



MEMORANDUM

FC 14

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Agricultural Water
Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Agricultural Water Advisory Committee
(AWAC)
January 5, 2026, Regular Meeting Summary.

DATE: March 10, 2026

This memorandum summarizes agenda items from the meeting of the Agricultural Water Advisory Committee (AWAC) held on Monday, January 5, 2026.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair.

It was moved by Jan Garrod and seconded by Erin Gil and unanimously carried that Vice Chairperson Trevor Garrod would become the Chairperson.

It was moved by Mitchell Mariani and seconded by Peter Van Dyke and unanimously carried that Tim Chiala would become the Vice Chairperson.

Review and Approve 2025 Accomplishments Report for Presentation to the Board (Committee Chair).

Valley Water Vice Chairperson Santos congratulated and thanked the Committee, as well as the outgoing AWAC Chair and Vice Chair, for their work and Peter Van Dyke, the outgoing Chair, also thanked Valley Water and staff.

It was moved by Erin Gil and seconded by Jan Garrod and unanimously carried that the following Recommendation was unanimously approved.

- A. Approve the 2025 Accomplishments Report for presentation to the Board.

Review and Provide Comment to the Board on Staff's Preliminary Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027 Groundwater Production Charges.

The Committee discussed the following topics: discussed how the last spring rains may have contributed to the increase in FY 2025 agricultural water use in South County; provided feedback that South County agricultural land use is declining and the potential effect on projections; noted agricultural use is projected to remain flat and stable with data reviewed and addressed as it becomes available; confirmed how Municipal & Industrial and treated water rates are calculated; discussed how groundwater charge projections are established, including the Open Space Credit, and how the water retailer rates are correlated; discussed challenges associated with incorporating drought conditions into projections and noted drought reserve options are replenished during non-drought periods; and discussed the Metropolitan Water District's pending Colorado River agreement and the potential impact on the state's allocations during a drought market.

The Committee received and noted the information, provided feedback, and took no formal action.

Receive an Update on the Upper Llagas Flood Protection Project.

The Committee discussed the following topics: confirmed the location of the box culverts on West Little Llagas Creek and how they assist with flood protection during high and low flow conditions; confirmed process of flood protection work near Watsonville and Monterey Road; discussed invasive species removal process of Arundo; confirmed native plants and shrubs will be used with an associated maintenance budget, and staff may redistribute excess plants if needed; expressed support for staff's work on this project; discussed the high groundwater table at Lake Silveira as beneficial for wetland conditions; discussed project improvements for flood protection upstream north of Morgan Hill to Monterey Road and downstream through San Martin and Gilroy; noted the Capacity Restoration Project may address overgrowth in portions of the channel and the potential of Soap Lake as a resource; noted flood protection work is targeted for completion by October 2026 and construction phase 2b is targeted for completion by March 2027; and noted Valley Water Vice Chairperson Santos and Director Varela are part of the Pajaro River Watershed Flood Protection Authority.

The Committee received and noted the information, provided feedback, and took no formal action.

Review and Discuss Resolution 17-75 Regarding the Agricultural Water Advisory Committee Membership and Provide the Feedback or Recommendations to the Board.

The Committee discussed the following topics: confirmed the six current vacancies and expressed interest in receiving additional details on Committee vacancies; discussed potential for Committee members to represent the Committee at large rather than by District; confirmed the Valley Water Board of Directors may consider revising Committee member eligibility requirements; discussed the possibility of a Committee member affiliated with a land trust; noted challenges facing the agricultural community due to urbanization; and expressed support for Committee members to remain actively engaged in agriculture and to conduct outreach within their respective areas to recruit potential new members.

The Committee discussed and noted the information, provided feedback, and took no formal action.

Review and Approve the Proposed 2026 Agricultural Water Advisory Committee (AWAC) Work Plan, the Outcomes of Board Action of Committee Requests, the Committee's Next Meeting Agenda; and Recommend the Proposed 2026 AWAC Work Plan to the Board.

The Committee discussed the following topics: expressed support for staff continuing to work with the AWAC Chair on preparing agendas; noted staff is working to streamline the

well-permitting process and may report updates as they become available, noted Board Representatives are continuing to support the agricultural community through participation on various meeting bodies; and provided feedback on the Work Plan Items.

It was moved by Peter Van Dyke and seconded by Erin Gil and unanimously approved to recommend the proposed 2026 AWAC Work Plan to the Board as amended to incorporate the Committee's feedback.

The next AWAC regular meeting is scheduled to occur at 1:30 p.m. on April 6, 2026.

Board member comments and suggestions can be forwarded to Nicole Merritt, Deputy Clerk (Committee Meetings) at (408) 630-3262 or by email to nmerritt@valleywater.org.

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