

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
North Kern Water Storage District
Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 16, 2025

A Meeting of the Board of Directors of North Kern Water Storage District was in person - commencing at 7:00 a.m., on December 16, 2025.

President Andrew declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order. The following Directors were present: Kevin Andrew, Joel Ackerknecht, Robert Holtermann and Monte Mitchell. Others present: David Hampton (General Manager), Ram Venkatesan (Deputy General Manager), Marinelle Duarosan (Controller), Heather Williams (Operations Superintendent) and Christy Castaneda (Administrative Assistant) of North Kern Water Storage District, Scott Kuney, Mark Bateman and Alan Doud of Young Wooldridge, Guests present: Stephanie Hearn, Art Chianello, Grace Martin, and John Gaugel.

President Andrew called the meeting to order at 7:01 am and opened the floor for Public Comments. At this time, there were none.

Board of Directors –

(25-124) Upon motion of Director Holtermann, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to approve the minutes from November 18, 2025, Regular Board Meeting.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

Consent Calendar –

Consent Calendar included the following:

- A. District Groundwater Levels
- B. PG&E Monthly Analysis
- C. District Exchange Balances
- D. Operations Report
- E. Approve 2026 District Memberships and Support for Organization
- F. Approve Task Order 26-01 for Providing General Engineering Tasks Support, GEI
- G. Approve Task Order 26-02 for Providing SGMA Implementation Support, GEI

(25-125) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Mitchell and unanimously carried, to approve the Consent Calendar.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

General Informational Items –

Watermaster Chianello reviewed a presentation from Jenny Fromm with the US Army Corps of Engineers. This presentation was a brief review of responsibilities and accomplishments of the water management section and the newly formed water data section. The presentation discussed Sacramento District Projects, Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch, Water Management Section, Reservoir Operator Activities, Water Data Activities, Water Control Data, and the Water Control Manual Updates.

Kern River Watershed Coalition Authority/Kern Water Collaborative Update – No report at this time.

Financial Matters –

(25-126) Upon motion of Director Mitchell, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to receive and file the Treasurer's Report for the North Kern Water Storage District for the month of November as presented.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(RR25-127) Upon motion of Director Mitchell, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to receive and file the Treasurer's Report for the Rosedale Ranch Improvement District for the month of November as presented.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

The Financial Statements, Summary of Water Sales and the Accounts Receivable reports for the month of November were reviewed and accepted as presented.

(25-128) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried, to approve payment of the Accounts Payable balance for the North Kern Water Storage District for the month of November as presented.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(RR25-129) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried, to approve payment of the Accounts Payable balance for the Rosedale Ranch Improvement District for the month of November as noted.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

Consulting District Engineer – Mrs. Hearn informed the board she has stepped down from her role as Branch Manager but will remain with GEI. She introduced Grace Martin as the new branch manager. Ms. Martin provided an update on the following:

Status of Grants – Most activity is related to transitioning between grant closings and obtaining new grant agreements. Ms. Martin indicated GEI Consultants are still waiting for a response from the Bureau of Reclamation on the Calloway Canal Lining Case Street to Arrow Street grant application, which was submitted in the Fall of 2024. GEI is also monitoring Prop 4 grant programs and DWR's Watershed Resilience Program, specifically for how it impacts IRWMP and what new grant program requirements will be mandated.

Budget & Personnel Committee –

General Manager Hampton presented the 2026 Budget and discussed an overview of the key Budget assumptions. He stated that Staff met with the Finance Committee on December 4th to review and discuss the details contained in the Budget figures.

(25-130) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Mitchell and unanimously carried, to approve the 2026 North Kern Water Storage District and Rosedale Ranch Improvement District Budgets and direct staff to closely track Kern River watershed precipitation through the winter/spring and make recommendations to the Board when available to adjust water tolls as necessary to match the District's costs and revenues with anticipated River supplies.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(25-131) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried, to adopt the Publicly Available Pay Schedule as presented on Exhibit A, effective for year 2026.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

Engineering Committee –

Deputy General Manager Venkatesan presented the 2026 Landowner Well Water Transportation Agreement highlighting the main points contained in the Agreement and the new changes, specifically under Item #12. All other provisions remained the same as in prior agreements.

(25-132) Upon motion of Director Mitchell, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to approve the 2026 Landowner Well Water Transportation Agreement as presented.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(25-133) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried to “Authorize staff to execute task order 25-10 with GEI Consultants to provide National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) support services for a budget amount not to exceed \$38,000 for the 2024 WaterSMART Drought Response Program grant award.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(25-134) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried to approve the renewal of the Consultant Services Agreement with GEI Consultants with changes as presented and to eliminate the \$50,000 reference under the Limitation of Liability section.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

Groundwater Committee –

General Manager Hampton reported that the Kern Subbasin received a letter from the State Water Resources Control Board officially returning the Kern County Subbasin to Department of Water Resources oversight. The Basin is in the process of scheduling meetings between subbasin representatives and DWR to discuss the transition and updates to the plan. He also stated that the group finalized a letter to the Friant Water Authority to re-engage the subsidence issue at the Friant Kern Canal. In addition, three proposed service agreements were presented:

(25-135) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Mitchell and unanimously carried to approve the Intera proposal for the Kern County Subbasin Technical Coordinator for 2026, with North Kern’s cost share not-to-exceed \$10,240.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(25-136) Upon motion of Director Mitchell, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried to approve MLJ Environmental’s two-year proposal for well mitigation program consultant assistance, with North Kern’s cost share not-to-exceed \$2,000.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(25-137) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried to approve MLJ Environmental’s proposal for the Kern County Subbasin Water Quality Implementation Services, with North Kern’s cost share not-to-exceed \$700.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

Produced Water Ad Hoc Committee – No report at this time.

Negotiating Committee – No report at this time.

Counsel of District – No report at this time.

Rosedale Ranch –

(25-138) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Mitchell and unanimously carried to “Authorize the General Manager to execute Task Order 25-09 with GEI Consultants to provide California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) support services for the Affentranger Groundwater Recharge and Banking Project for the Rosedale Ranch Improvement District for a budget amount not to exceed \$62,100. (Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

(25-139) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried to Authorize the General Manager to execute the Assignment Agreement to assign the Canal Right of Way Exchange Agreement currently with V Lions Holdings, LLC to Palmetto Estates LLC
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: Glende, Abstain: None)

General Manager’s Report – No report at this time.

The President publicly stated that the legal authorities for holding Closed Session at today’s Board Meeting are the following sections of the California Government Code:

- A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL EXISTING LITIGATION
(Govt. Code Section 54956.9(a) and (d)(1))
 - (i) North Kern Water Storage District v. City of Bakersfield
(VCSC #56-2011-00408712-CU-CO-VTA)
 - (ii) State Water Resources Control Board, Administrative Hearing Office
Adjudicative Hearing on Pending Applications 31673, 31674, 31675, 31676, 31677, and 31819
 - (iii) California High-Speed Rail Authority v. North Kern Water Storage District
(BCV-25-102876)
 - (iv) North Kern Water Storage District v. Rosedale Estates
(BCV-24-101361)
 - (v) Bring Back the Kern et al. v. City of Bakersfield (Defendant/Respondent) and Buena Vista Water Storage District et al. (Real Parties in Interest)
(BCV-22-1030220)
- B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL -ANTICIPATED LITIGATION
Initiation of litigation pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9: two case
- C. PERSONNEL MATTERS
(Govt. Code Section 54957)
- D. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS
(Govt. Code Section 54956.8) – use of District and landowner facilities for various potential water management programs; negotiator, David Hampton

The above legal grounds were determined to exist based on advice of counsel, and discussion of such matters in an Open Session would cause prejudice to the District. The Board went into Closed Session at 8:40 a.m. The Board reconvened back into the open session at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Hampton, General Manager

Approved by Board
January 20, 2025

Kevin Andrew, President