

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
INDIAN WELLS VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

September 14, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Indian Wells Valley Water District was called to order by President Kicinski at 4:30 p.m. in the Board of Directors Hearing Room, 500 West Ridgecrest Boulevard, Ridgecrest, California.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by David Saint-Amand.

CALL TO ORDER

DIRECTORS PRESENT: President Ronald R. Kicinski
Vice President David C.H. Saint-Amand
Director Charles D. Griffin
Director Mallory J. Boyd
Director Stan G. Rajtora

PLEDGE

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None.

ROLL CALL

STAFF PRESENT: Renée Morquecho, General Manager
Jim Worth, Attorney
Justin Thompson, Chief Engineer
Tyrell Staheli, Chief Financial Officer
John Svika, Operations Manager
Isabel Tejeda, Recording Secretary

STAFF ATTENDING

REMOTELY: George Croll, Special Projects Coordinator

AGENDA DECLARATION

Recording Secretary, Isabel Tejeda, reported that the agenda for today's Regular Board Meeting was posted on Thursday, September 10, 2026.

**AGENDA
DECLARATION**

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

None.

**CONFLICT OF
INTEREST**

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk.

**PUBLIC
COMMENTS**

With no further Board or Public comments, President Kicinski recessed the meeting and adjourned to Closed Session at 4:33 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

The meeting was reconvened in Closed Session at 4:36 p.m.

**CLOSED
SESSION**

Closed Session was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened to Open Session at 6:06 p.m.

Jim Worth reported the Board declared the real property identified as the Grant Airport and Stine Ranch as surplus property and authorized staff to explore options for selling the properties.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk and Mike Sinnott.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT**

CONSENT CALENDAR

MOTION: was made by Director Boyd and seconded by Director Griffin approving the Minutes of the August 10, 2026, Regular Board Meeting, and Payment of Accounts Payable totaling \$1,339,363.38. Motion was carried, unanimously. (Ayes: Kicinski, Rajtora, Griffin, Boyd, Saint-Amand. Nays: None. Absent: None.)

**CONSENT
CALENDAR**

October Board Meeting Date

President Kicinski explained to the Board and Public that the October Regular Board Meeting date falls on a holiday and there will be community forums for local candidates the same week. President Kicinski would like the Board to keep those events in mind when choosing the alternative date for the next Board Meeting. The Board and staff discussed their schedules and decided October 15, 2026 will be the date for the October Board Meeting.

**OCTOBER BOARD
MEETING DATE**

ADMINISTRATION / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Renee Morquecho presented a resolution that authorizes the General Manager to request and apply for funding on behalf of the District for the Stark Street Consolidation construction. Dr. Morquecho explained that this was recommended by the District's grant manager as the first step in the process. The same resolution was passed for the Dune 3 consolidation.

**STARK STREET
CONSOLIDATION
RESOLUTION**

MOTION: was made by Director Griffin and seconded by Director Boyd approving the resolution as presented by staff. Motion was carried, unanimously by the following roll call vote:

President Kicinski:	Aye
Vice President Saint-Amand:	Aye
Director Boyd:	Aye
Director Griffin :	Aye
Director Rajtora:	Aye

Director Griffin informed the Board there was a discussion in the Administration / Executive committee about adding an Agenda item that addresses how the District can assist customers with leaks.

Finance Committee

Ty Staheli informed the Board of payment processing costs that have increased from an average of \$60,000 per year to \$250,000 per year. Mr. Staheli explained there has been an industry-wide movement to push card fees onto customers. The District's current payment processing company offers the option to pass the card processing fees directly to the customer, the fee would be \$3 minimum or 3.5% of the payment. Cash, check, electronic check, ACH, and bank BillPay payments would continue to be accepted at no cost to the customer. Mr. Staheli estimates the District would save approximately \$110,000. The District will provide at least a two months' notice to customers.

**CREDIT CARD
FEES**

MOTION: was made by Director Boyd and seconded by Director Rajtora approving staff's recommendation of passing payment processing fees for card payments to customers. Motion was carried, unanimously by the following roll call vote:

President Kicinski:	Aye
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Vice President Saint-Amand: Aye
Director Rajtora: Aye
Director Boyd: Aye
Director Griffin : Aye

COMPREHENSIVE ADJUDICATION

COMPREHENSIVE ADJUDICATION

Jim Worth reported that the District is still working with all the involved parties to select a Special Water Master that everyone is comfortable with. Mr. Worth also informed the Board that there was a name provided by the State Board as a potential Special Water Master. There is a hearing set for September 24th with the court and if there is not a Special Master selected during the hearing, then there may be a process decided by the Judge to follow in order to make a decision. Mr. Worth informed the public and the Board that the Phase 2 closing trial brief is due on September 21st and confirmed it will be filed on time. The brief will be made available on the District's website once it is filed.

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk, Mike Sinnott and Mike Neel.

INDIAN WELLS VALLEY GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (IWVGA)

IWVGA

Vice President Saint-Amand reported that the closed session at the last IWVGA meeting went until 12:30 pm which resulted in seven out of the twelve people that were in attendance to leave before open session began. Mr. Saint-Amand requested that the closed session be moved to the end of the meeting in order to facilitate public participation. Vice President Saint-Amand reported there was a review of the draft 2027 budget for the IWVGA and he did request some clarification on a few of the items in the budget that he expects to be cleared up at the October meeting. There was also discussion on a potential unanticipated water loss program that would assist customers in paying for increased bills caused by leaks.

Special Projects Coordinator, George Croll, gave a presentation on the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) funding for the Imported Water Pipeline Project.

The Board heard public comment from Mike Neel, Mike Sinnott and Renee Westa-Lusk.

General Manager Update

GENERAL MANAGER UPDATE

Renee Morquecho reported there was only one significant event in August which was already reported on at the last Board meeting. Dr. Morquecho also reported that SB1125 (State rate assistance fund), AB 2739 (Community Water Affordability Program), AB 2469 and 2619 (water use by data centers) are all waiting on the Governor's signature. There was nothing significant to report in regards to personal safety or injuries.

Engineering Update/Water Supply Update

ENGINEERING UPDATE

Water Systems Consolidations:

- o Inyokern CSD: Nothing to report at this time.
- o Rademacher Way/Gordon St: There will be a meeting this week for a last attempt at getting the final easement. If staff is unable to get the final easements the Construction crew will move forward and complete the project with two dead ends.

- o Dune 3: The contractor has been given the Notice to Proceed on August 31st which starts their 250 days to complete, which would be May 8, 2027. No start day has been scheduled as of today.
- o Stark Street: Final design was received from Krieger and Stewart. Staff will continue working on obtaining easements for the project.

George Croll gave an update on the potential Prop 4-funded storm water capture project. He continues to meet with different agencies to gather support the project. Mr. Croll explained the District would like to capture storm water as it heads down Little Dixie Wash. Mr. Croll continues to work on the Storm Water Resource Plan which is required to apply for the grant.

Justin Thompson reported that Arsenic Treatment Plant 1 is active and running. General maintenance will be performed regularly during the pumping season. There is still maintenance to complete at Arsenic Treatment Plant 2. Staff is waiting on a flow sensor to be delivered. Mr. Thompson also reported the final camera installation is being completed at Arsenic Treatment Plant 2 and Well 31.

**WATER SUPPLY
UPDATE**

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Ty Staheli reported total billed consumption for the month of August. Mr. Staheli presented an update to the June 2026 Financial Report. Total revenues are just over \$20 million, expenditures at \$18.7 million which is \$1.1 million below budget, this results in a net of \$1.774 million. Mr. Staheli informed the Board additional year-entries have yet to be made that will impact the net revenue. Estimated year-to-date revenues as of August 31, 2026, are \$2,562,261 and expenses are \$2,268,010, therefore revenues exceeded expenditures by \$294,000 which is better than budget by \$840,589. The District ratepayers have paid \$20,791,956 to the IWVGA in replenishment and extraction fees. Staff also provided an update on delinquent account turn offs and WaterSmart alerts.

**FINANCIAL
UPDATE**

The Board heard public comment from Renee Westa-Lusk.

Operations Update

John Svika reported there were 54 valves exercised. There were 240 USA locates. Staff reported 28 after-hour calls. For the month there were 35 service lateral repairs, 17 lateral replacements, 93 valves were turned and 30 customer assists.

**OPERATIONS
UPDATE**

Mr. Svika also gave an update to the Board that the District's metal building foundation is out of the engineering stage.

BOARD COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Director Boyd thanked the staff for their hard work and gave praise to George Croll for his well-informed WRDA presentation.

**BOARD
COMMENTS/
FUTURE AGENDA
ITEMS**

Director Rajtora reiterated to staff that he would also like to see an Agenda item in November that addresses how the District can assist customers with leaks. He also asked staff if there is a better process so that the financial reports are more accurate throughout the year instead of waiting for end of year reports.

Director Griffin thanked the Board agreeing to get an Agenda item that addresses how the District can assist customers with leaks, He also

expressed he would like the District to create a new position for a governmental affairs or grant writer.

Vice President Saint-Amand thanked the staff for their dedication to transparency and praised them on their efforts that have resulted in District Transparency and District of Distinction awards. He also reassured the public that he will continue to advocate for the IWVGA to have their Board meetings at a more convenient time for the public.

DATE OF NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The date of the next Regular Board Meeting is Thursday, October 15, 2026.

**DATE OF NEXT
BOARD MEETING**

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,



Isabel Tejada

_Recording Secretary

APPROVED: October 15, 2026