

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
EL TORO WATER DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP
October 13, 2025

At approximately 1:05 p.m. President Gaskins called the Special meeting to order.

Director Havens led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

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

Also present were DENNIS P. CAFFERTY, General Manager, GILBERT J. GRANITO, General Counsel, VISHAV SHARMA, CFO, HANNAH FORD, Director of Engineering, JUDY CIMORELL, Director of Human Resources, SCOTT HOPKINS, Operations Superintendent, SHERRI SEITZ, Public Affairs Manager, ED MEANS, Means Consulting, and MARISOL MELENDEZ, Recording Secretary.

Determination of a Quorum

Five Board members were present for the meeting. Therefore, a Quorum was determined.

Oral Communications - Public Comments

There were no comments.

Items Received Too Late to Be Agendized

President Gaskins asked if there are any items received too late to be agendized. Mr. Cafferty replied no.

El Toro Water District Strategic Planning Workshop

Mr. Cafferty explained that the purpose of today's workshop was to review the draft 2026-30 Strategic Plan and allow the Board to provide feedback. A final version will be presented at the November Board Meeting after incorporating the Board's comments. He noted that Mr. Means facilitated multiple meetings with each Director, executive staff, and group meetings with all other staff to assess the District's key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. A draft Strategic Plan was produced as a result and is structured with objectives to support the strategies which support the goals that support the Mission and Vision. Key performance indicators track progress towards the goals.

Mr. Cafferty added that several photographs in the Strategic Plan will be updated to include current Board members and staff.

Staff recommended and the Board concurred with removing the word "*adequate*" from the Mission Statement and expanding the Vision Statement to read: "*To ensure lasting excellence in water, sewer and recycled water services that our community can rely on today and for generations to come.*"

Mr. Cafferty reviewed the objectives under Goal A: Water, Sewer, and Recycled Water reliability to provide the physical facilities and supply to meet the needs of the community. The Board suggested revising Objective A.1.2 to remove reference to the Delta Conveyance Project and keep the language open to alternative water supply options. They also recommended updating the wording in Strategy A.2.3 from "*grant opportunities*" to "*other appropriate funding opportunities*".

Mr. Cafferty reviewed the objectives under Strategy A.3, to implement the Capital Improvement Program to maintain water, sewer, and recycled water service. The Board recommended spelling out the acronym *AMI* as *Advanced Metering Infrastructure*.

Mr. Cafferty reviewed the objectives under A.3.4 and discussed potential upgrades to the Main Office, outlining the associated costs, benefits, and options to either remodel existing features or construct a new office.

Mr. Cafferty reviewed the objectives under Strategy D.4, to promote an open and professional work environment. He highlighted the various methods available to encourage staff ideas and create a culture where employee input is valued. Director Monin emphasized the importance of Objective D.4.3 and supported implementing an employee suggestion box. Mr. Cafferty noted that Objective D.4.3 is newly added and designed to encourage innovation and to ensure staff feel heard.

Mr. Cafferty reviewed the objectives under D.6, to ensure the District operations are efficient and effective. Director Havens recommended adding the word "*securely*" before "*expand*" in Objective D.6.4.

Vice President Freshley asked whether the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are linked to the Objectives to ensure measurable tracking of progress. Mr. Cafferty explained that updates are currently provided to the Board on a biannual basis but can include monthly updates where appropriate. Mr. Means added that KPIs serve as dashboard indicators used to assess performance and identify the need for intervention.

Mr. Cafferty reviewed Goal E: Relationships, to communicate and collaborate with customers, stakeholders, neighbors and peer agencies in the region to further the water and wastewater interests of the community. He noted that staff are exploring low-cost methods to gather customer feedback. Director Havens suggested including Homeowners Associations (HOAs) as examples of outreach, tracking the number of events and hours spent at community events.

Mr. Cafferty reviewed Strategy E.2 to work with local, regional, State and federal agencies, industry associations, and organizations to influence water policy for the benefit of our service area customers. He noted that Objective E.2.2 addresses one of Director Monin's earlier points on collaboration with local agencies. Director Havens recommended adding the word "*collaborate*" to Objective E.2.2.

Director Monin suggested presenting a summary of the Strategic Plan at a future CAG meeting or a TV-6 interview.

In response to Director Monin's inquiry, Mr. Cafferty stated that WEROC staff are leading a regional fuel planning effort to expand emergency response plans, including preparations for a system wide grid failure.

Mr. Cafferty stated that Strategy F.3 focuses on reducing energy use and evaluating opportunities for renewable energy sources. He noted that staff will be reviewing proposals from firms regarding solar and battery options. Vice President Freshley suggested considering insurance costs for battery systems, and Ms. Ford added that staff met with OCFA to discuss the battery systems and the risk reduction measures required in the proposals.

Mr. Cafferty noted that there have been changes to the schedule for the electric vehicle requirement and that staff will continue to evaluate the Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) Rule requirements.

Mr. Cafferty stated that Objective F.4.5 will be removed, as it duplicates Objective F.1.5. He also stated that an additional objective referring to the annual water use audit will be added and staff will continue to monitor the variety of regulations revolving around water use.

Director Monin recommended including language on fire mitigation or potential collaboration with fire departments. Mr. Cafferty stated that Carollo is assisting with producing color-coded map analyses and plans to work with the fire department to communicate important District system information.

Vice President Freshley suggested adding the word "*demand*" after "*energy*" in Objective F.3.1, and adding "*electrical*" before "*power*" in Objective F.3.2. She also recommended including a reference to battery demand costs in the KPIs under Goal F: Operations.

Mr. Cafferty thanked the Board, staff, and Mr. Means for their input on the Strategic Plan. He noted that the feedback provided during the workshop will be incorporated into the next draft, which will be presented at the November Board meeting.

Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items

There were no comments.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.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