

**Humboldt Bay Municipal Water  
District 828 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Eureka**



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of  
Directors**

March 12, 2026

1:00 p.m.

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joint meeting with RLCSO and suggested moving the meeting to the spring so any resulting items, such as new signage or program needs, could be incorporated into the budget process.

Ms. Mares suggested a late summer or fall meeting timeframe.

**5. Reports:**

**6.1 Staff Reports:**

**a. Operations Report**

**Non-Action Item**

Mr. Davidsen presented the February Operations Report, highlighting that Ruth Lake recorded 11.21 inches of rainfall during the month and the hydro plant generated 660,400 kWh.

Director Woo assured staff that they have the Board's support and encouraged them to continue working in a safe manner. Director Rupp also expressed appreciation to staff, acknowledging their hard work and commitment to the District.

**b. Management Report**

**Non-Action Item**

Ms. Mares presented the General Manager's Report, providing updates on regulatory compliance, permitting, and reporting activities. Ms. Mares reported that no workplace injuries occurred during the reporting period and that the District maintained full compliance with state and federal drinking water regulations. Discussion included FERC and Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) comments related to the embankment investigation drilling program, as well as operational considerations associated with Collector #4 being offline. Director Rupp asked clarifying questions.

Ms. Mares also reported on coordination with the Watershed Research and Training Center, a meeting with the Bear River Band regarding the un-naming of the Mad River initiative, and progress related to the General Manager performance appraisal process.

**6.2 Active Committee Reports**

**a. Instream Flow Dedication**

Director Stevens reported that the Instream Flow Dedication Ad-Hoc Committee (Directors Fuller and Stevens) met on February 11, 18, and 25. Director Stevens noted that the response deadline has been extended to May 20, and the Board will plan to discuss the matter further in Closed Session at the May Board meeting when additional information is available.

Director Stevens also commended Ms. Mares for her work facilitating the three meetings.

**b. Water Rights Renewal**

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Ms. Harris presented the February financial statement, reporting a general account balance of \$1.9 million, investments totaling \$12 million, \$14 million in advance charges, and \$4.3 million in general reserves.

**5.5 Approve Declaration of Emergency and Authorization for Emergency Procurement of Commercial Dive Services — R.W. Matthews Dam Slide Gate Failure**

**ACTION: Motion #26-018 approve declaration of emergency& authorization for emergency procurement of commercial dive services, increasing the authorized amount from \$215,000 to an amount not to exceed \$350,000, to be funded from the General Fund.**

**Maker:** Director Rupp

**Second:** Director Wheeler

**Vote:** 4-0 to approve

Ms. Mares provided a high-level report on the recent slide gate failure at the R.W. Matthews Dam intake structure, the emergency declaration, and the proposed next steps for inspection and repair. She noted that the estimated cost for dive services increased from \$215,000 to up to \$350,000 due to the scope and urgency of the required work. The emergency condition resulted from malfunction of the slide gate hydraulic operating system during a March 3, 2026, DSOD inspection, eliminating the District's ability to fully control or shut off flow from Ruth Lake. Ms. Mares noted that there is no risk to the public drinking water supply at this time.

**5.6 Approve Updated Joint Invasive Species Prevention Plan**

**ACTION: Motion #26-019 to approve updated joint aquatic invasive species prevention plan with amendment.**

**Maker:** Director Wheeler

**Second:** Director Rupp

**Vote:** 4-0 to approve

Director Rupp pulled the item for discussion and recommended revising the terminology from "dip tank" to "decontamination station," reflecting staff's shift from pursuing procurement of a dip tank to moving forward with a decontamination station, as previously discussed.

**5.7 Amend CDFW SFRA Boating Access Grant (Q2596908) – Invasive Mussel Response Program at Ruth Lake**

**ACTION: Motion #26-020 to approve amendment to CDFW SFRA boating access grant.**

**Maker:** Director Wheeler

**Second:** Director Rupp

**Vote:** 4-0 to approve

Director Woo pulled the item from the consent calendar and commended staff for their work in partnership with Ruth Lake Community Services District (RLCSD). Director Woo discussed the annual

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**4.2 Strategic Plan Presentation**

Ms. Mares provided a comprehensive overview of the District's FY 2027–2030 Strategic Plan, including the mission and vision statements, key issues and trends facing the District, and the proposed three-year goals and FY 2027 objectives.

Director Rupp stated he appreciated the plan and felt it provided strong direction for the District. Vice President Woo thanked Hilary Straus for facilitating the strategic planning workshop.

**DISCUSSION AND ACTION:**

**5.1 Approve Updated Mission and Vision Statements and FY2027-2030 Strategic Plan**

**ACTION: Motion #26-015 to approve updated mission and vision statements and strategic plan for fiscal year 2026/2027.**

**Maker:** Director Wheeler

**Second:** Director Stevens

**Vote:** 4-0 to approve

The Board discussed the updated Mission and Vision Statements and the Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year 2026/2027. The documents provided in the Board packet will be shared with District partners.

**5.2 Approve Adoption of Resolution No. 2026-02 HBMWD 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**ACTION: Motion #26-016 to approve HBMWD 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary resolution 2026-02.**

**Maker:** Director Stevens

**Second:** Director Wheeler

**Vote:** 4-0 to approve

Ms. Mares presented this item to formally recognize the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestone.

**5.3 Informational Memo Concerning the Former McNamara and Peepe Mill Site**

**Non-Action Item**

**-Director Woo recused herself due to a conflict of interest.**

Ms. Mares reported that a quarterly update meeting with DTSC was held on February 5, 2026, with no significant updates. The January 2026 DTSC Monthly Report was received. DTSC is currently initiating the contract process to fund the Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA) and Feasibility Study (FS).

**5.4 Approve the February Financial Statement & Vendor Detail Report**

**ACTION: Motion #26-017 to approve the February Financial Statement & Vendor Detail Report in the amount of \$408,728.45.**

**Maker:** Director Stevens

**Second:** Director Wheeler

**Vote:** 4-0 to approve

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**1.1 ROLL CALL**

Vice President Woo called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Roll call was conducted. Directors Rupp, Stevens, Wheeler, and Woo were present. General Manager Michiko Mares, Director of Maintenance and Operations Dale Davidsen, Director of Finance and Human Resources Chris Harris, and Board Secretary Contessa Dickson were present. President Fuller was absent.

**1.2 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice President Woo led the pledge of allegiance.

**1.3 ACCEPT AGENDA**

**ACTION: Motion #26-013 to accept Agenda less item 3.2 and 3.7.**

**Maker: Director Rupp**

**Second: Director Wheeler**

**Vote: 4-0 to approve**

Item 5.5 was added to the agenda. Supporting documents were made available to the public on the District website.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

**3. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**ACTION: Motion #26-014 to approve Consent Calendar.**

**Maker: Director Woo**

**Second: Director Rupp**

**Vote: 4-0 to approve**

3.1 Approve the Draft Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 12, 2026

~~3.2 Approve Updated Joint Invasive Species Prevention Plan~~

3.3 Informational Memo – Employee Handbook Update

3.4 Approve Succession Planning – Director of Operations and Maintenance

3.5 Approve Letter of Support for SB 1001 – Essential Utility Worker Identification Program

3.6 Approve Preliminary Investigation of Collector #4 Drinking Water Well and Authorization to Expend Reserve Funds

~~3.7 Discuss and Consider Approval to Amend CDFW SFRA Boating Access Grant (Q2596908) – Invasive Mussel Response Program at Ruth Lake~~

**4. PRESENTATIONS**

**4.1 District Jacket Presentations** – Per District tradition, new employee Cody Emmons was presented with a District jacket.

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Director Stevens reported that the Water Rights Renewal Ad-Hoc Committee (directors Fuller and Stevens) met on March 2 to discuss the upcoming deadline and timeline. She noted that, regionally, the District is not considered a high priority to the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Water Rights.

c. GM Appraisal

Director Woo reported that the GM Appraisal Ad-Hoc Committee (Directors Fuller and Woo) met on February 23, February 24, and March 9. Director Woo noted that two proposals were received from consultants recommended by legal counsel and that the committee conducted online interviews with both firms.

The committee selected CPS HR to move forward with the GM performance appraisal process. Director Woo stated the committee appreciated CPS HR's phased approach and their understanding that the process would serve as a pilot for developing new tools and evaluation processes, which could potentially be used District-wide in the future.

6.3 Director Reports

a. Vice President Woo

Director Woo reported that she attended the February Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) meeting as a member of the public. She stated the District has made valuable contributions to RCEA's work.

b. Director Wheeler

Director Wheeler wanted to confirm that Directors had received the Lost Coast Outpost article that staff provided to the Board.

c. Director Stevens

No comment.

d. Director Rupp

No comment.

6.4. Organizations on which HBMWD Serves

a. Association of CA Water Agencies (ACWA)

**Non-Action Item**

Director Rupp reported on the recent ACWA Finance Committee meeting he attended, noting that the committee reviewed end-of-year financial reports and investment updates and discussed planning for the upcoming year.

b. Association of CA Water Agencies/Joint Powers Insurance Authority (ACWA-JPIA)

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**Non-Action Item**

Director Rupp reported on the recent ACWA-JPIA meeting he attended. Topics included artificial intelligence applications and pharmacy benefits management. Director Rupp noted discussion regarding potential uses of AI tools for legacy planning and knowledge retention, allowing organizations to retain institutional knowledge when employees retire or leave.

7. Discussion of Future Agenda Items

7.1 Information Management System

**Non-Action Item**

No update.

7.2 Artificial Intelligence Policy

**Non-Action Item**

No update.

7.3 Association Memberships related to Local Business and Economic Development

**Non-Action Item**

No update.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Attest:

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Sheri Woo, Vice President

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Contessa Dickson, Board Secretary