

Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority

MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2026:

A meeting of the Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority was convened at 7:01 a.m. both remotely through technological means and in the Pinal County Offices in Casa Grande, Arizona.

Directors Present:

- Bill Collings, Papago Butte DWID
- Stephen Miller, Pinal County
- Bryan Hartman, Maricopa-Stanfield Irrigation & Drainage District
- Derek McEachern, Central Arizona Irrigation and Drainage District
- Craig McFarland, City of Casa Grande
- Fred Schneider, Water utilities with a CAP water subcontract

Also Present:

- Joe Singleton, PCWAA Executive Director
- Cheyenne Walsh, Compass Strategies
- Nathan Miller, MATRIX New World Engineering
- Mitch Basefsky, Central Arizona Project
- Lonnie Frost
- Sara Carroll, Arizona Special District Alliance

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CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Bill Collings called the meeting to order at 7:01.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Craig McFarland moved to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2026 Board meeting. Bryan Hartman seconded the motion, which carried 6-0. **COLLINGS, HARTMAN, McEACHERN, McFARLAND, MILLER, SCHNEIDER.**

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Stephen Miller noted the expenses on the List of Bills for the month, citing payment to Compass Strategies and reimbursement to Joe Singleton for the phone bill. He noted the bank statement, quoting a bank balance of \$755,463.96 as of the end of January 2026. Bill Collings noted that the expenses-to-date appeared within the budgeted amounts. Fred Schneider moved to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills as presented. Craig McFarland seconded the motion, which carried 6-0.

PCWAA CLOUD SEEDING:

Bill Collings reminded members of the Board presentation they had heard that detailed an analysis of a cloud seeding program. Collings said that after further discussion with the presenters, that he thought it would be a good idea to have a more in-depth analysis of the Pinal cloud seeding program that PCWAA had contracted for the previous summer. Collings said that he had asked West Consultants to submit a proposal for such an analysis of the PCWAA program that includes a cost-benefit analysis.

BARTLETT DAM MODIFICATION / SCIF:

Bill Collings told members that the needs subcommittee of the Verde Reservoirs Sediment Mitigation Project (i.e. "Bartlett Dam") had met to make recommendation of which alternative to use in reallocating capacity among the project partners as the available amount changes either through partners dropping out or because of accounting for a portion of capacity to the federal government. Collings said that the subcommittee forwarded both options 1 and 3 for the consideration of the steering committee. He told the group that the original PCWAA allocation amount was 7,227 AF of capacity of the proposed new space behind Bartlett Dam. He said that option 1 would leave the Authority with 5,064 AF and option 3 would result in an allocation to PCWAA of 4,152 AF of capacity. Collings said that the steering committee would be meeting on February 12, 2026, to consider the issue. He added that one of the differences in the two remaining methodologies considered a proposed minimum

capacity of 4,500 AF from the original allocations, which still exists under Option 1 and a figure that corresponds to the original minimum as a percentage of the original whole applied to a new, lower capacity that accounts for 50% of the project total going to the federal government.

Collings told the group that there had been several meetings regarding the SRP-CAP Interconnection Facility (SCIF) project. He said that interested parties were hearing about the issues concerning the project, particularly those about water quality. He said that the major issue right now was that SRP had detected Per/Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the water at the diversion dam, roughly in the area of the interconnect facility. Collings said that CAP water quality standards called for PFAS to be non-detectable for waters introduced to the CAP system. Collings said that SCIF participants, including PCWAA, were scheduled to meet on February 23, 2026. Stephen Miller said that he understood that the water quality varied between the Salt and Verde river systems within SRP and created additional complexity.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Joe Singleton told members that he had talked with staff at Baker Tilly as they had assigned a new accountant to the PCWAA account. He added that the partnership funding letters should go out soon, and that he was updating the Florence Town Council on PCWAA activities next week at their Town Council meeting.

LOBBYIST REPORT:

Cheyenne Walsh of Compass Strategies told the Board that there were a lot of water bills this session, but that next week was the first legislative committee deadline, where bills that were not heard in committee would be considered dead unless brought back on a striker. She said that the bill tracking list that she provided to the Authority would reflect this, leaving staff and members with fewer bills to follow moving forward. Walsh told the group that both Natural Resource committees were meeting later today. She said that Rep. Griffin's commingling bill was on the agenda, which the PCWAA had supported during the last several legislative sessions. She said that the version currently being considered, H.B. 2026 did not contain additive language from Spencer Kamps of the Home Builders Association of Central Arizona (HBACA). Walsh said that she assumed that PCWAA would like to continue their support of the legislation. Bill Collings confirmed that the Authority would continue to support the commingling legislation.

She told the group that HB 2827 and SB 1447 sought to extend the water banking portion of Pinal AMA withdrawal fees for 4 years but continue to direct that portion of withdrawal fee money to the Temporary Groundwater and Irrigation Efficiency Projects Fund, which would be extended by 5 years. Walsh opined that these were also probably good bills for PCWAA to support. Collings agreed. Walsh said that Rep. Griffin was running HCR 2038 about the Colorado River's 7 Basin States agreement. Collings asked the group for opinions on HCR

2038. Craig McFarland said that he personally supported it and thought that the Authority should too. Collings told Walsh that PCWAA would support HCR 2038.

Walsh said that she anticipated several bills next week sponsored by the HBACA, that include concepts like growth in outlying areas and working through deficiencies in physical availability of groundwater. Walsh suggested monitoring these bills for now. She added that the state may be approaching a point where decisions on operating the assured water supply program as it has been, specifically with the 100-year of physical availability of groundwater requirement, would need to be made. Walsh indicated that a counter argument to the current operating parameters was that if the water was replenished, it did not make a difference. Bill Collings said that he had spoken to CAGRDR staff at the dinner before the February CAP Board meeting, and staff indicated that they did not have any more water to do additional replenishment and were opposed to some of these bills and amendments. Collings said that he supported the CAGRDR opposition to these bills. Joe Singleton agreed with Cheyenne Walsh, saying that he felt that they were approaching the point where the 100-year requirement or the depth-to-water limit would be challenged. Fred Schneider said that the 100-year requirement was almost a third rail issue. Craig McFarland asked if there were current bills dealing with depth-to-Water requirements. Walsh said that HB 2095 dealt with well depth and HB 2027 would remove physical availability as a requirement in the event of replenishment. Collings said that he thought the Authority should oppose these bills. McFarland asked Walsh if she thought that these bills would advance through the legislative process. Walsh said that they could, probably along party lines and would likely be vetoed by the Governor. She added that CAP was opposing several bills, whereas in the past, they did not do so. Singleton asked Walsh how Spencer Kamps might react to the Authority's opposition of any of these bills. Walsh indicated that Kamps was helping with the PCWAA bonding legislation. She said that he was supposed to be talking to Representatives Kolodin and Olson, who had both voted against the PCWAA bonding legislation last year. Walsh asked if PCWAA wanted to oppose the bills the CAGRDR was opposing. Collings said that he would.

Stephen Miller said that he had a list of the position that CAP had taken on currently pending legislation. He said that they were supporting HB 2758, 2116, and 2038. He said that CAP was opposing HB 2263, 2161, 2099, 2094 and 2095 and SB 1200, 1201, and 1288. Miller told the group that CAP was monitoring HB 2722, 2757, 2054, and 2055 as well as SB 1176.

Fred Schneider suggested caution in opposing Spencer Kamps bills, perhaps selectively opposing the bills that might be more likely to advance. Craig McFarland concurred. Schneider asked if there were CAGRDR-opposed bills that the PCWAA could strategically support, noting that some would not make it through opposition from ADWR / the Governor's Office. Walsh said that she was not sure that any of the bills would make it through the Governor's Office. Walsh said that if the Authority wanted to show support for the CAGRDR that they might oppose HB 2027 (as recently amended). Stephen Miller suggested that remaining neutral on these bills might be a better strategy for now, while allowing more time to see which ones might progress through the legislative process. Bill Collings and other members agreed.

Walsh noted that the other bills that PCWAA had taken positions on at their work study session were the various cloud seeding and solar radiation management (SRM) bills. She said that Rep. Fink's SRM legislation moved through committee, while Sen. Farnsworth's mirror legislation also moved through committee. Walsh said that Farnsworth's cloud seeding bill, which also mirror's legislation that Rep. Fink is running in the House, also moved through committee in the Senate. Walsh reminded members that PCWAA supported the cloud seeding legislation and remained neutral on the SRM bills. Walsh said that she did not know if these bills would go through the process any further and said that she thought it was unlikely that they would be signed by the Governor in any event. Bill Collings asked which bill Rep. Griffin was running to promote winter cloud seeding. Walsh said it was HB 2024, noting that PCWAA had discussed asking for a more inclusive amendment.

Bryan Hartman asked if Walsh had spoken to Russell Smolden, the lobbyist for MSIDD, regarding some questions that Smolden had regarding the PCWAA bonding legislation. Walsh said that she had not but would send him a note to connect with him.

PCWAA FUNDING:

Stephen Miller said that the group had met. He said that Cheyenne Walsh and Mark Barnes were assisting in organizing some aspects of the meetings. Miller said that for him it boiled down to two things—do you form a district and can PCWAA form a district outside of the AMA boundaries or take efforts to secure pumping tax revenues for the Authority. Bill Collings noted that regarding PCWAA issuing bonds, not having a dedicating revenue stream was an issue. Collings said that one possibility might be to enter twenty-year IGAs with members to dedicate funding to the Authority. Miller said that he hoped to schedule the bonding attorneys for the next meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

There was no report from the Chair.

CALL TO THE AUTHORITY:

There was a call to the Authority. There was no response.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

There was a call to the public. Mitch Basefsky of Central Arizona Project told the group that the snowpack figures had continued to decline over the last month. He said that current numbers were running behind the 2018 figures, which was the second-worst year ever, and approaching the 2002 numbers. He noted that the river was in Tier 1 shortage condition for

this year and while it was previously thought likely to also be in 2027, it was now thought that conditions might warrant a Tier 2 shortage for 2027. Basefsky said that as of February 2, 2026, that conditions were at 61% of the 30-year median average for snow water equivalent. He noted that reduced figures could lead to 500,000 AF less being released from Lake Powell into Lake Mead.

He noted that the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for future Colorado river operations released in January consisted of 5 action alternatives and a no action alternative. He said that the alternatives in the draft EIS were not good options for Arizona. He noted that the basic coordination alternative, which seems like the likely choice in absence of an agreement among the states, shows only a 16% cut on paper, but those cuts come nearly all (77%) from CAP and P4 on-river users. Basefsky noted that California would take no cuts in this scenario, and that the upper basin states took no mandatory cuts in any of the scenarios. Basefsky said that CAP was developing a response to the draft EIS, which were due by March 2, 2026. Basefsky added that the alternatives did not recognize provisions of the Colorado River Compact, which require 75 million acre-feet to be released from the Upper Basin to the Lower Basin over a 10-year period. Stephen Miller noted that California and Nevada were working with Arizona on solutions.

Sara Carroll, the administrative director of the Arizona Special Districts Alliance (ASDA) told the Board that her organization seeks to raise awareness and advocate for local special districts. She asked if her group could do a presentation on ASDA legislative concerns and perspectives of domestic and irrigation members of ASDA. Bill Collings said that he would add an ASDA presentation to next month's agenda.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

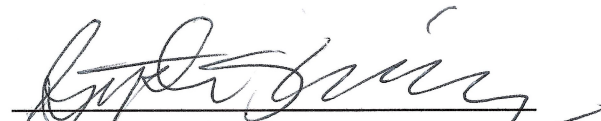
The next meeting will be held on March 10, 2026 at 7:00 a.m.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 a.m.

ATTEST:


William Collings, Chairman


Stephen Q. Miller, Secretary-Treasurer