

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
& OF THE
ENGINEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

October 20, 2025

At approximately 8:32 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, JUDY CIMORELL, Director of Human Resources, HANNAH FORD, Director of Engineering, SCOTT HOPKINS, Operations Superintendent, MIKE MIAZGA, IT Manager (Zoom), VU CHU, Water Resources Supervisor (Zoom), VICKI TANIOUS, Senior Accountant, 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

R-6 Reservoir Southern Slope Repair

Ms. Ford reported that the project was put out to bid, and although several firms expressed interest, only two firms attended the mandatory pre-bid meeting, with one willing to serve as the prime. The project was re-bid on Planet Bids, resulting in six bids received. The low bidder, MDB Engineering, submitted a proposal \$150,000 below the engineer's estimate, and staff received positive feedback from their references.

Staff is recommending LGC Geotechnical, Inc. for geotechnical inspection services, as their proposal provided adequate scope of services at a lower cost compared to the other bidder. Additionally, staff is recommending Dudek, who did the design for this project, for engineering services during construction. Ms. Ford noted that both MNWD and SMWD have confirmed agreement for their portion of the costs.

Vice President Freshley asked for a Motion.

Motion: Director Monin made a Motion, seconded by President Gaskins to authorize the District's General Manager to (1) enter into a contract with MDB General Engineering, Inc. in the amount of \$390,800.00 for construction of the R-6 Reservoir Southern Slope Repair Project, (2) enter into a contract with GMU Geotechnical, Inc. in the amount of \$20,480.00 for construction management and inspection services, and (3) amend its existing contract with Dudek in the amount of \$24,580.00 for engineering services during construction 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

Sewer Force Main Asset Management Plan

Ms. Ford explained that, due to concerns over the reliability of the sewer force mains, staff is initiating a focused asset management plan to evaluate these systems. This effort will include concept-level design work for some of the high priority alignments to better estimate costs. Hazen and Sawyer's proposal covers concept design for high risk force main replacement alternatives and the inclusion of sewer force mains in the District's asset inventory.

Mr. Cafferty added that the goal of this effort is to determine whether capital improvement projects for sewer force main replacements should be budgeted. The assessment will produce a risk-based analysis to identify and prioritize needs. Director Monin inquired about the timeline, and Mr. Cafferty responded that it will vary depending on findings, with the objective to identify needs and plan accordingly based on the condition and risk assessment results.

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 amend its existing contract with Hazen and Sawyer in the amount of \$109,790 to develop the Sewer Force Main Asset Management Plan 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

El Toro Water District Operations Report

Vice President Freshley noted the significant costs savings generated by the WRP battery storage system and inquired about the status of the contract extension. Mr. Cafferty stated that Terra Verde is assisting staff in discussions with STEM to explore potential opportunities, noting that the current contract term has approximately four years remaining.

El Toro Water District Capital Project Status Report

Moulton/El Toro Cathodic Protection Repair

Ms. Ford stated that the project was put out to bid, and staff had planned to recommend an award this month. However, only one bid was received, which was 2.5 times higher than the engineer's estimate. As a result, staff canceled the bid and will re-bid the project, incorporating feedback from firms. A new recommendation for award will be presented at the next Board meeting.

Battery and Solar Projects

Ms. Ford stated that six proposals were received for the battery and solar projects. Staff reviewed the bids, conducted interviews with the three shortlisted vendors, and has now narrowed the selection to two. Staff is currently working on obtaining the best and final offer and following up with additional questions. Once that process is complete, staff will determine whether to recommend award.

Ms. Ford explained that, if staff proceeds with a recommendation, the battery purchase would be the only immediate option. The SGIP, through SCE, that staff submitted applications for, will cover the majority of the cost. However, there will be additional expenses, and staff intends to pursue IRA funding to help offset those costs. To qualify, the battery must be safe harbored before the end of the year.

Based on the initial cost analysis, the projected savings are modest and will need to be re-evaluated to maximize the potential savings. There will also be annual operations and maintenance costs. Staff plans to present options to the Board at a Special Board meeting in early November to ensure eligibility for IRA funding and to authorize the battery purchase. The solar projects, which will be structured as power purchase agreements, will also be recommended for consideration at the Special Board meeting.

Vice President Freshley inquired about the insurance costs for the batteries. Ms. Ford stated that staff met with OCFA, which confirmed that the California Fire Code requires a 10-foot setback around each battery or a fire wall, to ensure that if a battery catches fire it will burn out safely without spreading. She added that these requirements have been incorporated into the coordination with battery vendors so they can be accounted for during the design phase.

Aliso Creek Lift Station Improvement Project

Ms. Ford stated that staff is reviewing the 90% design and is presenting the project to GRF and United Committees and Boards. She noted that the meetings have gone well so far, with no opposition to the requests. Additionally, staff has been responding to requests for information from CalOES regarding the submitted sub-application, with the main revisions consisting of terminology updates.

Main Office Warehouse Drainage Improvement Project

Ms. Ford reported that the Main Office Warehouse project is largely complete, and staff is working with the vendor to finalize the punch list. She noted that the system was tested during the recent rains and performed as expected.

Headworks and Secondary Clarifier No. 1 Rehabilitation Project

Ms. Ford stated that the project is currently in the submittal phase and that Filanc is scheduled to be on site in January.

Westline Lift Station Main Switchboard Replacement

Ms. Ford stated that staff began work last week, and the site will be officially converted to temporary power with SCE present during the transition.

Freeway Electrical Equipment Replacement

Ms. Ford stated that this project will proceed following the completion of the Westline Lift Station Main Switchboard Replacement.

Ocean Outfall Pump Station (OOPS) MCC and Valve Rehabilitation Project

Ms. Ford stated that staff requested proposals from three vendors and expects to receive cost estimates by the end of the month, after which a recommendation for award will be presented.

Secondary Clarifier No. 4 Drive Replacement Project

Ms. Ford stated that the bridge has been repaired and that Ovivo will return to perform start up.

Tertiary Disinfection Optimization Project

Ms. Ford reported that staff completed and submitted the operations plan to DDW, with comments expected within two months. DDW will conduct a site visit to review the installation, and staff is revising the electrical design based on their input.

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 9:17 a.m.

Attorney Report

Mr. Granito reported that there is a need for a Closed Session today to initiate the annual performance evaluation of the District's General Manager, as reflected on today's Closed Session Agenda.

Closed Session

At approximately 9:17 a.m. everyone left the open session except the Board members, General Counsel, and Ms. Cimorell. In the Closed Session, the Board initiated the annual performance evaluation process of the District's General Manager.

Regular Session

At approximately 9:35 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 the item on today's Closed Session agenda. No reportable action was taken.


Adjournment


There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 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