



County of Monterey

Item No.5

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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Consider recommendations from the Planning Committee for proposed revisions to the Agency's Bylaws and provide direction. (Staff: Ara Azhderian)

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Board of Directors:

The Board of Directors to consider recommendations from the Planning Committee for proposed revisions to the Agency's Bylaws and provide direction.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

At the October 1, 2025, Planning Committee meeting, the Committee reviewed a memorandum (attached) summarizing the Agency's formation and governance documents, the Agency Act and MCWRA Ordinance 3559, and presenting examples of governance guidance policies adopted by other California water agencies. The primary purpose of the memorandum was to provide a framework to guide consideration of future, potential changes to the Bylaws and to seek guidance on the Committee's interest towards developing governance guidance policies.

The Committee discussed the value of considering what is working well under the current Bylaws and where there is room for improvement. The Committee also observed that there are four audiences for the Bylaws: 1) Agency staff; 2) the Board of Directors; 3) the Board of Supervisors; and 4) the public. In this context, the Committee recommended future revisions to the Bylaws be clear, concise, and in plain, widely accessible language. After discussion, the Committee recommended evolving towards a governance guidance policy manual but, in doing so, also recognized that this evolution will take some time. With that in mind, the Committee made three recommendations regarding near-term priorities:

First, the Committee recommended staff present draft language that would effectuate a reduction in Agency committees to improve the opportunity for public participation and understanding, while also improving staff efficiency by reducing the resource demands of the current committees' structure. The recommended committee changes are to combine the Finance and the Personnel & Administration committees into a single Finance & Administration Committee, and to combine the Reservoir Operations Advisory Committee and Basin Management Advisory Committee into a single Water Resources Advisory Committee to better demonstrate the interdependence of operations at the reservoirs in the southern Salinas Valley, with Basin-wide effects on groundwater, to the operation of the Salinas Valley Water Project, and more specifically, the Salinas River Diversion Facility, and its role in reducing groundwater extraction from the 180/400 foot aquifer. The aim is, by looking at these

facets of water resource management as a whole, to improve understanding of members of the advisory committee and the public of the impact Agency actions have Valley-wide.

The second Committee recommendation was to reduce the term of service for the Chair and Vice-Chair from two years to one to expand the opportunity for Directors to serve in these leadership roles.

Lastly, the Committee requested staff begin preparing a “conflict of interest” policy for future consideration.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The proposed Bylaws revisions align with the adopted Strategic Plan Goal B, Strategy 7; Goal D, Strategies 3 & 5; and Goal E, Strategies 1 & 4.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Planning Committee

FINANCING:

Revising the Bylaws has no fiscal impact on the 2025-26 fiscal-year adopted budget.

Prepared and Approved by: Ara Azhderian, General Manager, (831) 755-4860

Attachments:

1. 2025-09-24 - MEMO to Planning Committee RE Considerations for modernizing the Agency's BOD governance guidance
2. Amendment No. 1
3. Revised Scope of Services