

# JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - REGULAR MEETING

## MINUTES

December 10, 2024

### ATTENDANCE

#### DIRECTORS PRESENT

Riley Chaney, President  
Robert Motte, Vice-President  
Robert Barcellos  
Wm. Cory Carvalho  
Andrew Groppetti

#### PUBLIC

- LANDOWNERS / GROWERS  
Sal Parra, Jr.  
Thomas Coleman, Coleman Farming Co.
- McMULLIN AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY  
Donnie Gagnani, Donnie Gagnani Farms

#### EXCUSED

None

#### CONSULTANTS

- LIGHTHOUSE PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LLC / CLOSED SESSION  
Andy Lynch (Zoom)

#### ABSENT

None

#### LEGAL COUNSEL

- YOUNG WOOLDRIDGE, LLP  
Alan F. Doud, Esq. (Zoom)  
Brett A. Stroud, Esq. (Zoom)
- BARTKIEWICZ KRONICK & SHANAHAN / CLOSED SESSION  
Ryan S. Bezerra, Esq. (Zoom)

#### STAFF PRESENT

Manny Amorelli, General Manager  
Kenneth Mancini, Superintendent  
Walter Flores-Barboza, Office Manager  
Donna Hanneman, Secretary

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### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT (“District”) was held Tuesday, December 10, 2024, in the District office located at 8749 Ninth Street, San Joaquin, California. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m., by President, Riley Chaney. A quorum was at all times present and acting.

### **2. ADDITIONS / CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no corrections/additions to the Agenda.

### **3. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST** [FPPC §87105]

Directors were given an opportunity to identify potential conflicts-of-interest with items appearing on the Agenda. None were reported.

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## 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the public were given an opportunity to directly address the Board to comment on any item of interest before or during consideration of the item.

## 15. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.8 - CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR

### a. FRESNO COUNTY APN 030-090-24S (15.98 ACRES), 030-090-28S (366.07 ACRES) (10/16/2012)

Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
Landowner: Marilyn Fay Briggs, Trustee  
Tenant: Thomas Coleman

Comments:   
▶The Board previously approved a Water Delivery Agreement to the above severed parcels effective November 1, 2022, pending construction/activation of a private groundwater well. (Min: 12/13/2022).  
▶On November 14, 2023, Thomas Coleman appeared before the Board to report a well had been constructed; however, Pacific Gas & Electric was unable to provide power until their substation upgrades were completed late 2024/early 2025.  
▶Mr. Coleman reported as of this date, he is still waiting for power hook-up and requested the Board:  
(1) Authorize his ability to continue purchasing District irrigation water for 2025; and  
(2) Consider approving an agreement similar to the Schramm Agreement (07/16/2013) once purchase of these parcels is finalized. If an agreement is approved, he would appreciate assistance from the District to install an improved distribution system.

Mr. Coleman was thanked for attending and was informed the Board would consider his requests in Closed Session and will be promptly notified of the Board's decision.

## 5. OTHER BUSINESS

### a. MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was observed to honor the passing of ALICE M. DEAL (1933-2024), former landowner/grower.

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## 6. MINUTES

### a. REGULAR MEETING: NOVEMBER 12, 2024

M/S/C (A.GROPPETTI / R.MOTTE), to APPROVE as presented by the following vote:

**AYES:** 5 (A.Groppetti, R.Motte, R.Barcellos, W.Carvalho, R.Chaney)

## 7. TREASURER'S REPORT

In accordance with Water Code §24273, Mr. Amorelli presented reports as follows:

### FINANCIAL REPORTS

#### a. Interim Warrants: November 13-December 10, 2024 (Att.1)

#### b. Accounts Payable (Att.2)

Interim Warrants (bills paid) with supporting invoices and Accounts Payable invoices (unpaid bills) were presented for review/approval. M/S/C (R.MOTTE / A.GROPPETTI), to RATIFY/APPROVE Interim Warrants totaling \$413,321.90 and AUTHORIZE/APPROVE payment of Accounts Payable totaling \$308,062.68 by the following vote:

**AYES:** 5 (R.Motte, A.Groppetti, R.Barcellos, W.Carvalho, R.Chaney)

#### c. Payroll Certification: Pay Periods Ending November, 2024 (Att.3)

A listing of payroll checks totaling \$76,759.22 (net) issued to employees and members of the Board was reviewed and certified by the President, General Manager and Office Manager.

#### d. Income Statements (Budget-to-Actual): Period Ending November 30, 2024

#### e. Cash Position Report: November 30, 2024

#### f. Accounts Receivable Activity Report: November 30, 2024

## 8. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Amorelli presented his verbal report encompassing operations, maintenance, projects and other District matters for the month of November, 2024, as follows:

### OPERATIONS

- ▶ Water Deliveries: November, 2024 - Water deliveries for the month of November were 1,154 acre-feet which is 299 acre-feet less than was delivered during November, 2024. The fiscal year-to-date total deliveries are at 48,406 acre-feet which is 4,380 acre-feet more than was delivered at this time during the last fiscal year.

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- ▶ Weekly TDS Readings: November 25, 2024
- ▶ Kings River Water Association (KRWA)
  - KRWA Storage Operations in Pine Flat Reservoir as of November 24, 2024, totaled 7.380 CFS-days.

## AGENCIES

- ▶ McMullin Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MAGSA) - Met with representatives on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Productive meeting.

## EVENTS

- ▶ Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) - Attended the ACWA Fall Conference December 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. Connected with many partners for productive networking.

## 9. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent, Kenneth Mancini, reported on the following activities.

- ▶ Finished another water year!
- ▶ Draining the system for inspection.
- ▶ Weir maintenance (cracks, boards)
- ▶ Booster maintenance
- ▶ PG&E hookups continue to be delayed.
- ▶ Constructing well discharges
- ▶ Application of pre-emergent sprays.

## 10. DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Directors were given an opportunity to inform the Board of meetings and/or conferences attended on behalf of the District.

### VICE-PRESIDENT, ROBERT MOTTE

- ▶ Attended the ACWA Fall Conference December 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>.
- ▶ Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) information projected a total of 500,000-1,000,000 acres of crop land will need to be retired to reduce demand on groundwater pumping to meet SGMA goals. Subsidence is the dominant issue.
- ▶ The Valley Ag Water Coalition presented excellent national/state information.
- ▶ Met with a number of people and felt the conference was well worth attending. Valuable networking opportunities. Encouraged Board members to consider attending future ACWA Conferences.

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## 11. ACTION ITEMS

a. RATHMANN ON-FARM RECHARGE PROJECT (10/08/2024)

One bid was received from Joe Nagra for the agricultural lease on the Rathmann On-Farm Project at \$151.00/acre. Mr. Amorelli will be meeting with Mr. Nagra to review the lease agreement.

## 12. REPORT ITEMS

a. ETHICS TRAINING (06/20/2006)

Biennial training is scheduled for 11:00 a.m.

b. MID-PACIFIC REGION WATER USERS' CONFERENCE: JANUARY 29-31, 2025, RENO, NV (12/10/2024)

Mr. Amorelli indicated he plans to attend this conference which is sponsored by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

### **ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION AT 10:24 A.M.**

Directors Attending:

Riley Chaney, President  
Robert Motte, Vice-President  
Robert Barcellos, Director  
Wm. Cory Carvalho, Director  
Andrew Groppetti, Director

Staff Attending

Manny Amorelli, General Manager

Consultants:

- Lighthouse Public Relations  
Andy Lynch (Zoom)

Legal Counsel

- Young Wooldridge, LLP  
Alan F. Doud, Esq. (Zoom)  
Brett A. Stroud, Esq. (Zoom)
- Bartkiewicz Kronick & Shanahan  
Ryan S. Bezerra, Esq. (Zoom)

## 13. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.9 - CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

a. SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO LITIGATION PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OR (3) OF SUBDIVISION (D):

4 CASES

## 14. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.9 - CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-EXISTING LITIGATION

AS DEFENDANT: 3 CASES

a. NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL, ET AL, V HAALAND, ET AL

U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California  
Case No. 1:5-CV-01207LJO-GSA

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- b. CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, RESTORE THE DELTA AND PLANNING & CONSERVATION LEAGUE V UNITED STATES BUREAU OF RECLAMATION ET AL (06/08/2021)  
United States District Court, Eastern District of California  
Case No. 1:20-CV-00706 DAD-EPG
- c. MCMULLIN AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY V JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT Fresno  
County Superior Court Case No. 24CECG03049 (08/13/2024)

AS PLAINTIFF: 2 CASES

- d. KINGS RIVER WATER ASSOCIATION ET AL V. JAMES VERBOON ET AL  
Kings County Superior Court, Case No. 15 C0304
- e. JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT V. MCMULLIN AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY  
Santa Clara County Superior Court, Case No. 23CV417565

AS INTERVENOR: 1 CASE

- f. CITY OF FRESNO, ET AL V. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
United States Court of Federal Claims, Case No. 1:16-CV-01276-MCW

## 15. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.8 - CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR

- a. FRESNO COUNTY APN 030-090-24S (15.98 ACRES), 030-090-28S (366.07 ACRES) (10/16/2012)  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
Landowner: Marilyn Fay Briggs, Trustee  
Tenant: Thomas Coleman  
Under Negotiation: Price, terms & conditions of possible real property and/or water supply transactions
- b. JAMES & TRANQUILLITY NEGOTIATIONS  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
Tranquillity Irrigation District: Danny Wade  
Kings River Lower River Units: Scott Sills  
Under Negotiation: Price, terms & conditions of possible real property and/or water supply transactions
- c. SOUTHWEST GROUNDWATER RECHARGE PROJECT (11/13/2012)  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
Fresno Irrigation District: Bill Stretch  
Under Negotiation: Price, terms and conditions of possible real property and/or water supply transactions, operations & maintenance.

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- d. WATER BANKING & TRANSFERS (04/19/2018)  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
To Be Determined  
Under Negotiation: Price, terms and conditions of possible water supply transactions.
- e. WATER BANKING & TRANSFERS: MCMULLIN AREA GSA (06/22/2021)  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
McMullin GSA: Matthew Hurley, General Manager  
Under Negotiation: Price, terms and conditions of possible water supply transactions.
- f. FRESNO COUNTY APN 033-040-92S, 61.06 ACRES, SAN JOAQUIN, CA  
FRESNO COUNTY APN 033-040-60S, 1.72 ACRES, SAN JOAQUIN, CA  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
Landowner: Jasbir S./Shinderpal K. Sran Trustees of the Jasbir S. Sran and Shinderpal K. Sran Trust of 2014 (Formerly Orlando Ranch)  
Under Negotiation: Price, terms & conditions of possible real property and/or water supply transactions
- g. FRESNO COUNTY APN 033-050-41S, SAN JOAQUIN, CA  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
Landowner: PCR Farms LLC  
Under Negotiation: Price, terms & conditions of possible real property and/or water supply transactions

**RECONVENED IN OPEN SESSION AT 11:20 A.M.**

## 16. REPORT ON ACTIONS TAKEN DURING CLOSED SESSION Gov. Code 54957.1

Following Closed Session deliberation, the following actions were initiated on the following matters:

### 15. CLOSED SESSION: GOVERNMENT CODE §54956.8 - CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR

- a. FRESNO COUNTY APN 030-090-24S (15.98 ACRES), 030-090-28S (366.07 ACRES) (10/16/2012)  
Negotiating Parties: James Irrigation District: General Manager/Designee  
Landowner: Marilyn Fay Briggs, Trustee  
Tenant: Thomas Coleman  
Action: M/S/C (R.CHANEY / A.GROPPETTI) to EXTEND STANDARD DISTRICT WATER SERVICE TO THE ABOVE-CAPTIONED PARCELS THROUGH 2025.  
**AYES: 5** (R.Chaney, A.Groppetti, R.Barcellos, W.Carvalho, R.Motte)

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## 17. ETHICS TRAINING

Alan Doud, Esq., Young Wooldridge LLP, conducted a live, 2-hour Ethics Training Class remotely by Zoom. The following were in attendance:

James Irrigation District

Robert Barcellos, Director  
Riley Chaney, President  
Wm. Cory Carvalho, Director  
Andrew Groppetti, Director  
Robert Motte, Vice-President

James Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Salvador Parra, Jr., Director

Reclamation District No. 1606

Gerald Kinnunen, President  
Matthew Carvalho, Trustee

Manny Amorelli, General Manager  
Walter Flores-Barboza, Office Manager  
Donna Hanneman, Secretary  
Kenneth Mancini, Superintendent

## 18. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was ADJOURNED at 1:02 p.m., until the next Regular Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 14, 2024.

RECORDED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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Donna Y. Hanneman, Secretary

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Riley Chaney, President

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Manny Amorelli, General Manager

## ATTACHMENTS:

1. Interim Warrants: November 13-December 10, 2024, \$413,321.90
2. Accounts Payable: \$308,062.68
3. Payroll Certification: Pay Periods Ending November, 2024, \$76,759.22 (net)