

BISHOP AREA WASTEWATER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES  
*December 17, 2024*

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Muchovej called the Bishop Area Wastewater Authority Board of Directors Meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. in City Hall, 377 West Line Street, Bishop, California in-person and via Zoom.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair Schwartz.

3. ROLL CALL

Present:

Chair Muchovej  
Vice Chair Schwartz  
Board Member Pachucki  
Board Member Carr

Others Present:

Nora Gamino, Authority Administrator  
Michele Rhew, Authority Secretary  
Matt Bullis, Assistant Administrator via Zoom  
Ward Simmons, Legal Counsel via Zoom  
Eastern Sierra Community Service District Staff  
Bishop Paiute Tribal Council Members / Staff

4. PUBLIC COMMENT: NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: See modified public comment procedure above. Under California law the Board of Directors is prohibited from generally discussing or taking action on items not included in the agenda; however, the Board of Directors may briefly respond to comments or questions received from members of the public. Therefore, the Board of Directors will be provided with all public comments but will not generally discuss the matter or take action on it.

No public comments were received.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. New Members to be Sworn into Office

Authority Secretary Rhew assisted newly appointed Board Member Carr and newly appointed Alternate Board Member Freundt with taking their oath into office.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR – NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: All matters under the Consent Calendar are considered routine by the Authority and will be acted on by one motion.

- a. Board of Directors of the Bishop Area Wastewater Authority Meeting Minutes – September 17, 2024 – Minutes

No comments were made by the Board or received from the Public.

Vice Chair Schwartz made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar and Board Member Pachucki seconded the motion. Motion approved 4-0.

Ayes: Board Member Pachucki, Board Member Carr, Vice Chair Schwartz, and Chair Muchovej

Noes: None

6. NEW BUSINESS (continued)

- b. Update on Preliminary Engineering Report

Chair Muchovej opened the item and turned the item over to Assistant Administrator Bullis.

Bullis updated the Board on the Preliminary Engineering Report and came up with three questions to be discussed among the Board. Question one pertains to future plant operations and project funding requirements. Coming up with an agreement of how the plant is going to be operated and who will operate the plant, budget assignments between agencies, and how the future growth projections will be allocated. Question two is about rough cost projections for the new plant. Are budget funds being set aside by both agencies. The third question is regarding what the maximum loan amount agencies are willing to take on.

Muchovej opened the item for discussion and started out asking what the Board views as the long-term goals when it comes to maintenance and operations.

Vice Chair Schwartz responded that the number one priority would be service to the customers and that ratepayers receive the most value out of the service provided. Schwartz added that BAWA should research other sewer plant's models run by multiple jurisdictions.

Muchovej remarked that our goal is to always have the best service and rates for the ratepayers. Muchovej asked Bullis how much staffing would be needed for the joint plant compared to the current staffing of both the City and the District plants. Bullis said the PER will provide recommendations and, in the meantime, Bullis will create a report for the next meeting highlighting what other agencies have done.

Muchovej commented that rates should be equitable to all customers, either those in City limits or the District's, and Board Members Carr and Pachucki agreed.

Bullis stated that he would query other agencies and have a report for the next meeting. Muchovej suggested Bullis also find out the rates of other agencies.

Muchovej moved on to question two regarding if both the City and District are currently budgeting funds. Muchovej explained that the City does not have a line item in their budget, however, are committed to making the project happen and Schwartz concurred.

Board Member Carr remarked that the District has fundings set aside plus did their rate increase last year to account for the new plant.

Muchovej then commented on the third question regarding what the maximum loan amount each agency is willing to take on. Muchovej stated that the City has a good credit line, however he cannot provide a number without consultation with the City Finance Director.

Schwartz said that she would like to explore all funding options and what a bond measure might look like.

Board Member Pachucki mentioned that the Authority needs to get further down the road, maybe to a 90% plant design, before they can have numbers that can be carried into loan requests for bond measures. Pachucki added that everyone agrees on the concept for what resources will make sense for the agencies involved.

Authority Administrator Gamino commented on the third question and stated that staff has been asked the question directly by the State Board when applying for the CWSRF.

Carr asked Bullis what he has seen with other districts and Bullis shared information on agencies in his area.

No public comment was received.

c. Initiating the Process to add the Bishop Paiute Tribe to the Bishop Area Wastewater Joint Powers Authority

Chair Muchovej opened the item and turned the item over to Assistant Administrator Bullis.

Bullis reported on the item.

Muchovej commented that both the City and District are on board about extending the collaboration and moving forward. Muchovej suggested an Ad-Hoc Committee be formed to update the Joint Powers Agreement document.

Board Member Carr asked if the Bishop Paiute Tribe had any comments on the item.

Bishop Paiute Tribe Chairman Steven Orihuela stated that as mentioned in previous BAWA meetings, there are a lot of resources and experience that all parties bring to the Board.

Carr confirmed that the Tribe would be involved in the development of the Ad-Hoc Committee and all Board members agreed. Muchovej asked Orihuela if the Tribe was on board for forming a committee and Orihuela said yes.

No further public comments were made.

Vice Chair Schwartz made a motion to approve the initiation process to amend the Joint Powers Agreement to add the Bishop Paiute Tribe as members of Bishop Area Wastewater Authority and Board Member Carr seconded the motion. Motion approved 4-0.

Ayes: Board Member Pachucki, Board Member Carr, Vice Chair Schwartz, and Chair Muchovej

Noes: None

## 7. STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS

Chair Muchovej opened the item and asked for reports from the Board and Staff.

Vice Chair Schwartz shared that she is excited about the trajectory the Authority is headed and the collaboration among the jurisdictions.

Muchovej reminded the public to not allow their grease to go down the drain.

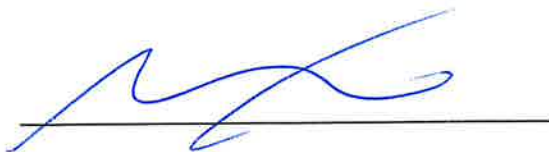
Board Member Pachucki shared that he recently attended a Tribal Council meeting to address circulating misinformation about the District's billing method, reporting flows to the Tribe, and the District's position with regard to bringing the Tribe into BAWA. Pachucki said that the most important message to bring back to BAWA is that the Tribe will be represented as we move forward in redrafting a Joint Powers Authority to include the Tribe.

Board Member Carr said that he attended the Tribal Council meeting as well and shared that the words spoken by Bishop Paiute Tribal Council Chairman Jeff Romero's mother, Francis Romero, spoke volume for all and Carr appreciated what Mrs. Romero said.

No further reports were made.

9. ADJOURNMENT: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Bishop Area Wastewater Authority Board of Directors will be March 18, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. in the Bishop City Council Chambers, 301 West Line Street, Bishop.

Chair Muchovej adjourned the meeting at 8:48 a.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting on March 18, 2025.

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to be 'Chair Muchovej', written over a horizontal line.

Chair Muchovej

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to be 'Michele Rhew', written over a horizontal line.

Michele Rhew, Authority Secretary