

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
North Kern Water Storage District
Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 17, 2026

A Meeting of the Board of Directors of North Kern Water Storage District was in person, commencing at 7:00 a.m., on March 17, 2026.

President Andrew declared a quorum was present and called the meeting to order. The following Directors were present: Kevin Andrew, Joel Ackerknecht, Robert Holtermann, Winn Glende 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, Alan Doud, Mark Bateman and Brett Stroud of Young Wooldridge, Guests present: Stephanie Hearn, Art Chianello, Sonia Lemus, Jay Payne and John Gaugel.

President Andrew called the meeting to order at 7:00 am and opened the floor for public comments. At this time, there were none.

Board of Directors –

- (26-19) Upon motion of Director Holtermann, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to approve the minutes from February 17, 2026, Regular Board Meeting.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

Consent Calendar –

Consent Calendar included the following:

- A. District Groundwater Levels
- B. District Exchange Balances
- C. Operations Report

- (26-20) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Glende and unanimously carried, to approve the Consent Calendar.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

General Informational Items –

Watermaster Chianello presented a couple of pictures of Cottonwood Path snow survey station. When surveyed on March 4th it was measured at 18 inches of snow water equivalent and on March 14th it was down to 16.5 inches.

He stated The CNRFC for April-July forecast is 60% of average compared to DWR's B-120 March 10th Water Supply Forecast summary of 79% of average for the same period. He also reported that Isabella Storage was 64,800-acre feet above average as of March 16th.

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

Financial Matters –

- (26-21) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Mitchell and unanimously carried, to receive and file the Treasurer's Report for the North Kern Water Storage District for the month of February as presented.

(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

- (RR26-22) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Mitchell and unanimously carried, to receive and file the Treasurer's Report for the Rosedale Ranch Improvement District for the month of February as presented.

(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

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

- (26-23) Upon motion of Director Glende, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to approve payment of the Accounts Payable balance for the North Kern Water Storage District for the month of February as presented.

(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

- (RR26-24) Upon motion of Director Glende, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to approve payment of the Accounts Payable balance for the Rosedale Ranch Improvement District for the month of February as noted.

(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

Public Hearing –

At this time, President Andrew asked the Board to begin the Public Hearing for the 2025 Agriculture Water Management Plan. The hearing began at 7:30 am. General Manager Hampton gave a brief discussion of several water conservation related acts and noted that most agricultural water suppliers were required to prepare an Ag Water Management Plan in 2015 and were required to be updated every 5 years. The District provided a 2015 and 2020 plan and has completed an updated 2025 draft plan using data sets consistent with the GSP dataset.

Staff recommended that the Board adopt Resolution No. 26-25 approving the District's 2025 Agricultural Water Management Plan, noting that the Plan was posted on the website and no comments were received thereafter. At this time, Director Andrew opened the hearing to the public for questions, comments and/or objections, there were none. At 7:35 am President Andrew closed the public Hearing, Director Andrew opened the hearing to the public for questions, comments, and/or objections;

- (26-25) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried, to Adopt Resolution #26-25 approving the District's Agricultural Water Management Plan Update.

(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

Consulting District Engineer – Mrs. Hearn updated the Board on the following:

Mrs. Hearn provided an overview of the tentative Modesto Order, which approves the Nitrate Management Zone Implementation Plan and amends the Waste Discharge Requirements to incorporate the Nitrate Control Program. Public comments on the tentative order are due by April 15 and there will be a State Water Board hearing to adopt the Order on June 3/4, 2026. The significance of this order is that it will be the template for all Priority 1 and 2 Nitrate Management Zones. Affected industries include irrigated agriculture, dairies, bovine and poultry facilities, non-15 dischargers (facilities such as wineries, food processors, cold storage, etc.), and property owners with septic systems. The program's key objective is to restore groundwater designated beneficial use of MUN to meet the water quality objective of 10 parts per million for nitrate. Program requirements

include community engagement, emergency and interim drinking water, and a residential well survey and registration program.

The tentative order details action items with timelines. A few of the near-term highlights include establishing minimum data and collection needs within 6 months, verify discharges are collecting the required data within 1-year, and submit proposal updates to ILRP groundwater protection values/targets within 4 years. Several other targets noted in the Order relate to being align with the waiver timeframe for each of the affected industries. There are also requirements for co-contaminant testing and coordination with other programs.

Budget & Personnel Committee –

Staff provided an update of the hydrology forecast and discussed various potential scenarios with respect to setting the water toll rate.

- (26-26) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried, to approve to set the toll rate at \$130 as of March 1, 2026.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

Mrs. Duarosan presented the Audit Engagement letter for the 2025 Financial Statements noting that a Single Audit is again required for grant purposes.

- (26-27) Upon motion of Director Glende, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to Authorize engagement of Barbich, Hooper, King, Dill Hoffman to audit the December 31, 2025 financial statements of North Kern Water Storage District (including Rosedale Ranch Improvement District) as per the engagement letter dated February 23, 2026.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

Engineering Committee –

*Due to conflict-of-interest Director Glende left the room for the following vote:

- (26-28) Upon motion of Director Ackerknecht, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried, to 1. Approve Exchange Agreement with Farmland Reserve Inc., 2. Accept replacement well property from Farmland Reserve Inc. to North Kern for well 99-26-010 and 3. Approve Quitclaim of the old well property to Farmland Reserve Inc., from North Kern for well 99-26-010.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: Glende)
- (26-29) Upon motion of Director Mitchell, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to Approve Quitclaim of the easement for the Old Little 9-2 canal to Millrose Properties California LLC.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)
- (26-30) Upon motion of Director Mitchell, seconded by Director Holtermann and unanimously carried, to Authorize the General Manager to execute Task Order 26-06 with GEI Consultants for Friant Kern Canal Pump-in Well Sampling for a budget amount not-to-exceed \$62,400.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

Staff reported that due to bad road conditions after rainfall, a District vehicle was submerged in a canal rendering it a total loss by the insurance carrier. The loss

value was about \$28,000, which will be reimbursed to the District. However, a new replacement vehicle now becomes necessary. Staff recommends the purchase of a replacement vehicle not to exceed \$43,000, which is approximately \$15,000 above the reimbursement received from the insurance.

- (26-31) Upon motion of Director Glende, seconded by Director Mitchell and unanimously carried, to Approve the purchase of a Replacement District Vehicle as presented.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

General Manager Hampton gave a brief discussion about the concern regarding the invasive Golden Mussels, their presence in the State and Federal systems, and potentially entering the Kern River system. The District was in discussions with Cawelo Water District on potential treatments and costs share to combat their introduction into our respective systems and shared facilities.

Groundwater Committee –

General Manager Hampton stated the Spring measurements were completed in compliance with the adopted Kern GSP. He indicated all the groundwater levels at the RMWs were above the MTs. The water quality results at the two RMW wells are reported to be below the water quality MTs except for TCP. The Shafter Well 18 is historically known to have high levels and is already being treated. The TCP level was just below the MT at this particular well. Our 88-29-14 well is also known to have higher levels of TCP and the spring detection of 22 parts per trillion exceeded the MT of 27 parts per trillion. This triggers an investigation as to whether or not the exceedance was caused by GSA activities.

General Manager Hampton presented a proposed scope of work for the continued support of monitoring network data gap activities for the remainder of the 2026 year as there are currently six remaining gaps in the Subbasin.

- (26-32) Upon motion of Director Mitchell, seconded by Director Ackerknecht and unanimously carried, to Approve the proposed scope of work for Luhdorff and Scalmanini Consulting Engineers (LSCE) to support 2026 monitoring network data gap activities for implementation of the Kern County Subbasin GSPs, for a total not to exceed \$23,000 and authorize North Kern's cost share of up to \$1,385.
(Ayes: Andrew, Ackerknecht, Mitchell, Glende & Holtermann, Noes: None, Absent: None, Abstain: None)

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

Negotiating Committee – No report at this time.

Counsel of District – Mr. Doud provided an update on the Base Service Charges delinquency process.

Rosedale Ranch – No report at this time.

General Manager's Report – General Manager Hampton informed the Board that the District has printed the Brown Act is available for anyone to review during these Board meetings. He also informed the Board that some field employees (including managers) have been attending the ITRC training courses. These classes are specific to agricultural water operations.

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 8:20 a.m. The Board reconvened back into the open session at 10:06 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Hampton, General Manager

Approved by Board
April 21, 2026

Kevin Andrew, President