

**PANOCHÉ DRAINAGE DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**June 22, 2021, at 10:00 A.M.**

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held in accordance with Governor Newsom’s Executive Orders N-25-20 and N-29-20 issued in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, which allows local and state legislative bodies to hold meetings by web and teleconference, and to make meetings accessible to the public electronically. Those present at the meeting were:

- Directors Present:        John Bennett, President  
                                 Mike Stearns, Secretary  
                                 Ross Koda, Director
  
- Directors Absent:        Sue Redfern-West, Vice-President  
                                 Michael Linneman, Director
  
- District Staff Present:  Ara Azhderian, General Manager  
                                 Juan Cadena, Water Resources Manager
  
- Others Present:         Philip Williams, General Counsel  
                                 Diane Rathmann, Of Counsel  
                                 Doug Brown, Bond Counsel  
                                 Jonathan Guz, Bond Counsel  
                                 Robert Porr, Municipal Financing Advisor  
                                 Lora Carpenter, Municipal Financing Advisor  
                                 Steve Smith, Turlock Fruit

**ANNOUNCEMENT PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54952.3**

Pursuant to the Brown Act, President Bennett announced that Directors do not receive compensation or a stipend for simultaneous or serial order meetings of Panoche Water District, Panoche Drainage District, Panoche Financing Authority, and/or the Panoche Resource Conservation District.

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Bennett called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**REVIEW OF AGENDA**

There were no changes to the Agenda.

**ROLL CALL**

Directors Redfern-West and Linneman were absent. A quorum of the Board and presence of the District’s Officers were confirmed.

**POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts were reported.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

*At approximately 9:05 a.m., President Bennett suspended the Drainage District meeting and continued the Water District-ONLY meeting.*

*At approximately 11:40 a.m., President Bennett adjourned the Water District meeting and resumed the Drainage District-ONLY meeting.*

**THE BOARD TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER REQUEST BY SANDTON AGRICULTURE INVESTMENTS II TO BE ANNEXED BY THE DISTRICT**

General Manager Azhderian presented a letter from Sandton Agriculture Investments requesting the properties it recently acquired be annexed into the District to improve and ensure compliance with state and local regulatory requirements. He explained the annexation would affect the Drainage District as it administers and operates the drains historically used by the property, the Grassland Basin Authority as its agriculturally induced drainage would continue to be managed on the San Joaquin River Improvement Project, and the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority as its stormwater induced drainage would be managed through the Grassland Bypass Project. Azhderian reported that the Basin Authority and Water Authority had both adopted policies requiring a 2-year “buy in” to join the respective projects and recommended the Drainage District impose the same requirement. He said, if approved, staff and General Counsel Williams would work with Sandton to negotiate an annexation agreement. After consideration, on a motion by Director Stearns, seconded by Director Koda, the Board accepted the recommendation and approved the request for annexation.

The vote on the matter was as follows:

Ayes:	Bennett, Stearns, Koda
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Redfern-West, Linneman

**THE BOARD TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVING AS TO FORM A PRE-ANNEXATION AGREEMENT TO GOVERN DRAINAGE SERVICE DURING THE ANNEXATION PROCESS**

General Manager Azhderian and General Counsel Williams presented a draft “Pre-Annexation Agreement” for consideration. Azhderian explained the purpose of the Agreement is to define the terms and conditions under which Drainage Service would be provided during the time of the annexation process. He said the annexation would need to be considered and approved by the Fresno County Local Agency Formation Commission and that their processes can often take years, even under straightforward applications. Azhderian said the proposal was for the form of Agreement to be the basis from which he and General Counsel Williams would negotiate with the landowner’s requesting annexation and that the negotiated agreements would be brought back to the Board for final consideration and approval. Williams reviewed the details of the proposed Agreement. After consideration, on a motion by Director Stearns, seconded by Director Koda, the Board approved the draft Pre-Annexation Agreement as the basis for annexation negotiation.

The vote on the matter was as follows:


Ayes:	Bennett, Stearns, Koda
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Redfern-West, Linneman

**FUTURE MEETING DATES**

The next regular meeting of the Board was scheduled at 9:00 a.m. on July 13, 2021.


**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business on the agenda, President Bennett adjourned the meeting at 12:02 p.m.



---

John Bennett, President



---

Mike Stearns, Secretary