Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority

MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2026:

A meeting of the Pinal County Water Augmentation Authority was convened at 7:00 a.m. both remotely through technological means and in the Pinal County Offices in Casa Grande, Arizona.

Directors Present:

- Bill Collings, Papago Butte DWID
- Melissa Campbell, City of Coolidge
- Stephen Miller, Pinal County
- Bryan Hartman, Maricopa-Stanfield Irrigation & Drainage District
- Mackenzie Letcher, City of Eloy (at 7:02 a.m.)
- Jake Lenderking, Water utilities without a CAP water subcontract
- 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
- Mitch Basefsky, Central Arizona Project
- Lonnie Frost
- Sara Carroll, Arizona Special District Alliance
- Carol Shrock, Arizona Special Districts Alliance

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Bill Collings called the meeting to order at 7:00.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Craig McFarland moved to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2026 Special Board meeting and the minutes of the February 10, 2026 Board meeting. Melissa Campbell seconded the motion, which carried 8-0. **CAMPBELL, COLLINGS, HARTMAN, LENDERKING, McEACHERN, McFARLAND, MILLER, SCHNEIDER.**

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Stephen Miller noted the expenses on the List of Bills for the month, citing payments to Compass Strategies, to Baker Tilly for accounting work and tax form preparation, P.O. Box fees, and an insurance payment for Director's and Officers. He noted the bank statement, with a bank balance of $744,279.13 as of the end of February 2026. Fred Schneider moved to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills as presented. Jake Lenderking seconded the motion, which carried 9-0. **CAMPBELL, COLLINGS, HARTMAN, LENDERKING, LETCHER, McEACHERN, McFARLAND, MILLER, SCHNEIDER.**

PINAL SPECIAL DISTRICTS:

Bill Collings introduced Carol Shrock, Chair of the Arizona Special District's Alliance. Shrock noted that special districts in Arizona were special taxing districts with independent, popularly elected or locally appointed Governing Boards. She said that most revenues were derived from property taxes. She noted that in rural areas of the state that special districts provide for critical infrastructure for clean water, fire, sanitary and library districts, and hospital districts. She said that the Alliance, formed in 2023, currently consists of Pinal, Pima and Cochise counties members, as well as a few district members from other areas of the state. She said that as counties joined the Alliance, they discovered that there were about twice as many special districts as they had originally estimated. Shrock said that the Alliance seeks to provide education and resources to the special districts, noting that the Alliance and PCWAA could be resources to each other. Shrock said that special districts were defined in Title 48 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, noting that there were other districts, like Community Facilities Districts that do not fall under Title 48. Shrock said that those fall outside of here focus. Shrock told the group that the Pinal special districts served as a model for other counties.

Stephen Miller said that one of the issues that the county has with special districts is the lack of oversight on their finances, noting that the state Auditor General does not have the authority to audit them. Shrock said that there was no central repository of information for how special districts were supposed to be run, noting that some districts have particular

requirements. Miller asked if Shrock intended on pursuing legislative remedies for some of the statutory shortcomings in the legislation concerning special districts. Shrock said that she hoped to see better relationships and training mitigate some of the issues, noting that feedback from some counties indicated that they did not have the staff capacities to deal with many governance or enforcement issues.

Jake Lenderking thanked Shrock for the presentation, saying that he had not known how many special districts existed. Stephen Miller suggested that Shrock address the Counties Supervisors Association, noting that many of these issues fall back on the county when not properly addressed.

PCWAA CLOUD SEEDING:

Bill Collings told members that the two bills most directly effecting addressing cloud seeding had been pulled out of the legislative process. He said that for now the Authority was not planning to engage in cloud seeding this coming summer, and asked members for their input on continued cloud seeding, inviting them to contact himself or Joe Singleton.

BARTLETT DAM MODIFICATION / SCIF:

Bill Collings told the group that the Bartlett Dam Steering Committee had met on February 12, 2026. He said that the Committee approved the allocation 1 method for reallocating capacity among the project partners as the available amount changes. Collings said that option 1 would leave the Authority with 5,064 AF of capacity, which should roughly equate to 1,333 AF of water on an annualized basis. He noted that this was more than the alternative method would allow for PCWAA.

Collings told the group that the SRP-CAP Interconnection Facility (SCIF) project group had met on February 23, 2026. He said that the group reviewed project costs to proceed with the 60% design of the facility. Collings said that the PCWAA cost share for this stage of the project based on its 6 cubic feet per second allocation was $139,148 over two years. Joe Singleton added that the last CAP/SRP joint meeting had focused on water quality. He said that the major issue was that SRP had detected Per/Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the water and that the CAP standard for introducing water into their system for the constituent was non-detect. Singleton told members that issues concerning downstream tribal agriculture and the possibility of additional water treatment at municipal treatment plants were raised. Singleton said that meeting was the third of four contemplated joint meetings on the project, but a fourth had yet to be scheduled. He added that the Bartlett Steering Committee was scheduled to meet again on May 12, 2026.

Craig McFarland asked if most municipal providers were already treating their water for PFAs. Fred Schneider said that Arizona Water Company did not currently have to treat for PFAs in the Pinal system, although the company was dealing with the issue in some of its other

Arizona systems. Jake Lenderking said that Global Water Resources had a similar issue, and that they did not need to treat in the Pinal area. McFarland asked if the levels in the SRP were more than what the local utilities were encountering. Joe Singleton said that the levels discovered in the SRP system were within health and safety standards, but as any measured amount exceeds CAP's current non-detectable standard for introduction into their system, it caused a conflict. Carol Shrock noted that several of the smaller, rural systems that she worked with had encounter issues with PFAs as well. Mitch Basefsky of CAP said that they had had several hits for PFAs at Lake Pleasant. Basefsky noted that there were not introduction standards for Colorado River water, and that the CAP's introductory standards only applied to non-project water. Basefsky noted that the levels being detected in the SRP water were so small that they may not have been able to be detected several years ago. Stephen Miller noted that CAP delivery agreements to their customers do not guarantee any level of water quality. Bill Collings said that because the infrastructure was so important to many groups, that he thought that they would work out the issue. McFarland questioned continuing to spend money on something without certainty that it would be useable. Lenderking asked if the SCIF project could be slowed down while solutions to the water quality issues were found. Collings noted that PCWAA would need the SCIF to access SRP water from the Bartlett Dam project, but that they were two separate projects with two separate NEPA timelines. Collings said that he thought that stopping the design process would delay the project 2 – 4 years, which he was not in favor of doing.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Joe Singleton told members that the cloud seeding review that had been previously discussed for inclusion on the agenda had been delayed to further refine a scope of the project with the consultant. He said that he had done a presentation to the Florence Town Council on February 17, 2026. Singleton said that one of the councilmembers had said that they had received comment about PCWAA cloudseeding activities and level of public notification concerning the project.

Singleton said that there was a signing ceremony last week with Governor Hobbs to commemorate Arizona Water Company's ADAWS application being approved. Singleton said that it was nice to celebrate a policy win, and to recognize that a lot of the work and will to implement it came from Pinal. Singleton said that he had thanked ADWR Director Tom Buschatzke and Patrick Adams, the Water Policy Advisor to Gov. Hobbs for all their efforts in putting ADAWS in place. Singleton said that they expressed a hope to see Ag-to-Urban applications from Pinal. Bill Collings agreed, saying that they had told him that they hoped PCWAA would help promote applications. Stephen Miller asked Fred Schneider if Arizona Water Company had heard of many applications in the pipeline. Schneider said that they had heard from developers, but most were early in the entitlement process, particularly after a long period of little activity. Jake Lenderking said that Global had talked to several people. He noted that developers had bought farmland that they farmed or leased since purchasing it without always conveying the IGFR water rights to the smaller pieces of land that they subsequently sold. He said that it was worth bearing in mind when discussing development issues with

landowners that might want to utilize Ag-to-Urban to indicate that the water right conveyances need to be in order before proceeding with Ag-to-Urban. Singleton reminded members that the deadline to file annual water withdrawal and use reports with ADWR was the end of March.

LOBBYIST REPORT:

Cheyenne Walsh of Compass Strategies told the Board that HB 2098, the PCWAA bonding bill, would be heard in the Senate Natural Resources committee later today. She said that she did not anticipate problems or amendments to the legislation. Walsh told members that the commingling bill was also scheduled to be heard today, noting PCWAA's support for that legislation. She said that the bill was moving along party lines. Walsh said that although the cloud seeding bills had stopped moving through the process, the solar radiation management (SRM) bill had passed along party lines and was ready to be transmitted to the Governor. Walsh said that she thought it was more likely than not that the SRM bill would be vetoed. She said that the next committee deadline was Friday, March 27, 2026, with the Appropriations committees getting one extra week to hear bills.

PCWAA FUNDING:

Jake Lenderking said that the group had met. He said that the meeting discussed needs and tried to backtrack into funding. He said that Joe Singleton had brought up a high-level 5-year budget that had been created for previous work, which could begin to provide a framework to look at the issue.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Chairman Collings told the group that the passage of the PCWAA bonding bill was an important step in the process, but that in his opinion the Authority needed a dedicated funding source.

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 CAP had sent in comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Post-2026 operations at Lake Powell and Lake Mead. Basefsky said that there were many signatories to the CAP comments, as well as many who submitted their own comments. He added that CAP

had commissioned a study on the economic impacts of reduced Arizona water supplies to CAP. He said that based on the Draft EIS's "Basic Coordination" alternative the state would suffer a $2 trillion economic hit to the state through 2060 if the CAP allocation is reduced to 263,000 acre-feet annually. He noted that the Basic Coordination alternative in the Draft EIS considered cuts in priority order, which would lead to Arizona taking 77% of the cuts.

Basefsky said that the Colorado basin snow water equivalent figures were at 67% of average. He said that the Bureau of Reclamation had already decided to delay the release of some of the waters due to go from Lake Powell to Lake Mead, but that without additional action it appeared that Lake Powell would go below 3,500' at some point over the summer. He said that elevation 3,490' was the critical elevation for power generation and moving water past Glen Canyon Dam through normal means.

Craig McFarland said that the water committee of the Pinal Partnership was looking at the Arizona Water Banking Authority (AWBA) credits. He said that Terri Sue Rossi of Arizona Water Company was trying to arrange for Rebecca Bernat of the AWBA to address the Partnership group. He asked Basefsky if he could help get someone from CAP to also address the group.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting will be held on April 14, 2026 at 7:00 a.m.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 a.m.

William E. Collings

William Collings, Chairman

ATTEST:

Stephen Q. Miller, Secretary-Treasurer