

President
Stacy Doolittle

VP
David Fick

Directors
Tom Floen
Jane Jarlsberg
Jane Fawke

**General
Manager Pro Tem**
Anne Roman

Legal Counsel
Jeff Hoskinson



SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS **Monday, September 28, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.**

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN PERSON AT 61750 CHOLLITA RD., JOSHUA TREE, CA 92252

REMOTE ACCESS IS AVAILABLE FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF THE PUBLIC

CLICK TO JOIN VIRTUALLY: [ZOOM LINK](#)

CALL TO JOIN BY PHONE: (669) 444-9171

MEETING ID: 864 4800 3304

PASSCODE: 61750

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission Statement

To provide, protect, and maintain Joshua Tree's water - our vital community resource.

Vision Statement

To achieve excellence in all District endeavors.

Values

The community of Joshua Tree has entrusted the Board of Directors and employees of Joshua Basin Water District with its most valuable natural resource, its groundwater. As stewards of the community water supply, we oversee this critical natural resource to ensure current and future water reliability. Dedicated to this purpose, we embrace these important values:

- **Integrity** – To consistently earn our customers' trust by prioritizing the needs of the community... doing the right thing for the right reason.
- **Transparency** – To openly and honestly share information about our operations with the public.
- **Respect** – To treat the residents of Joshua Tree, and all those contacted in the course of business, with high esteem and regard.
- **Fiscal Responsibility** – To manage all resources as if they were our own, whether revenues, assets, or water supply, in a conscientious and appropriate manner.
- **Accountability** – To take responsibility for our decisions and actions in managing this essential resource.

1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Consideration of Board Member requests for remote participation.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

This is the time set aside for public comment on any District related matter, whether appearing on the agenda or not. Pursuant to the Brown Act, the Board is prohibited from taking action on items not listed on the agenda. At the discretion of the Board President comments on a particular Agendized item may be deferred until that item is heard. Please state your name and limit your comments to 3 minutes. For members of the public attending the meeting on-line, please use the "Raise Hand" reaction feature in your toolbar on Zoom to signal your desire to comment and be recognized by the Board.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent calendar items are expected to be routine and non-controversial, to be acted upon by the Board at one time, without discussion. If a board member would like an item to be handled separately, it will be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate action.

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A. **DRAFT MINUTES – 09.16.26**

6. ITEM(S) PULLED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR FOR DISCUSSION

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

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A. **SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY JOSHUA TREE SEPTIC-TO-SEWER INITIATIVE - INFORMATIONAL SPECIAL MEETING**

PRESENTED BY: GENERAL MANAGER PRO TEM, ANNE ROMAN

RECOMMENDED ACTION: RECEIVE PRESENTATIONS AND INFORMATION REGARDING SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY'S JOSHUA TREE SEPTIC-TO-SEWER PLANNING INITIATIVE; REVIEW AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER, REGULATORY, FINANCIAL, GOVERNANCE, AND WASTEWATER-PLANNING INFORMATION; DISCUSS THE COUNTY'S REQUESTED RESOLUTION; REVIEW THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANY CHANGES; IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NEEDED; AND PROVIDE DIRECTION TO STAFF. NO FINAL ACTION ON THE COUNTY-REQUESTED RESOLUTION IS RECOMMENDED AT THIS SPECIAL MEETING.

8. DIRECTOR REPORTS/COMMENTS

This time is reserved for Director reports and comments on matters within the District's jurisdiction, for informational purposes only, on subjects not covered by the agenda; the opinions expressed by individual Directors do not necessarily reflect those of the Board as a whole or District staff, and no action shall be taken.

9. MANAGERS' REPORT

For informational purposes only on subjects not covered by the agenda. No action is to be taken.

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10. **AGENDA ITEMS REQUESTED BY THE BOARD**

Directors may request items be placed on future agendas. These requests will be recorded on the "Future Agenda Items" list, located on the page following the agenda, and scheduled as time permits. Items will be brought back for Board discussion as requested—no additional staff work will be initiated in advance. The Director making the request is responsible for being prepared to discuss the topic for initial consideration. The full Board will then vote to determine whether the item moves forward for staff involvement.

11. CLOSED SESSION -

- A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (Govt. Code § 54956.9(d)(4))
Initiation of Litigation: 1 case
- B. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT (Govt. Code § 54957)
Title: General Counsel

12. ADJOURNMENT

MEETING INFORMATION

The public is invited to comment on any item on the agenda during the discussion of that item.

Availability of agenda materials: Materials related to any item on this Agenda submitted to the District Board of Directors or Committee Members after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection at the District's office, 61750 Chollita Road, Joshua Tree, CA 92252, during normal business hours. All documents supporting this agenda are available on the District website www.jbwd.com, subject to the staff's availability to post the documents before the meeting.

Reasonable Accommodation: Any person with a disability who requires accommodation to view the agenda or to participate in the public comment portion of the Board meeting, should direct such requests to Lisa Thompson, Executive Assistant, at 760-366-8438. Please allow three business days for your request to be processed. Requests must be received at least seventy-two (72) hours before the scheduled meeting.

Disruptive Conduct: If any meeting of the District is willfully disrupted by a person or by a group of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting impossible, a meeting may be recessed or the person or persons willfully disrupting the meeting may be ordered to leave the meeting. Disruptive individuals attending on-line may be removed from the meeting and banned for the remainder of such session. Disruptive conduct includes addressing the Board or Committee without first being recognized, not addressing the subject before the Board or Committee, repetitively addressing the same subject, failing to relinquish the podium when requested to do so, or otherwise preventing the Board or Committee from conducting its meeting in an orderly manner. Your cooperation is appreciated.

MEETING MINUTES



REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEPTEMBER 16, 2026, 5:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Doolittle called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM & ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present: President Doolittle, Director Floen, Director Fick, Director Jarlsberg, Director Fawke

Staff Present: General Manager Pro Tem Roman, Director of Administration Shook, Accounting Supervisor Rich, Executive Assistant Thompson, HR & Risk Generalist Sheehan

Consultant(s) Present: Legal Counsel, Jeff Hoskinson; Public Outreach Consultant, Kathleen Radich,

Citizens Advisory Council Member(s) Present: Jeff Walters, Thomas Fjallstam

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Director Floen moved to approve the agenda and seconded by Director Jarlsberg and approved by the following vote:

1st / 2nd Floen/Jarlsberg
Ayes: Doolittle, Floen, Fick, Jarlsberg
Noes: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

4. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. DRAFT MINUTES – 09.02.26 – President Doolittle requested that the minutes be pulled from the Consent Calendar.

6. ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR FOR DISCUSSION

- A. DRAFT MINUTES – 09.02.26 – President Doolittle requested that the printed comments from the 09.02.26 meeting be added to the minutes.

President Doolittle made a motion to approve the 09.02.26 minutes as amended to add her written comments, seconded by Director Fick and approved by the following vote:

1 st / 2 nd	Doolittle/Fick
Ayes:	Doolittle, Floen, Jarlsberg, Fick
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

7. DISCUSSION/ACTION CALENDAR

A. BOARD VACANCY APPOINTMENT AND ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENT

PRESENTED BY: GENERAL COUNSEL, JEFF HOSKINSON

RECOMMENDED ACTION: 1. CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF JANE ‘SPIDER’ FAWKE TO FILL THE VACANT DIVISION 1 DIRECTOR POSITION THROUGH DECEMBER 4, 2026; AND

2. FOLLOWING THE APPOINTMENT AND SEATING OF THE NEW DIRECTOR, ELECT A VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD.

Legal Counsel Jeff Hoskinson presented the Board Vacancy Appointment and reviewed the options for filling the Division 1 vacancy. Hoskinson clarified the deadline for filling the vacancy and explained the residency requirements under state law.

The Board discussed the proposed appointment of Jane “Spider” Fawke and the qualifications and experience she would bring to the position. Hoskinson also clarified that the appointee must reside within Division 1.

Director Fick made a motion to consider Jane ‘Spider’ Fawke to fill the vacant Division 1 Director position through December 4, 2026, seconded by President Doolittle and approved by the following vote:

1 st / 2 nd	Fick/Doolittle
Ayes:	Doolittle, Floen, Jarlsberg, Fick
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

Legal Counsel, Jeff Hoskinson, presented the Election of a Vice President of the Board.

President Doolittle made a motion to nominate Director Fick as Vice President of the Board, seconded by Director Fawke, and approved by the following vote:

1 st / 2 nd	Doolittle/Fawke
Ayes:	Doolittle, Floen, Jarlsberg, Fick
Noes:	Floen
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

B. CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM (CALPERS) CONTRACT AMENDMENT – FINAL BOARD ACTION

PRESENTED BY: GENERAL MANAGER PRO TEM, ANNE ROMAN
RECOMMENDED ACTION: ADOPT THE CALPERS-PREScribed RESOLUTION (NUMBERED 26-1099) AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT; AUTHORIZE THE BOARD PRESIDENT, AS PRESIDING OFFICER, TO EXECUTE THE AMENDMENT; AND DIRECT THE BOARD SECRETARY TO COMPLETE THE CERTIFICATION OF FINAL ACTION OF GOVERNING BODY AND RETURN THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO CALPERS.

General Manager Pro Tem Anne Roman presented the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) Contract Amendment – Final Board Action. The Board reviewed the final contract amendment and Resolution No. 26-1099 authorizing the amendment.

Director Jarlsberg made a motion to adopt CalPERS-prescribed Resolution No. 26-1099, authorizing an amendment to the District's contract with CalPERS; authorize the Board President, as Presiding Officer, to execute the amendment; and direct the Board Secretary to complete the Certification of Final Action of Governing Body and submit the required documents to CalPERS, and seconded by Director Floen and approved by the following vote:

1st/ 2nd	Jarlsberg/Floen
Ayes:	Doolittle, Floen, Jarlsberg, Fick
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

C. CAPACITY CHARGE REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING 06/30/2026

PRESENTED BY: GENERAL MANAGER PRO TEM, ANNE ROMAN
RECOMMENDED ACTION: FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. NO ACTION IS TO BE TAKEN.

General Manager Pro Tem, Anne Roman presented the Capacity Charge Reports for Fiscal Year Ending 06/30/26. Roman explained that the annual reports summarize the collection, use, and interest earned for the Water and Wastewater Capacity Funds.

Roman reported that the Water Capacity Fund increased during fiscal year 2025/26, with no funds used for growth or expansion projects. The Wastewater Capacity Fund also increased, and the Hi-Desert Medical Center note was paid in full, subject to any remaining interest. No Wastewater Capacity funds were used for growth or expansion projects during the fiscal year.

D. 4th FISCAL QUARTER ENDING 06/30/2026 FINANCIAL REPORT – PRELIMINARY/UNAUDITED

PRESENTED BY: GENERAL MANAGER PRO TEM, ANNE ROMAN
RECOMMENDED ACTION: REVIEW AND APPROVE

General Manager Pro Tem Anne Roman presented the 4th Fiscal Quarter Ending 06/30/2026 Financial Report – Preliminary/Unaudited. Roman noted that the report is preliminary and unaudited, with the annual audit scheduled for November.

Roman provided an overview of the District's year-end financial position, reserves, revenues, expenditures, and cash balances. Water payments were the primary source of quarterly cash receipts, followed by property tax and assessment revenues. Roman also reviewed historical water sales and investment performance.

Roman noted that accounts receivable increased, including past-due accounts subject to collection efforts, liens, and bad debt. Capital spending was below projections, and staffing vacancies affected capital and inventory activities.

Director Jarlsberg made a motion to approve the 4th Fiscal Quarter Ending 06/30/2026 Financial Report-Preliminary Unaudited, seconded by Director Floen and approved by the following vote:

1st/ 2nd	Jarlsberg/Floen
Ayes:	Doolittle, Floen, Jarlsberg, Fick
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

8. DIRECTOR REPORTS/COMMENTS

President Doolittle

- Doolittle appointed Vice President Fick to the Water and Growth Committee.
- Doolittle stated that she is permanently dissolving the Board Retreat Ad Hoc Committee.
- Doolittle reported on her participation in the ACWA Affordability Working Group and discussed the challenges smaller and rural water districts face in accessing technical assistance and outside funding.
- Doolittle reported that the Water and Growth Committee is continuing to develop a policy addressing new and intensified high-demand water use. She stated that the policy will be based on water demand and impacts rather than specific types of development and will be brought to the Board before numerical thresholds are established.
- Doolittle referenced a Public Records Request concerning Agenda Items 7A and 7B and the County letter regarding the septic-to-sewer project. Doolittle noted that a special Board meeting is being scheduled to discuss the matter.
- Doolittle reported that she was interviewed by the District's auditors and that the auditors spoke highly of General Manager Pro Tem Anne Roman and Accounting Supervisor Autumn Rich.

Director Floen

- Floen reported attending the Landers Homestead Valley Association meeting. Floen noted that Director Jarlsberg donated a new, lighter table for the community center. Floen also reported that Steve Bardwell of the Morongo Basin Conservation Association spoke about responsible growth and the importance of considering the desert environment and location when planning development.

Director Jarlsberg

- Jarlsberg reported attending the Landers Homestead Valley Association meeting the previous Monday. Jarlsberg noted that County Supervisor Dawe Rowe attended the meeting and stated that Rowe confirmed she does not plan to run for office for the next two years and will conclude her term as chairperson this year.

Director Fick

- Fick commented on the recent activity concerning the County's septic-to-sewer project. Fick referenced the County Supervisor's letter requesting Board action and noted that the Board has not reviewed the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the sewer consultant in several months. Fick stated that the Board should review the RFP and understand the terms of the project before taking action.
- Fick welcomed Director Fawke to the Board and thanked the Board for allowing her to serve.

9. MANAGER'S REPORT

General Manager Pro Tem Roman prepared and distributed a written manager's report which is included as an attachment to the minutes.

10. AGENDA ITEMS REQUESTED BY THE BOARD

- Doolittle – None
- Floen – None
- Jarlsberg – None
- Fick – General Manager Pro Tem Roman compensation.
Consideration for the Board to continue using Rojas Public Affairs.

11. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Director Jarlsberg seconded by Director Floen, and approved by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Roman, General Manager Pro Tem & Board Secretary

TO VIEW THE MEETING RECORDING ON YOUTUBE, CLICK HERE:



FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS REQUESTED BY THE BOARD

Staff will notify the requesting Board member of the meeting at which the agenda item will be scheduled, with a minimum of two weeks' notice. Any supporting materials must be submitted to the General Manager by close of business on the Wednesday preceding the Board meeting. Board members requesting an agenda item are expected to be prepared to discuss the item, including its anticipated benefits, alignment with the Strategic Plan, and any associated costs. Leads will be assigned by the GM after the agenda item is presented to the board for direction.

#	Item Requested	By	Date Requested	Lead	Notes
1	PFAS Concerns Discussion	Jarlsberg	01.21.26	TBD	No PFAS detected in water sampling
2	Sewer Project Updates	Fick	01.21.26	Johnson	Completed 04.01.26 (more info to come)
3	Chromium 6 Updates & Workshop	Doolittle	01.21.26	Johnson	Completed 03.19.26
4	Customer Deposits	Short	02.04.26	Roman	Completed 08.05.26
5	Update Employee Handbook with incentives	Short	02.04.26	Johnson	FY 26/27
6	CAAP Re-evaluation	Fick	02.04.26	Shook	Completed 08.05.26
7	Board Retreat Workshop/Social Media	Jarlsberg/Doolittle	02.18.26	Johnson	Temporarily suspended as of 08.05.26
8	District to join JTABC	Fick	03.19.26	Johnson	Completed 08.05.26
9	Waste Water Strategy	Doolittle	03.19.26	TBD	
10	Landscaping Policy Discussion	Doolittle	03.19.26	TBD	
11	Nitrates Presentation	Fick	05.11.26	Roman	Added to 09.28.26 Agenda
12	CEQA Review on Budget	Doolittle	05.11.26	TBD	Added to FY 26/27 Budget
13	Cadiz Disucssion	Doolittle	07.15.26	Johnson	
14	Love more Ranch Project Status	Fick	08.19.26	Roman	Added to 09.02.26 Agenda
15	Enable Zoom & YouTube transcription	Doolittle	09.02.26		Completed on 09.17.26
16	Supporting Documents for Agenda Items 7A and 7B from 08.05.26 Board meeting	Jarlsberg	09.02.26		
17	Board Meeting Recordings, Public Comments, Records Retention and Publication	Doolittle	09.02.26		
18	GM Pro Tem Roman Compensation	Fick	09.16.26		
19	Consideration for the District to continue using Rojas Public Affairs	Fick	09.16.26		

FUTURE DIRECTOR MEETINGS - CALENDAR REMINDER

Informed, well-connected, and educated Directors are able to provide the best decision-making on behalf of JBWD ratepayers. Training and educational conferences provide an invaluable opportunity for Directors to become and stay educated about issues of significance to JBWD. Networking with various representatives, whether local, state, or federal officials, provides an opportunity for JBWD to have a seat at the table, and affords perspective, insight, and occasion for JBWD to collaborate on similar issues, learn about grant opportunities or gain an understanding of upcoming legislation. Director attendance at various meetings is critical for ensuring that JBWD's concerns, needs, or interests are appropriately shared and represented at many levels of government. Directors serve as the official face of JBWD and their attendance at JBWD-sponsored events such as Water Education Day, JBWD tours, retirements, or celebrations, signifies the importance and value of such events. JBWD belongs to various industry associations and Director attendance at their meetings demonstrates our interest and willingness to be part of the solution.

MEETING	DATE	TIME	ATTENDEES
MWA - TAC Meeting	10.01.26	10:00 AM	Doolittle
SGPWA - State of the Pass Event	10.06.26	8:30 AM	Doolittle/Fawke
JBWD - Board Meeting	10.07.26	5:00 PM	All



AGENDA ITEM NO:	7A
MEETING DATE:	09.28.26

Staff Report

PRESENTED BY:	Anne Roman, General Manager Pro Tem
TOPIC:	SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY JOSHUA TREE SEPTIC-TO-SEWER INITIATIVE - INFORMATIONAL SPECIAL MEETING
RECOMMENDATION:	Receive presentations and information regarding San Bernardino County's Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer planning initiative; review available groundwater, regulatory, financial, governance, and wastewater-planning information; discuss the County's requested resolution; review the draft resolutions and make recommendations for any changes; identify additional information needed; and provide direction to staff. No final action on the County-requested resolution is recommended at this Special Meeting.

BACKGROUND:

On August 20, 2026, San Bernardino County Supervisor Dawn Rowe requested that the JBWD Board adopt a formal resolution stating whether the District supports or opposes continued County planning and feasibility work for a Joshua Tree septic-to-sewer initiative. The County characterized the requested decision as a threshold question concerning continuation of planning work, rather than approval of construction, a final service area, treatment alternative, funding mechanism, governance structure, future operator, or mandatory connection requirement.

President Doolittle subsequently requested a Special Board Meeting to develop a more complete factual record before the Board considers the County's requested resolution. The requested scope includes County project status and administration; authority and funding; groundwater and regulatory conditions; JBWD wastewater planning history and restricted capacity-charge funds; future system responsibility and costs; and possible Board direction. Additional questions have been submitted regarding funding deadlines, County decision-making authority, Phase I and Phase II decision points, public and JBWD participation, project tracking, groundwater criteria and project boundaries, affordability, consultant procurement, and the collaborative process described by the County.

This report summarizes information presently available for public discussion. A separate County Initiative: Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer FAQ accompanies this staff report and provides additional detail regarding factual questions, available answers, and items that remain pending. Attorney-client privileged legal and risk advice is intentionally omitted. Several County and Regional Water Quality Control Board responses remain pending, and additional technical information is expected at the Special Meeting.

ANALYSIS:

1. COUNTY PROJECT STATUS, ADMINISTRATION, AUTHORITY AND FUNDING

Staff has requested additional information from the County concerning work completed or underway since the April 1 presentation; findings and deliverables to date; expenditures and remaining funds; schedule; changes in scope or proposed boundaries; WBSE 30.30.0214; the responsible County department and project manager; and a public means of tracking project funding, contracts, documents, schedule, and progress.

Additional unanswered questions ask the County to clarify the respective roles and decision-making authority of the Board of Supervisors, Public Works, Special Districts, and Supervisor Rowe's office; whether the Board of Supervisors specifically authorized the August 20 request; and the practical effect of support, opposition, delay, or no action by JBWD.

Funding questions remain outstanding. The County has been asked to identify the specific County and federal funding sources, applicable grant or appropriation documents, deadlines or conditions that make JBWD action necessary now, and what would happen to funding if it is not used for the County initiative. Questions also include who has authority to reallocate County funds and the award, obligation, and expenditure deadlines applicable to the \$750,000 FY2026 federal Community Project Funding / EPA Community Grant identified for Joshua Tree wastewater planning.

The County has also been asked to explain what must occur before the project moves from Phase I to Phase II; whether there will be a formal public review or decision point before that transition; the dates and opportunities for JBWD and community review; and how affordability, governance, boundaries, funding, and project management will be evaluated while Phase I planning remains underway.

2. GROUNDWATER, NITRATE AND REGULATORY INFORMATION

Brian Hammer, Principal Data Analyst, Hammer Analytix, is scheduled to present 'An Exploration of Nitrate Levels in Joshua Basin Water District Production Wells.' This presentation is intended to provide a broader review of nitrate conditions in District production wells and should be considered separately from Operations observations regarding Well 10 and from historical USGS findings.

District Operations reports that nitrate levels at Well 10 increased somewhat around 2024-2025 and recommends more frequent monitoring than the current annual sampling practice. Wells 10, 14, and 15 feed the same distribution zone; however, Operations has clarified that distribution-system mixing is not controlled blending before water enters the distribution system. Customers nearer Well 10 may therefore receive a greater proportion of Well 10 water.

A 2006 USGS investigation found evidence of septic-system influence in groundwater entering the upper portion of Well 10. The historical investigation did not identify the particular septic source responsible and does not establish the source of current nitrate increases. Operations has identified several possibilities requiring further evaluation, including nitrate migration from surrounding areas, septic loading near the well, and possible influence from the District shop septic system if the sanitary seal were compromised.

Potential operational responses identified for evaluation include increased nitrate sampling; sampling inactive Wells 2 and 11 and/or future monitoring

wells; profiling Well 10 to identify nitrate-bearing intervals and possible temporary isolation; nitrate-specific treatment; and longer-term replacement-well planning. Operations advises that the Strong Base Anion technology currently being considered for Chromium-6 uses different resin/media from nitrate treatment and, as presently contemplated, would not remove both constituents in a single treatment process.

Well 10 was drilled in 1968 and is approximately 58 years old, with its original steel casing and sanitary seal. Its age and condition are relevant to the future path for the well, including whether to invest in treatment or rehabilitation at the existing site, advance replacement-well planning, or use a combination of near-term and long-term measures. Operations has also noted the District's current need for Well 10 for system capacity and redundancy.

Staff has requested input from the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board regarding its current assessment of Joshua Tree wastewater and groundwater-quality conditions, particularly nitrate impacts associated with onsite wastewater treatment systems; whether additional groundwater assessment, monitoring, interagency coordination, or regional wastewater planning is recommended; and whether existing or anticipated Basin Plan requirements, regulatory actions, studies, or other RWQCB initiatives should be considered now. Staff has also requested clarification that the cited 2028/2031 Yucca Valley OWTS prohibition is distinct from Joshua Tree's separate Basin Plan status as an unsewered community identified for investigation and possible prioritization for sewerage.

The County has separately been asked to identify the groundwater-quality standards, regulatory requirements, findings, or other water-resource criteria that will be used to determine where sewerage is warranted and how proposed project boundaries or scope would change if available groundwater data do not demonstrate a regulatory or water-quality need in portions of the study area.

3. JBWD WASTEWATER PLANNING HISTORY AND CAPACITY-CHARGE FUNDS

JBWD obtained wastewater planning and package treatment plant authority and adopted a Wastewater Treatment Strategy prepared by Dudek & Associates in 2009. The Strategy established a phased, development-oriented framework that contemplated localized/package facilities and potential larger or consolidated facilities as development warranted. It also contemplated wastewater connection/capacity charges to fund eligible wastewater capital capacity.

Dudek & Associates prepared an updated Wastewater Treatment Strategy in 2020. The District utilized \$60,711 in Wastewater Capacity Charge funds for that update effort; however, the 2020 update was never adopted by the Board. It may provide technical and planning background, but it should not be characterized as adopted District policy. The 2009 Strategy remains the Board-adopted historical strategy unless and until the Board takes further action.

As of June 30, 2026, the District held \$3,212,265.07 in restricted Wastewater Capacity Charge funds. District counsel has advised, in information identified for public discussion, that wastewater capacity charges are governed by Government Code section 66013 and that

collection of the charges does not, by itself, create a legal obligation or commitment to construct a future wastewater collection or treatment system. Section 66013 requires fiscal stewardship of the restricted funds, including maintaining them in a separate capital facilities fund, using them solely for the purposes for which the charges were collected, retaining interest in the fund, and making the required annual disclosures.

The County's August 20 correspondence referenced JBWD's wastewater-capacity-charge reserves. The County has been asked why those funds were cited, whether County financial planning assumes any contribution from JBWD, and whether the County is relying on any District communication or agreement committing those funds. No such commitment is identified in the information presently available to staff.

4. LOVEMORE RANCH AND RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL PLANNING

The current Lovemore Ranch project proposal includes a package wastewater treatment plant and is undergoing District plan check. The District's 2009 Strategy contemplated developer-related localized/package treatment facilities that could potentially relate to or transition toward larger future wastewater infrastructure. Review of a private development's package-treatment proposal should remain distinct from any future policy decision for JBWD to own or operate a community wastewater system. Staff is continuing to evaluate how the Lovemore proposal, historical District planning, RWQCB requirements, and the County initiative may intersect without assuming a future governance or ownership outcome.

5. FUTURE SYSTEM RESPONSIBILITY, GOVERNANCE, FINANCING AND AFFORDABILITY

No final governance, ownership, financing, operating, service-area, treatment, or mandatory-connection structure has been identified in the information presently available to staff. Public/non-privileged counsel information indicates that JBWD presently does not have authority to construct a broader sewer collection or treatment system beyond its current package-treatment-plant authority; activation of broader latent sewer authority would require LAFCO action.

The ultimate responsibilities would depend on the governance structure and approvals that may be selected in the future. Potential structures identified for discussion include JBWD, a County Service Area, a joint powers agency involving the County and JBWD, or another regional approach. Potential financing could involve State and federal grants and local financing mechanisms, with ongoing user rates and charges depending on the structure selected. A County/JBWD Joint Powers Authority has been identified by JBWD staff only as a concept for future exploration; it is not a current proposal or commitment.

Questions remain regarding when and how Phase I will evaluate potential property-owner and ratepayer costs, impacts on disadvantaged households, and available grant funding or other affordability assistance. President Doolittle has also asked whether the County would act as a constructive partner if JBWD ultimately pursued a District-owned and managed wastewater project, including potential County financial support and assistance securing other funding.

6. COUNTY REQUESTED RESOLUTION AND INTERAGENCY PROCESS

The County has characterized the requested resolution as a threshold decision on whether County planning and feasibility work should continue,

rather than approval of a future sewer system or its final details. The County has also stated that it does not intend to continue directing significant resources to an initiative affirmatively opposed by the local water agency. Staff has requested more specific County information regarding what work or funding would actually stop or change if JBWD does not adopt the requested resolution.

President Doolittle has asked whether JBWD may support continued Phase I planning while retaining independent oversight, requesting additional information, raising concerns, proposing changes, disagreeing with recommendations, and taking a different position later without being treated as opposed to the project or jeopardizing County work or funding. She has also asked whether the County is open to alternative resolution language that would allow Phase I work to continue while preserving JBWD's future discretion.

Additional questions address the collaborative process described by the County in April, including whether the County will provide regular updates, establish predictable opportunities for JBWD and community input, and engage the District and its Water & Growth Committee earlier in Phase I. Attorney-client privileged advice regarding the legal effect of resolution language, litigation risk, developer/property-owner claims, or other confidential legal strategy is not summarized in this public staff report.

7. COUNTY RFP / CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT

Directors have requested the status and scope of any County Request for Proposals, solicitation, or consultant procurement associated with Joshua Tree septic-to-sewer planning, including the services to be procured, anticipated procurement schedule, and expected start of consultant work. This remains pending County response.

OUTSTANDING INFORMATION

County responses regarding project status, expenditures, remaining funding, County and federal funding deadlines, decision-making authority, Phase I deliverables, the Phase I-to-Phase II process, JBWD/community review opportunities, WBSE 30.30.0214 and public project tracking, project boundaries and groundwater criteria, use or assumptions regarding JBWD capacity-charge funds, affordability, future collaboration, and any County RFP or consultant procurement.

RWQCB responses regarding current Joshua Tree groundwater and wastewater conditions, nitrate and onsite-wastewater impacts, applicable Basin Plan provisions, potential monitoring or planning recommendations, and the distinction between Joshua Tree and the Yucca Valley OWTS prohibition.

Any Board questions or follow-up analysis arising from Brian Hammer's scheduled presentation regarding nitrate levels in JBWD production wells.

Any further technical evaluation of Well 10, including monitoring frequency, surrounding groundwater characterization, condition and remaining useful life, potential treatment or rehabilitation, and replacement-well planning.

Additional information regarding future governance, ownership, financing, operation, affordability, funding assistance, and any LAFCO process that would be required for broader sewer authority.

**RECOMMENDED
ACTION:**

Receive the presentations and available information, including the separate Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer FAQ; discuss the County's Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer planning initiative and requested resolution; review the draft resolutions and make recommendations for any changes; identify any additional information the Board wishes to obtain; and provide direction to staff regarding follow-up with the County, RWQCB, technical consultants, and legal counsel. Any final action on a support/opposition resolution may be brought back at a subsequent regular Board meeting after the Board has had an opportunity to consider the information presented.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No direct fiscal impact results from receiving information and providing direction at this Special Meeting. As of June 30, 2026, the District holds \$3,212,265.07 in restricted Wastewater Capacity Charge funds. The District previously utilized \$60,711 of Wastewater Capacity Charge funds for the Dudek & Associates 2020 Wastewater Treatment Strategy update, which was not adopted by the Board. Any future expenditure of restricted wastewater funds, participation in County planning, studies, governance actions, capital improvements, or commitment to a wastewater project would require separate evaluation and, as applicable, Board authorization and identification of appropriate funding sources.



JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT

County Initiative: Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer

Frequently Asked Questions - Special Meeting, September 28, 2026

This FAQ summarizes the Director questions submitted to San Bernardino County and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), rather than reproducing each question verbatim. Responses will be updated as additional information becomes available.

This FAQ reflects information received as of September 24, 2026, at 2:45 p.m. Substantive responses received after that time will be posted on JBWD.com as supplemental agenda materials.

The FAQ is intended to provide factual information and non-privileged legal information relevant to the Special Meeting. Attorney-client privileged communications and legal or risk analysis are maintained separately and are not included in this public document.

County Initiative and Board Decision

Q: What is the County asking JBWD to decide?

A: San Bernardino County has asked the Board to state whether JBWD supports or opposes the County continuing its planning and feasibility work for a potential Joshua Tree septic-to-sewer project. At this stage, the Board is **not being asked to approve construction of a sewer system**. The requested decision also would not establish the final project area, treatment approach, funding method, governance structure, system operator, or future connection requirements.

Q: What would support for continued planning mean legally?

A: District counsel advises that, by its terms, support for continued County planning would not approve a future sewer system; commit JBWD to build, fund, own, or operate a system; activate broader LAFCO sewer authority; or waive JBWD's later authority over water-service and current package-treatment-plant decisions. It would support the County completing feasibility and information-gathering work.

Q: Is JBWD legally required to support the County initiative?

A: No. District counsel advises that JBWD has no legal duty to support a County initiative. The consequences identified by the County for opposition are practical rather than legal sanctions, including the County's stated position regarding continuation of County resources and availability of federal planning funds.

Q: What does "constructive agency partner" mean?

A: District counsel advises that this is an undefined County term. In context, it appears to mean good-faith cooperation with the feasibility process, such as providing information and participating in planning, while governance, boundaries, cost, operator, and other substantive decisions remain open.

Q: What procedural choices are available to the Board?

A: District counsel advises that the Board may support continued planning, adopt qualified support that expressly reserves future District decisions, oppose continued planning, or defer action while additional questions or information are pursued.

Q: If JBWD supports Phase I planning, does the District retain independent oversight and the ability to disagree later?

A: This remains a question for the County to confirm. President Doolittle has asked whether JBWD may continue to request information, raise concerns, propose changes, disagree with recommendations, and

later take positions inconsistent with Phase I work without being treated as opposed to the project or jeopardizing continued County work or funding.

Q: If JBWD does not adopt the requested resolution, what specifically happens?

A: The County has stated that it would not continue directing significant resources to an initiative the local water agency affirmatively opposes. Additional County clarification is still needed regarding exactly what work would stop or change, what funding would be affected, what decisions would be delayed, what specific JBWD action would trigger those consequences, and who within the County has authority to make those decisions.

Q: Is the County open to alternative resolution language?

A: Pending. President Doolittle has asked whether, if JBWD is not comfortable with the resolution as drafted, the County would consider alternative language or another approach that allows Phase I to continue while preserving JBWD concerns and future discretion.

Q: Who has decision-making authority over the County project and the August 20 request?

A: Pending. The County has been asked to clarify the respective roles of the Board of Supervisors, Public Works, Special Districts, and Supervisor Rowe's office, and whether the Board of Supervisors specifically authorized the August 20 request that JBWD take a binary support-or-oppose position.

Q: What are the actual County and federal funding deadlines?

A: Pending. The County has been asked to identify the specific funding source at risk, any grant agreement, appropriation, Board action, budget provision, fiscal-year deadline, or other requirement making JBWD action necessary now, and the date by which JBWD must act. The County has also been asked to identify the EPA award and obligation/expenditure deadlines for the \$750,000 FY2026 Community Grant / Community Project Funding and the federal document establishing those deadlines.

Q: What happens to County funding if it is not used for this project?

A: Pending. Questions include whether the funds lapse, revert, remain available to the Third District, or may be reallocated; who has authority to reallocate them; and whether some or all could be made available to JBWD for District-led wastewater planning or a downtown sewer project.

JBWD Wastewater Authority and Capacity Charges

Q: What is JBWD's current authority regarding sewer service?

A: District counsel advises that JBWD presently does not have authority to construct a broader sewer collection or treatment system beyond its current package-treatment-plant authority. Activation of broader latent sewer authority would require LAFCO action.

Q: Do the wastewater capacity charges require JBWD to build a wastewater system?

A: No. District counsel advises that Government Code section 66013 governs wastewater capacity charges and that collecting such charges does not, by itself, create a legal obligation or commitment to construct a future wastewater collection or treatment system.

Q: How much is currently held in restricted Wastewater Capacity Charge funds?

A: \$3,212,265.07 as of June 30, 2026.

Q: What fiscal requirements apply to these funds?

A: Counsel advises that the revenues must be maintained in a separate capital facilities fund, used solely for the purposes for which the charges were collected, with interest retained in the fund, and subject to the annual disclosures required by Government Code section 66013. Counsel further advises that section 66013 does not impose a construction deadline or refund trigger solely because funds remain unexpended.

Q: What happened with the 2020 Wastewater Treatment Strategy update?

A: Dudek & Associates prepared an update in 2020, and the District used \$60,711 in Wastewater Capacity Charge funds for that effort. The update was never adopted by the Board, so it may provide technical and planning background but should not be characterized as adopted District policy. The 2009 Strategy remains the Board-adopted historical strategy unless and until the Board takes further action.

Q: Does the County project financial plan assume use of JBWD Wastewater Capacity Charge funds?

A: Pending. Supervisor Rowe's August 20 correspondence referenced the District's wastewater-capacity-charge reserves. The County has been asked why those funds were cited, whether its financial planning assumes any contribution from JBWD, and whether the County is relying on any District communication or agreement committing those funds.

Groundwater, Nitrate and Well 10

Q: What is known about nitrate conditions at Well 10?

A: Operations reports that nitrate levels increased somewhat around 2024-2025 and recommends more frequent monitoring than the current annual sampling practice. A 2006 USGS investigation found evidence of septic-system influence in groundwater entering the upper portion of Well 10, but it did not identify the particular septic source responsible and does not establish the source of current nitrate increases.

Q: Is water from Wells 10, 14 and 15 “blended”?

A: The wells feed the same distribution zone and their water mixes within the distribution system. Operations has clarified that this is not controlled blending before water enters the distribution system. Customers nearer Well 10 may therefore receive a greater proportion of Well 10 water.

Q: What options are being considered for Well 10?

A: Operational concepts identified for further evaluation include increased nitrate sampling; sampling inactive Wells 2 and 11 and/or future monitoring wells; profiling Well 10 to identify nitrate-bearing intervals and possible temporary isolation; nitrate-specific treatment; and longer-term replacement-well planning. These are evaluation concepts, not final mitigation recommendations.

Q: How old is Well 10, and why does that matter?

A: Well 10 was drilled in 1968 and is approximately 58 years old, with its original steel casing and sanitary seal. Its age and condition are relevant when considering whether to invest in treatment or rehabilitation at the existing well, pursue replacement-well planning, or use a combination of near-term and long-term measures.

Q: Would the Chromium-6 treatment currently being considered also remove nitrate?

A: Operations advises that the Strong Base Anion technology currently being considered for Chromium-6 uses different resin/media from nitrate treatment and, as presently contemplated, would not remove both constituents in a single treatment process.

Q: How will groundwater and regulatory criteria affect the proposed project boundaries?

A: Pending. The County has been asked to identify the groundwater-quality standards, regulatory requirements, findings, or other water-resource criteria that will be used to determine where sewerage is warranted, and how the proposed boundaries or scope would change if available groundwater data do not demonstrate a regulatory or water-quality need in portions of the study area.

Q: What is the Regional Water Quality Control Board's current assessment of Joshua Tree wastewater and groundwater conditions?

A: Pending. Staff has requested the Regional Water Quality Control Board's current assessment of septic-system and nitrate impacts, applicable Basin Plan provisions, and whether additional groundwater assessment, monitoring, coordination, or regional wastewater planning is recommended.

Questions Pending - Regional Water Quality Control Board

Q: What is the Regional Water Quality Control Board's current assessment of wastewater and groundwater-quality conditions in the Joshua Tree area?

A: Pending RWQCB response. Staff has asked the Regional Water Board to address current wastewater and groundwater-quality conditions in Joshua Tree, particularly with respect to nitrate impacts from onsite wastewater treatment systems.

Q: Does the Regional Water Board recommend additional groundwater assessment, monitoring, coordination, or regional wastewater planning?

A: Pending RWQCB response. The question asks whether, in light of current development activity, including the proposed Lovemore Ranch package wastewater treatment plant, and the County's developing Septic-to-Sewer Initiative, additional assessment, monitoring, interagency coordination, or regional wastewater planning is warranted before JBWD makes longer-term decisions regarding potential wastewater collection, treatment, ownership, or operation.

Q: Are there existing or anticipated Basin Plan requirements, regulatory actions, studies, or other RWQCB initiatives that JBWD and the County should consider now?

A: Pending RWQCB response. Staff has requested identification of any current or anticipated regulatory requirements, actions, studies, or initiatives relevant to planning for Joshua Tree's future wastewater needs.

Q: Are the Yucca Valley OWTS prohibition and related compliance dates applicable to Joshua Tree?

A: This distinction should be confirmed in the RWQCB response. The Basin Plan provisions previously reviewed identify the cited 2028/2031 OWTS prohibition as applying to Yucca Valley. Joshua Tree is separately identified as an unsewered community with high septic density for investigation and possible prioritization for sewerage. The FAQ should not characterize Joshua Tree as currently subject to the Yucca Valley prohibition unless the Regional Water Board identifies an applicable requirement.

Future Wastewater System and Development

Q: Who would own, finance and operate a future wastewater system?

A: That has not been determined. Counsel advises that responsibilities will depend on the governance structure ultimately approved through LAFCO. Potential structures could include JBWD, a County Service Area, a joint powers agency involving the County and JBWD, or another regional approach. Financing could involve State and federal grants and local financing mechanisms, with ongoing user rates and charges depending on the structure selected.

Q: Is a County/JBWD Joint Powers Authority currently proposed?

A: No. JBWD staff identified a County/JBWD Joint Powers Authority as one concept for future exploration. Counsel confirms that a joint powers agency could be among the possible governance structures. It is not a current proposal or commitment.

Q: How does Lovemore Ranch relate to this discussion?

A: The Lovemore Ranch proposal includes a package wastewater treatment plant and is undergoing District plan check. The 2009 Strategy contemplated developer-related localized/package treatment facilities that could potentially relate to or transition toward larger future wastewater infrastructure. Review of a private package-treatment proposal should remain distinct from any future policy decision for JBWD to own or operate a community wastewater system.

Q: What Phase I work has been completed by the County, and what are the remaining deliverables?

A: Pending. The County has been asked for progress since the April 1 presentation, work completed or underway, findings or developments to date, expenditures and remaining funds, specific Phase I deliverables, schedule, and any opportunities identified to reduce cost, improve affordability, or refine the service area.

Q: What must occur before the project moves from Phase I to Phase II?

A: Pending. The County has been asked to identify the required decision points, whether there will be a formal public review before Phase II, and the specific opportunities and dates for JBWD and community review of boundaries, governance, funding, project management, affordability, and other Phase I issues.

Q: How can the public track the County project?

A: Pending. Staff has requested identification of WBSE 30.30.0214, the responsible County department and project manager, and the County project number or other publicly accessible mechanism for tracking expenditures, contracts, documents, schedule, and progress.

Q: What is the status of any County RFP or consultant procurement?

A: Pending. Directors have requested the status and scope of any County RFP, solicitation, or consultant procurement associated with the planning effort, the anticipated procurement schedule, and the expected start of consultant work.

Q: What happened to the collaborative process described by the County in April?

A: Pending. President Doolittle has asked why the level of County engagement since April has differed from the regular updates and collaborative process previously described, whether the County will commit to regular communication going forward, and how the County can engage with JBWD and its Water & Growth Committee earlier in Phase I.

Q: Would the County support a District-led wastewater project if JBWD pursued one?

A: Pending. President Doolittle has asked whether the County would act as a constructive partner if JBWD pursued a District-owned and managed sewer project, including potential County financial support and assistance securing additional funding.

Q: When and how will affordability impacts be evaluated?

A: Pending. The County has been asked when Phase I will evaluate potential property-owner and ratepayer costs, impacts on disadvantaged households, and available funding or affordability assistance.

Information Still Being Developed

Q: What information is still outstanding?

A: Outstanding items include County project status, expenditures, remaining funding, specific County and federal funding deadlines, decision-making authority, Phase I deliverables and the Phase I-to-Phase II process, JBWD/community review opportunities, project tracking, any County RFP or consultant procurement, the County's assumptions regarding JBWD capacity-charge funds, groundwater/regulatory criteria and project boundaries, RWQCB input, the Brian Hammer nitrate presentation, future governance/ownership/financing/operation/affordability, and future County-JBWD collaboration.

Q: Will the Special Meeting necessarily result in a final resolution?

A: The current staff recommendation is to receive information, discuss the County initiative and requested resolution, identify additional information needed, and provide direction. The preliminary staff report contemplates that any final support/opposition resolution may be brought back at a subsequent regular Board meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY PLANNING AND FEASIBILITY WORK FOR THE JOSHUA TREE SEPTIC-TO-SEWER INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, Joshua Basin Water District ("District") is a county water district organized and existing under the County Water District Act as set forth in Division 12 (commencing with Section 30000) of the California Water Code; and

WHEREAS, San Bernardino County ("County") is undertaking planning and feasibility work to evaluate whether a centralized wastewater collection and treatment system may be feasible and appropriate for the Joshua Tree community; and

WHEREAS, The County has advised that the current effort is intended to evaluate technical, environmental, financial, governance, infrastructure, funding, and community considerations before any decision regarding construction of a wastewater system is made; and

WHEREAS, The County has further advised that no final service area, treatment alternative, funding mechanism, governance structure, future operator, or mandatory connection requirement has been selected or approved; and

WHEREAS, By letter dated August 20, 2026, Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe requested that the District Board of Directors formally indicate whether the District supports or opposes continued County planning and feasibility work for the Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer Initiative; and

WHEREAS, The Board recognizes that continued planning and feasibility work may provide information necessary to evaluate groundwater protection, wastewater needs, infrastructure alternatives, costs, potential funding sources, governance options, impacts to property owners, and other matters relevant to future decision-making; and

WHEREAS, The Board desires to clarify the District's institutional position regarding continuation of the County's planning and feasibility work while reserving all future decisions regarding any potential wastewater project.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Joshua Basin Water District hereby resolves as follows:

- 1. Support for Continued Evaluation.** The Board supports San Bernardino County continuing the planning and feasibility work associated with the Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer Initiative.
- 2. No Project Approval or Commitment.** This Resolution does not constitute approval by the District of the construction of a centralized wastewater system or of any particular project, service area, treatment alternative, funding mechanism, governance structure, ownership or operating arrangement, mandatory connection requirement, or other project-specific element.
- 3. No Financial Commitment.** Nothing in this Resolution commits District funds, wastewater capacity charge revenues, staff resources beyond those separately authorized, or any other District resources to the planning, design, construction, ownership, operation, or financing of a future wastewater system.
- 4. Future Board Consideration.** Any future District participation in or commitment to a wastewater project shall be subject to separate review and approval by the Board of Directors, including consideration of applicable technical, financial, environmental, legal, and public policy requirements.

5. Agency Participation. The District may continue to participate in the County's planning process as an interested public agency and may provide technical information, comments, and input consistent with District authority and Board direction.

6. Transmittal. The General Manager or designee is authorized and directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the County of San Bernardino and Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this October 7, 2026, pursuant to the following votes:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Stacy Doolitte, President

ATTEST:

Anne Roman, Board Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 26-_____

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO CONTINUED SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY PLANNING AND FEASIBILITY WORK FOR THE JOSHUA TREE SEPTIC-TO-SEWER INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, Joshua Basin Water District ("District") is a county water district organized and existing under the County Water District Act as set forth in Division 12 (commencing with Section 30000) of the California Water Code; and

WHEREAS, San Bernardino County ("County") is undertaking planning and feasibility work to evaluate whether a centralized wastewater collection and treatment system may be feasible and appropriate for the Joshua Tree community; and

WHEREAS, The County has advised that the current effort is intended to evaluate technical, environmental, financial, governance, infrastructure, funding, and community considerations before any decision regarding construction of a wastewater system is made; and

WHEREAS, By letter dated August 20, 2026, Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe requested that the District Board of Directors formally indicate whether the District supports or opposes continued County planning and feasibility work for the Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer Initiative; and

WHEREAS, The Board has considered the County's request and the information presently available regarding the planning initiative; and

WHEREAS, The Board desires to formally state the District's institutional position regarding continuation of the County's planning and feasibility effort.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Joshua Basin Water District hereby resolves as follows:

- 1. Opposition to Continued County Planning.** The Board does not support San Bernardino County continuing the planning and feasibility work associated with the Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer Initiative.
- 2. Scope of District Position.** This Resolution expresses the District's position regarding the County's current planning initiative and does not constitute a determination that wastewater planning, groundwater protection, or wastewater infrastructure should never be evaluated or pursued by the District or another entity in the future.
- 3. Future Wastewater Considerations.** The District reserves the right to independently consider future wastewater needs, planning activities, infrastructure alternatives, funding opportunities, or other actions within the District's authority as circumstances warrant and subject to future Board action.
- 4. No Commitment of District Resources.** Nothing in this Resolution authorizes or commits District funds, wastewater capacity charge revenues, staff resources beyond those separately authorized, or other District resources toward a future wastewater project.
- 5. Transmittal.** The General Manager or designee is authorized and directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the County of San Bernardino and Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this October 7, 2026, pursuant to the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Stacy Doolittle, President

ATTEST:

Anne Roman , Board Secretary

DRAFT

RESOLUTION NO. 26-_____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT EXPRESSING
QUALIFIED SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY PLANNING AND FEASIBILITY WORK
FOR THE JOSHUA TREE SEPTIC-TO-SEWER INITIATIVE**

WHEREAS, Joshua Basin Water District ("District") is a county water district organized and existing under the County Water District Act as set forth in Division 12 (commencing with Section 30000) of the California Water Code; and

WHEREAS, San Bernardino County ("County") is undertaking planning and feasibility work to evaluate whether a centralized wastewater collection and treatment system may be feasible and appropriate for the Joshua Tree community; and

WHEREAS, The County has advised that the current effort is intended to evaluate technical, environmental, financial, governance, infrastructure, funding, and community considerations before any decision regarding construction of a wastewater system is made; and

WHEREAS, The County has further advised that no final service area, treatment alternative, funding mechanism, governance structure, future operator, or mandatory connection requirement has been selected or approved; and

WHEREAS, By letter dated August 20, 2026, Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe requested that the District Board of Directors formally indicate whether the District supports or opposes continued County planning and feasibility work for the Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer Initiative; and

WHEREAS, The Board recognizes that additional planning and feasibility work may provide information useful to the District, the County, property owners, residents, businesses, and other interested parties in evaluating wastewater needs, groundwater protection, infrastructure alternatives, potential costs, funding opportunities, governance options, and other relevant considerations; and

WHEREAS, The Board further recognizes that the County's current planning effort is preliminary and that substantial technical, financial, environmental, legal, governance, and community issues remain unresolved; and

WHEREAS, The District possesses wastewater-related authority and responsibilities independent of the County's planning initiative, and the Board desires to preserve the District's ability to evaluate and exercise that authority based upon the information developed through this and any other appropriate planning efforts; and

WHEREAS, The Board desires to support the continued development of information necessary for informed future decision-making without committing the District to any particular wastewater project, ownership structure, operator, governance model, funding arrangement, service boundary, infrastructure alternative, or course of action.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Joshua Basin Water District hereby resolves as follows:

1. Qualified Support for Continued Planning. The Board supports San Bernardino County continuing the planning and feasibility work associated with the Joshua Tree Septic-to-Sewer Initiative for the purpose of developing additional technical, environmental, financial, governance, infrastructure, funding, and community information necessary to evaluate potential wastewater alternatives.

2. No Approval of a Wastewater Project. The Board's support for continued planning shall not be interpreted as approval, endorsement, or authorization of the construction of a centralized wastewater system or any specific project, service area, treatment alternative, connection requirement, infrastructure configuration, or implementation schedule.

3. Preservation of District Authority. Nothing in this Resolution relinquishes, limits, transfers, delegates, or otherwise affects any authority, responsibility, right, or discretion of the Joshua Basin Water District regarding wastewater planning, facilities, services, financing, governance, ownership, operation, or related matters.

4. No Determination of Future Ownership or Governance. The Board makes no determination at this time regarding whether the District, County, another public agency, or any other entity should own, operate, manage, finance, or otherwise be responsible for any future wastewater system.

5. No Commitment of District Funds. Nothing in this Resolution authorizes or commits District funds, wastewater capacity charge revenues, reserves, staff resources beyond those separately authorized, or any other District assets toward the planning, design, construction, acquisition, ownership, operation, or financing of a future wastewater project.

6. Independent Review of Future Proposals. Any future proposal involving District participation, financial commitment, assumption of ownership or operational responsibility, use of restricted wastewater funds, infrastructure construction, or other substantive District action shall be subject to separate review and approval by the Board of Directors.

7. Continued Participation and Information Sharing. The District may continue to participate in the County's planning and feasibility process as an interested public agency, including providing technical information, reviewing studies and proposals, participating in discussions, and offering comments consistent with District authority and Board direction.

8. Community and Agency Coordination. The Board supports a planning process that provides meaningful opportunities for public participation and coordination among affected public agencies before substantive project decisions are made.

9. No Waiver of Future Positions. The District expressly reserves the right to support, oppose, modify, or decline participation in any future wastewater proposal based upon the results of the planning and feasibility process and any additional information available at that time.

10. Transmittal. The General Manager or designee is authorized and directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the County of San Bernardino and Third District Supervisor Dawn Rowe.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this October 7, 2026, pursuant to the following votes:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Stacy Doolittle, President

ATTEST:

Anne Roman, Board Secretary

DRAFT