

Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority

MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2025:

A meeting of the Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority was convened at 7:02 a.m. both remotely through technological means and in the Pinal County Offices in Casa Grande, Arizona.

Directors Present:

- Bill Collings, Papago Butte DWID
- Bryan Hartman, Maricopa-Stanfield Irrigation & Drainage District
- Derek McEachern, Central Arizona Irrigation and Drainage District
- Jake Lenderking, Water utilities without a CAP water subcontract
- Bob Marsh, City of Maricopa
- Craig McFarland, City of Casa Grande
- Keith Eaton, Town of Florence
- David Malewitz, City of Eloy (at 7:05 A.M.)
- Stephen Q. Miller, Pinal County
- Fred Schneider, Water utilities with a CAP water subcontract

Also Present:

- Joe Singleton, PCWAA Executive Director
- Cheyenne Walsh, Compass Strategies
- Mitch Basefsky, Central Arizona Project
- Ricardo Aguirre

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Bill Collings called the meeting to order at 7:02.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Craig McFarland moved to approve the minutes as drafted from the meeting of March 11, 2025. Fred Schneider seconded the motion, which carried 9-0. **COLLINGS, EATON, HARTMAN, LENDERKING, MARSH, McEACHERN, McFARLAND, MILLER, SCHNEIDER.**

LOBBYIST REPORT:

Cheyenne Walsh of Compass Strategies told the Board that the PCWAA bonding bill was ready for a vote of the full House. She said the legislation had been through the Committee of the Whole yesterday, where it was amended to fix a typo. She said that it could receive a vote this week, although federal officials from Washington D.C. would be at the State Capitol today, so she surmised that little legislative action would happen.

Walsh said that Sen. Shope had held another "Ag-to-Urban" stakeholder meeting last week, and was holding another one tomorrow. Walsh said that the group continued to explore a legislative path forward for the provision. Walsh added that this could continue until the end of the legislative session. She said that the process had now moved past the committee phase, so lawmakers would now be mostly working on just existing proposals and the budget. She said that republican legislators and the Governor's Office were currently negotiating supplemental funding for the developmentally disabled. Walsh said that current funding would run out at the end of the month.

Craig McFarland said that the Pinal Partnership had sent a letter in support of the PCWAA bonding legislation, Senate bill 1134. He asked to be kept informed regarding the Ag-to-Urban processes, and for any available help on supporting the Pinal CAGR legislation. Walsh said that she would check in with the other lobbyists working on the topic.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Stephen Miller said that the expenses for the month were standard, with an invoice from Matrix New World leaving about a \$1,400 balance remaining on the current contract with them. Miller noted the bank balance from the last bank statement. Jake Lenderking moved to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills as presented. Craig McFarland seconded the motion, which carried 10-0. **COLLINGS, EATON, HARTMAN, LENDERKING, MARSH, McEACHERN, McFARLAND, MALEWITZ, MILLER, SCHNEIDER.**

BARTLETT DAM MODIFICATION / SCIF:

Bill Collings said that there was not much new to report on these items. He said that the Bartlett Dam Steering Committee would meet again on June 11, 2025. Collings said that he hoped to have more direction from the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) by then, particularly regarding the amount of water that the federal government might want from the project, and the funding situation.

Stephen Miller asked what the BOR would do with any water that they might take from the project. Collings said that that he thought that they would use it to meet their own obligations, including tribal ones, and possibly leave some water behind the dam to bolster water elevation levels at Lake Mead.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Joe Singleton told members that the Ag-to-Urban stakeholder group being run by the legislative Natural Resource chairs had met twice since the last PCWAA board meeting. Singleton said that it appeared that legislative staff and elected members were communicating with the Governor's Office and ADWR staff, but it was not apparent that they were coordinating their work. Singleton told members that there were still significant differences in the program being put forward by ADWR and the legislative proposal. He said that the current differences include the volumes of water made available, the level of replenishment that would be called for, and the eligibility of the acres and water providers that would qualify. Singleton clarified that the program proposed by ADWR would be for providers with a designation of assured water supply, while the legislative proposal contemplated both designated providers and lands appurtenant to a certificate of assured water supply.

Singleton said that the PCWA legislation was ready for passage. He noted that Cheyenne Walsh and some of the PCWAA partners had put in a lot of effort in getting the bill to this point, as its outlook a month ago was not good.

Singleton told members that he had sent out the partnership funding letters. He said that he had received checks from Maricopa-Stanfield IDD, Central Arizona IDD, and Pinal County. He said that the funding requests were generally sent to the partner organizations' manager. Singleton said that the letters showed the first half of a 10% increase in contribution levels that the Board voted for last year, with the other 5% increase due in the next fiscal year. He said that he had heard back from ADWR staff regarding entering an IGA with the Department for their funding of PCWAA. He told the Board that ADWR was asking for reporting requirements within the IGA that seemed to match PCWAA's statutory requirements. Singleton said that there were some technical points to the draft language that he wanted to clarify with Department staff before moving forward, but the larger issues seemed OK.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Chairman Collings said that he had been working with a cloud seeding consultant, who was supposed to submit a proposal to the Authority by the end of April. Collings said that he hoped to have this information before the May board meeting, to weigh the affordability of a cloud seeding program with updated cost figures. Collings asked David Malewitz for information on Eloy-owned hangar space at the City's airport, to determine if the space could accommodate an aircraft rigged for cloud seeding. Joe Singleton mentioned that he had talked to a second consultant and hoped to have another quote by the end of April. Collings added that he was considering emerging technology for rain harvesting as a future augmentation means. Collings said that those studying the technology thought that the cost could eventually be refined to 2¢/gallon. Collings said that in the near future he wanted to go back through the PCWAA strategic plan to evaluate progress.

CALL TO THE AUTHORITY:

There was a call to the Authority. Stephen Miller said that as the end of the legislative session nears, he may want to convene the Pinal Stakeholders Group for an update. Craig McFarland said that the Pinal Partnership's water group was working on the Pinal CAGRD bill (H.B. 2753), and could use some additional help. McFarland said that some of the state-level legislative chaos could be affecting Colorado River negotiations. Keith Eaton said that as he was becoming more knowledgeable of water issues and he was available for training.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There was a call to the public. Mitch Basefsky of CAP said that the Colorado River conditions were slightly better than they were last month. He said that several storms in California could lead to them taking less from Lake Mead, and filling California's Intentionally Created Surplus space, which would bolster water levels at Lake Mead. Basefsky said that in consideration of this and other factors, he expected the system to remain in Tier 1 shortage conditions for next year. He said that all the Colorado River negotiators were called to Washington D.C. yesterday by the Dept. of the Interior. He said that there was still no Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner. Basefsky said that the April CAP Board meeting in Pinal was a success, and thanked Stephen Miller for helping to setup the meeting and the dinner the night before.

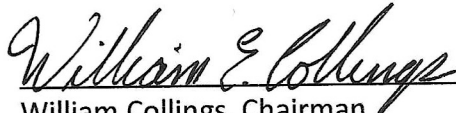
NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting will be held on May 13, 2025 at 7:00 a.m.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 a.m.

ATTEST:


William Collings, Chairman


Stephen Q. Miller, Secretary-Treasurer