

**MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 25, 2025
REGULAR MEETING OF THE SSJID BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) met in person in regular session in the District Boardroom at 9:00 a.m., with public access provided via the online Zoom meeting platform. President Spyksma called the meeting to order. Director Holbrook led the flag salute. Upon roll call the following members were noted present:

DIRECTORS: HOLBROOK ROOS SPYKSMA VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
ABSENT: NONE

Also present were General Manager Peter Rietkerk, General Counsel Mia Brown, Engineering Department Manager Forrest Killingsworth, and Clerk of the Board Danielle Barney.

Public Comment – None

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of Checks in the amount of \$86,738.33; Accounts Payable Wires in the amount of \$972,092.77; and Payroll dated February 7, 2025 in the amount of \$301,482.24.
- B. Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2025
- C. Financial Reports through January 31, 2025
- D. Investment Report for January 2025

MOTION: A motion was made by Director Holbrook and seconded by Director Roos to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted.

The motion passed 5 to 0 by the following vote:

AYES: HOLBROOK ROOS SPYKSMA VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS

Item #1 – Directors’ Reports

Director Weststeyn reported that he attended the San Joaquin County (SJC) Advisory Water Commission (AWC) meeting on February 19, which included the Election of Officers on the agenda. He stated that Director Holbrook had been elected as the AWC Chairman, congratulated him, and commented on the respect he has as a leader from his AWC peers.

President Spyksma addressed Director Roos regarding his 2025 Board Appointments, and stated that he will re-evaluate and discuss in the near future.

Director Roos thanked the Maintenance Crew for the work completed on the pipelines during the winter, in preparation for irrigation season.

Director Holbrook thanked all SSJID employees for their good work and shared that he has received multiple

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comments from constituents regarding the District's excellent customer service.

Director Van Ryn thanked staff for the important work done to maintain the health of the District's infrastructure.

President Spyksma reported that he attended the Tri-Dam Project Board meeting on February 20, and mentioned the numerous commendations heard for SSJID Engineering Department Manager Forrest Killingsworth, SSJID Public and Government Relations Manager Katie Patterson, and Engineering Department Executive Assistant Dawn Driesen for their hard work and contributions to the Canyon Tunnel public meetings held at Knights Ferry, Oakdale Irrigation District (OID), and SSJID. He commented that the Knights Ferry meeting changed the public's opinion, of the Canyon Tunnel Project, to a more positive one.

Item #2 – Various Reports

Mr. Peter Rietkerk, SSJID General Manager, announced the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Region 4 Tour & Program, on April 16. The event partners ACWA and FISHBIO for a tour and program to visit San Joaquin River, view fyke trapping and an electrofishing demonstration at River Islands, and learn the impacts of non-native fish to the ecosystem. Those interested should contact Mr. Rietkerk, or SSJID Clerk of the Board Danielle Barney. Registration deadline is April 9.

Mr. Rietkerk noted the ACWA/Joint Powers Insurance Authority (JPIA) Executive Committee nominations, which were initially mentioned by Director Holbrook at the board meeting on February 11. He explained the nomination/endorsement process whereby the District can endorse a candidate for the JPIA Executive Committee election via an endorsement resolution, and that the nomination deadline is April 12. Mr. Rietkerk added that staff can present the endorsement resolutions for Board consideration at the board meeting on March 25, though an endorsement is not a requirement of JPIA nor constitutes a vote. The Board-appointed representative(s) to the JPIA will vote at the JPIA Board meeting on May 12.

Mr. Rietkerk noted a letter received, from Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District, requesting a meeting with the District to discuss the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The Board stated that attendance of the requested meeting should include South San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainable Agency (SSJGSA) members in addition to SSJID staff.

ACTION CALENDAR

Item #3 – Presentation by PFM Financial Advisors on Financing Options for the Canyon Tunnel Project

Ms. Sonya Williams, SSJID Financial and Administration Manager, addressed the Board and prefaced the presentation by PFM Financial Advisors (PFM) by introducing PFM Managing Director Darren Hodge, and PFM Senior Management Consultant Jaime Trejo. Mr. Hodge and Mr. Trejo were in attendance via the online Zoom meeting platform.

Mr. Hodge addressed the Board and gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding a preliminary financial analysis related to Canyon Tunnel Project funding and financing options. He displayed slides and provided detailed explanations of SSJID's Capital Improvement Project (CIP) needs; funding options; cash flow analysis; debt financing benefits and considerations; benefits and considerations of public market versus private placement versus State Revolving Fund (SRF) funding; and financing scenarios of 100% public debt financing, 50/50 debt financing/pay-go financing, and 100% SRF financing. He noted that SRF financing contains onerous terms and conditions, SRF funding could take 12-18 months to receive, and that the deadline to apply for SRF funding for 2025 was December 31, 2024.

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Board discussion referenced the cash flow projections and action should a Prop 218 rate increase be rejected by public ballot; clarification of public financing (bonds); risk of unknown interest rates; the SRF 25-percent (25%) project construction completion guidelines; the Joint Supply Canal (JSC) health; District risks to delay Canyon Tunnel construction; and Board appointment of an Ad Hoc Canyon Tunnel Finance Committee. The Board requested a detailed payment schedule for all three (3) financing scenarios provided to identify monthly and yearly payment costs, interest rates, and principal.

Mr. Bob Holmes, speaking as an SSJID customer and constituent, provided public comment regarding financing options for the Canyon Tunnel Project. He noted that the SRF 2024 application deadline passed on December 31, and it would be detrimental for the District to delay the Project as expenses and costs would increase. Mr. Holmes expressed his opinions of opting for a 50-percent (50%) public bond issuance, and that 100-percent financing (100%) would not be manageable.

President Spyksma appointed Director Holbrook, and himself to a newly formed Ad Hoc Canyon Tunnel Finance Committee, and thanked Ms. Williams and PFM representatives for the information provided on the Canyon Tunnel financing options.

Item #4 – Consider Adoption of Resolution 25-07-C Adoption of Addendum to Previously Adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Canyon Tunnel Project

Mr. Killingsworth addressed the Board and provided background of Resolution No. 23-08-C for the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the Canyon Tunnel Project, which was adopted by Board action on March 14, 2023.

Mr. Killingsworth explained that adopting an addendum to the previously adopted IS/MND is an option provided through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) when project changes do not significantly impact the environment. He further explained that, since adoption, several components of design and construction have been modified that will have a favorable impact on the environment and that adopting the resolution would be an opportunity to formally document the changes. Mr. Killingsworth referenced a summary of the revisions that was provided in the agenda Item #4 Staff Report.

Minor filing fees will be required for each of the three counties (\$50-100), which will be covered by Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group and invoiced to SSJID through their existing contract.

Staff recommended that the Board adopt Resolution 25-07-C, and authorize the Engineering Department Manager to file the three necessary Notice of Determinations with the Calaveras, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne County Clerk offices, and the State Office of Planning and Research.

MOTION: A motion was made by Director Holbrook and seconded by Director Weststeyn to approve adoption of Resolution 25-07-C, and authorize the Engineering Department Manager to file the three necessary Notice of Determinations with the Calaveras, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne County Clerk offices, and the State Office of Planning and Research.

**SOUTH SAN JOAQUIN IRRIGATION DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 25-07-C**

**ADOPTION OF AN ADDENDUM TO THE PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED MITIGATED NEGATIVE
DECLARATION FOR THE CANYON TUNNEL PROJECT**

WHEREAS, South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID or District) adopted an Initial Study/Mitigated

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Negative Declaration (IS/MND) in 2023 for the Canyon Tunnel Project (Project) in accordance with requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the requirements of the CEQA, California Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq. (“CEQA”), the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (“District”) has prepared an “Addendum to an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND),” dated February 2025 which evaluates the potential environmental effects of the proposed revisions to the “South San Joaquin Irrigation District Canyon Tunnel Project (“Project”); and

WHEREAS, the originally approved Project is for the construction of Canyon Tunnel to bypass approximately 12,250 lineal feet of existing canal, referred to as the Joint Supply Canal (JSC); and

WHEREAS, revisions for minor design and permitting changes that have occurred over the last two years include an additional 106 linear feet of tunnel totaling an approximately 12,106-foot-long tunnel and a new spoils stockpile location adjacent to the Project site versus at an offsite location requiring traffic on public roads; and

WHEREAS, the District finds that it cannot be fairly argued, nor is there any substantial evidence in the record, that the Project could have a significant effect on the environment, either directly or indirectly; and

WHEREAS, based upon the Addendum to the IS/MND and the record, the Project will not individually or cumulatively have an adverse impact on environmental resources; and

WHEREAS, the Board believes the approval of the Addendum to the IS/MND will be in the best interest of the District's landowners and water users; and

WHEREAS, the District is the custodian of the documents and other materials that constitute the record of proceedings upon which the District’s decision is based, and 11011 E. Highway 120, Manteca, CA 95336 is the location of this record.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Directors of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District that:

1. The South San Joaquin Irrigation District Board of Directors adopts the Addendum to the previously adopted IS/MND including the MMRP for the Canyon Tunnel Project.
2. The Engineering Department Manager of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District is hereby authorized and directed to prepare the three (3) Notice of Determinations to be filed with the Calaveras, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne County Clerk Offices and the State Office of Planning and Research.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 25th day of February 2025, by the following vote:

AYES:	HOLBROOK ROOS SPYKSMA VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
NOES:	NONE
ABSTAIN:	NONE
ABSENT:	NONE

Item #5 – Consider Adoption of Resolution 25-08-W Declaring the Start of the 2025 Irrigation Season

Mr. Brandon Nakagawa, SSJID Water Resources Coordinator, addressed the Board regarding Resolution No.

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25-08-W Declaring the Start of the 2025 Irrigation Season. He noted the critically dry conditions at the start of 2025, and that with recent rains and projections of additional wet weather anticipated within the next week, the water supply outlook for SSJID seemed to be improving. Mr. Nakagawa stated that SSJID and OID will most likely be allocated the 600,000 acre-feet (AF) of inflow into New Melones Reservoir per the 1988 Agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation.

Staff recommended March 12, 2025 as the start date of the 2025 irrigation season, or later if rain is on the horizon. Staff also recommended that the General Manager advise the Board President on a postponed start date should hydrologic conditions warrant. It was mentioned that OID intends to start their irrigation season around March 3, and Modesto Irrigation District around March 12.

Board discussion included the timeline to begin bringing water into Woodward Reservoir in preparation for water deliveries, and inquired on the last date to confirm March 12 as the start of the 2025 irrigation season. Mr. Rietkerk responded that diversions into Woodward could occur as early as March 1, and confirmation on the irrigation season start date would occur around March 5 unless conditions warrant postponement.

MOTION: A motion was made by Director Roos and seconded by Director Van Ryn to approve adoption of Resolution 25-08-W Declaring the Start of the 2025 Irrigation Season as March 12, 2025.

**SOUTH SAN JOAQUIN IRRIGATION DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 25-08-W**

**DECLARING THE START OF 2025 IRRIGATION SEASON WITH NO INITIAL IMPOSITION OF
WATER ALLOTMENTS OR TIER II RESTRICTIONS**

WHEREAS, the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) is authorized to impose water allocations, restrictions, and water conservation measures pursuant to Sections 350 *et seq.* and Division 11 of the California Water Code, in the event of a present or threatened water shortage; and,

WHEREAS, SSJID has imposed such allotments and restrictions in the past, when SSJID's water supply was endangered due to multiple years of below-average precipitation which reduced inflow to and depleted storage levels within New Melones Reservoir, making such extraordinary conservation measures necessary; and,

WHEREAS, SSJID's Board of Directors adopted Resolution 00-21-O on November 14, 2000, which provides that the water supply to lands annexed after that date ". . . is subject to cutoff in order for the District to serve Original Landowners and to satisfy the District's contractual obligations to the Cities of Manteca, Escalon, Ripon, Lathrop and Tracy," and which cutoff is referred to below as "Tier II Restrictions;" and,

WHEREAS, hydrologic forecasts for the 2025 water year has informed SSJID to reasonably expect inflow into New Melones Reservoir to be less than 600,000 acre-feet which entitles SSJID and OID to the total amount of inflow into New Melones plus one-third of the difference between 600,000 acre-feet and the total inflow into New Melones pursuant to the 1988 Agreement and Stipulation with Bureau of Reclamation; and,

WHEREAS, the amount of water expected to be available to SSJID is anticipated to meet the full agricultural and municipal needs of the District for the 2025 water year provided that precipitation and runoff forecasts meet or exceed expectations; and,

WHEREAS, the expectation that SSJID's available water for the 2025 water year will be sufficient to fully meet the needs of its agricultural and municipal customers alleviating the need for extraordinary conservation measures in the form of allotments or Tier II restrictions at this time.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED by the Board of Directors of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District:

1. The foregoing Recitals are true and correct.
2. The 2025 Irrigation Season shall start no sooner than March 12, 2025, which is the first day irrigation customers may schedule and receive SSJID deliveries.
3. The Start of the 2025 Irrigation Season may be delayed due to local precipitation at the discretion of the President of this Board of Directors as informed by the General Manager.
4. There shall be no maximum limit on the number of inches of water that will be delivered to growers.
5. There shall be no Tier II restrictions imposed.
6. Deliveries of drinking water to the Cities of Manteca, Lathrop and Tracy will not be restricted.
7. Should unprecedented dry hydrology continue to undermine available water supplies necessary to meet anticipated SSJID demands, the Board reserves the right to reconsider water allotments and restrictions for the remainder of 2025 to assure the adequate allocation of available water supplies.
8. SSJID municipal and agricultural customers and employees are encouraged to take reasonable and appropriate measures to prevent unnecessary and wasteful use of water and are further encouraged to prudently and efficiently use available water resources.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District at a regular meeting thereof held this 25th day of February, 2025 by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	HOLBROOK ROOS SPYKSMA VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
NOES:	NONE
ABSTAIN:	NONE
ABSENT:	NONE

It was announced that all remaining items on the Closed Session agenda would be discussed. The Board took a brief recess at 10:25 a.m. and convened to Closed Session at 10:35 a.m.

Item #6 – CLOSED SESSION

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to Open Session at 1:06 p.m.

Item #7 – ANNOUNCEMENT OF REPORTABLE ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION

Disclosure of reportable actions taken in Closed Session, pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.1:
There were no reportable actions taken in Closed Session.

Item #8 – Brown Act Review

Deferred.

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Item #9 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

ATTEST:

Danielle Barney, Clerk of the Board