

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
& OF THE  
ENGINEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

November 24, 2025

At approximately 8:12 a.m. Vice President Freshley called the Engineering Committee meeting to order.

Committee Members MARK MONIN, MIKE GASKINS, KAY HAVENS, KATHRYN FRESHLEY, and WYATT McCLEAN participated.

Also participating were DENNIS P. CAFFERTY, General Manager, GILBERT J. GRANITO, General Counsel, VISHAV SHARMA, CFO, HANNAH FORD, Director of Engineering, RORY HARNISCH, Senior Engineer, VU CHU, Water Resources Supervisor (Zoom), ABEL ESTRADA, Billing & Customer Service Supervisor (Zoom), CAROL MOORE, Laguna Woods City Council Member (Zoom), JANET FORDUNSKI, Member of the Public (Zoom), and MARISOL MELENDEZ, Recording Secretary.

Consent Calendar

Vice President Freshley asked for a Motion.

Motion: Director Monin made a Motion, seconded by Director McClean to approve the Consent Calendar.

Roll Call:

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Director McClean        | aye |
| Director Havens         | aye |
| Director Monin          | aye |
| Vice President Freshley | aye |
| President Gaskins       | aye |

Engineering Action Items

OOPS MCC and Valve Rehabilitation Project

Mr. Harnisch reported that the motor control center (MCC) and automatic transfer switch (ATS) for Ocean Outfall Pump Station are approximately 45 years old and have reached the end of their useful life. Both components were purchased separately to reduce costs and have already been received. Staff also prepared construction documents in-house for the removal and replacement of the electrical equipment. The WRP asset management plan flagged valves that staff will replace and install.

Mr. Harnisch stated that four bids were submitted by reputable contractors for the project. A notice of exemption was filed with the County under CEQA guidelines. Staff recommend awarding the contract for the electrical equipment installation to Hydro Tech Electric.

Vice President Freshley asked for a Motion.

Motion: President Gaskins made a Motion, seconded by Director Monin to authorize the District's General Manager to enter into a contract with Hydro Tech Electric in the amount of \$51,700.00 for construction of the OOPS MCC and Valve Rehabilitation Project and to authorize the General Manager to fund the project costs from the District's Capital Reserves as recommended by staff in accordance with the District's adopted Capital Reserve Policy.

Roll Call:

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Director McClean        | aye |
| Director Havens         | aye |
| Director Monin          | aye |
| Vice President Freshley | aye |
| President Gaskins       | aye |

## Westline Lift Station Generator Replacement

Mr. Harnisch explained that the generator for the Westline Lift Station was installed in 1984 and serves as a backup to the lift station in the event of a power outage. This equipment is critical as the lift station collects sewage, eventually transporting it to the District Water Recycling Plant. Due to its age and the inability to obtain replacement parts, staff recommend purchasing a new generator from Quinn Power Systems, Inc. A separate contractor will be recommended for installation closer to the delivery date.

Director Monin asked whether a natural gas generator could be used. Mr. Cafferty explained that there are no gas sources in the area but noted that staff will evaluate the feasibility of natural gas for future generator replacements.

Director Havens asked about District generators that do not have double containment. Ms. Ford explained that staff has developed a priority list for generator replacements based on installation year, obsolete parts, and criticality, and that the capital budget includes funding for future replacements. Mr. Cafferty added that the double containment concern primarily relates to underground fuel tanks, and the District currently has only one.

Vice President Freshley asked for a Motion.

Motion: Director Monin made a Motion, seconded by Director Havens to authorize the District's General Manager to issue a purchase order to Quinn Power Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$266,804.09 to furnish a new diesel generator for the Westline Lift Station and to authorize the General Manager to fund the project costs from the District's Capital Reserves as recommended by staff in accordance with the District's adopted Capital Reserve Policy.

Roll Call:

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Director McClean        | aye |
| Director Havens         | aye |
| Director Monin          | aye |
| Vice President Freshley | aye |
| President Gaskins       | aye |

Engineering Information Items

Emergency Groundwater Supply Project

Mr. Cafferty provided an overview of the Emergency Groundwater Supply Project in partnership with Moulton Niguel Water District, Orange County Water District, and the City of Santa Ana. He reviewed the project background and requested Board input on whether the District should consider pursuing this emergency supply opportunity. The proposed project involves the construction of new facilities to transfer groundwater to South Orange County through the East Orange County Feeder No. 2, to be used only in extreme emergency situations.

The Board discussed the Emergency Groundwater Supply Project, evaluating its costs, benefits, and overall need. While appreciative of the opportunity to collaborate with neighboring agencies, the Board agreed not to pursue participation in the project.

EI Toro Water District Operations Report

Vice President Freshley asked about the spike in battery activity on the WRP battery storage system report and if the cause of the in-rush could be related to timing.

Ms. Ford explained that staff has to maintain certain treatment targets. A large part of the electrical use is from the blowers which are controlled by the dissolved oxygen concentration that vary through the day due to temperature and flow impacting aeration demand. A diurnal fluctuation at the treatment plant is inevitable.

## El Toro Water District Capital Project Status Report

### Moulton/El Toro Cathodic Protection Repair

Ms. Ford reported that the project was advertised for bids, but only one contractor responded, and the bid exceeded the estimate. After staff conducted a value engineering exercise, it was determined that reducing the number of sites for new anode groundbed installations would lower costs without compromising the level of protection. Another pre-bid meeting will be held, and staff anticipates bringing a recommendation for award in January.

### Aliso Creek Lift Station Improvement Project

Ms. Ford reported that staff is reviewing a 90% design. Following the presentations to Golden Rain Foundation (GRF) and United Mutual Committees staff will move forward with temporary construction agreements with GRF. She also noted that Cal OES has completed the first round of review for the BCA, and if approved, the application will proceed to the federal review stage.

Ms. Fordunski left the meeting at approximately 9:28 a.m.

### Main Office Warehouse Drainage Improvement Project

Mr. Harnisch reported that the new pump drain system has been in operation for several weeks and performed effectively during recent rain events. He also noted that the project was funded from capital reserves due to its urgency.

### Westline Lift Station Main Switchboard Replacement

Mr. Harnisch reported that staff has coordinated with the contractor and SCE to operate the lift station in temporary mode. SCE will install a meter, after which the station will return to permanent mode. The project is expected to be completed in early December.

### Headworks and Secondary Clarifier No. 1 Rehabilitation Project

Mr. Harnisch reported that staff is still in the submittal phase and is coordinating with the contractor to perform potholing activities at the WRP and Laguna Woods Golf Club.

### R-6 Reservoir Southern Slope Repair Project

Mr. Harnisch reported that the District has entered into an agreement with MDB General Engineering, Inc. and issued a Notice to Proceed. Staff is reviewing the construction schedule, and the contractor is expected to mobilize next week.

Mr. Harnisch left the meeting at approximately 9:38 a.m.

### Secondary Clarifier No. 4 Drive Replacement Project

Ms. Ford reported that the rehabilitation of Secondary Clarifier No. 4 Drive is complete. This will be followed by taking Clarifier No. 1 offline as part of the larger rehabilitation project.

### Solar and Battery Projects

Ms. Ford reported that staff has selected a vendor who is providing a Foreign Entity of Concern (FEOC) compliant battery, eliminating the time pressure of having to order this year while still qualifying for Inflation Reduction Act funding. Legal counsel is reviewing the Energy Services Agreement, which will be presented along with the final cost details at the next Board meeting. Available funding is sufficient to cover the capital costs for both battery projects. Staff is also continuing to review potential solar project options with less time pressure.

### Tertiary Disinfection Optimization Project

Ms. Ford reported that staff is waiting for DDW's final approval of the operations plan. WRP staff have installed three new free chlorine analyzers and District staff will construct the new local control panel in-house, resulting in cost savings.

### Asset Management

Ms. Ford reported that staff held a kickoff meeting for the force main asset management project. As-built documents have been submitted, and staff is processing data requests. Initial results from the linear asset management project have been reviewed, and the project dashboard will be presented to the Board.

### Freeway Electrical Equipment Replacement

Ms. Ford stated that this work will begin after the completion of the Westline Lift Station main switchboard project.

### Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Engineering Committee Items

There were no comments.

### Adjournment

There being no further business, the Engineering Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:48 a.m.

Ms. Ford left the meeting at approximately 9:48 a.m.

### Attorney Report

Mr. Granito reported that there is a need for a Closed Session today to address both items on today's Closed Session Agenda. Item number one on the Closed Session Agenda is a matter of anticipated litigation. Item number two resumes the annual performance evaluation of the District's General Manager.

Mr. Sharma provided follow up information for Director Monin stating that the District does not have equities in the CAMP pool but does invest in corporate bonds. He also noted that the current CAMP pool rate is 4.08%.

### Closed Session

At approximately 9:50 a.m. everyone left the open session except the Board members, General Counsel, and Mr. Cafferty. In the first phase of the Closed Session, item number one of the Closed Session Agenda item was discussed.

Mr. Cafferty left the Closed Session meeting for the second phase to address item number two of the Closed Session Agenda. During this time the Board resumed the annual performance evaluation process of the District's General Manager.

### Regular Session

At approximately 10:51 a.m., the Board returned to Regular Session. Also, at this time, Mr. Cafferty and Ms. Melendez returned to the meeting.

### Open Session Report

Mr. Granito reported that the Board went into Closed Session to discuss both items on today's Closed Session Agenda. During the first phase of the Closed Session, the District's General Manager and General Counsel led a discussion on the anticipated litigation. No reportable action was taken. The second phase of the Closed Session concerned item two of today's Closed Session Agenda and the Board resumed the annual performance evaluation process of the District's General Manager. No reportable action was taken.


### Adjournment


There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
MARISOL MELENDEZ  
Recording Secretary

APPROVED:

  
MIKE GASKINS, President  
of the El Toro Water District and the  
Board of Directors thereof

  
DENNIS P. CAFFERTY, Secretary  
of the El Toro Water District and the  
Board of Directors thereof