – ii – Celebrate our history as stewards of our aquifer and wildland.
 - 4F – i – Continue tours at recharge facilities, sponsor a water conservation demonstration garden, exhibit the District’s recharge operations, and invite new community leaders to participate and promote the District’s programs, projects and initiatives.
 - Move 4H up
 - 4K – ADD Universities
- Goal 5 – Collaborative Partnerships
 - The Board suggested adding a graph to reflect partnerships.
 - Remove 5A, 5C, 5D, and 5L
 - 5N – ii – Support operations of dams for water conservation (e.g., Forecast-Informed Reservoir Operations).
- Goal 6 – Fiscal Commitment and Accountability
 - Remove 6A
 - Director Corneille suggested adding an objective on the Groundwater Charge.
 - 6D – ii – Continue to prioritize investments on a pay as you go basis and minimize debt by fully funding future liabilities.
 - Remove 6F
 - ADD – Develop a cost benefit ration process to balance maximum recharge against basin maintenance cost to inform decision-making.

- 6B – ii – Continue Land Management Enterprise to amplify the District’s investment in its strategic goals (i.e., augment buffer properties), and explore potential evolving use of District-owned lands to optimize return on investments.
- Remove 6H
- Goal 7 – Sustainable Organization & Governance
 - 7C – Develop a protocol for onboarding new Board members and transferring institutional context from those leaving the Board to foster uninterrupted governance.
 - Move to end 7F – Empower professional partnerships between the District Board and Staff through clear roles and responsibilities and guiding principles to successfully implement the Strategic Plan. Periodically and regularly review Strategic Plan goals and objectives for alignment.
 - 7G – ii – With expand recharge operations, assess the need for expanded field support facilities.
 - Remove 7J

Ms. Cross thanked the Board for their feedback, and noted that the Strategy Driver team will continue to edit for brevity. Director Raley said that he wants the Board to determine how and when they will evaluate the progress related to Strategic Plan goals. The final objectives will be brought to the Board on September 13 for final approval.

4. ADJOURN MEETING

It was moved by Director Corneille and seconded by Director Longville to adjourn. The motion carried 5-0 with all Directors present voting in the affirmative.

President McDonald: Yes

Vice President Stewart: Yes

Director Longville: Yes

Director Raley: Yes

Director Corneille: Yes



 Betsy Miller
 General Manager