

**MINUTES OF
THE SALINAS VALLEY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING
JANAURAY 22, 2026
117 Fourth Street, Gonzales, CA 93926**

CALL TO ORDER

President Silva called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Board Directors

County of Monterey	Glenn Church, <i>Vice President</i>
City of Salinas	Gloria De La Rosa, <i>Alternate Vice President</i>
City of Salinas	Jose Luis Barajas
City of Salinas	Dennis Donohue
City of Gonzales	Elizabeth Silva, <i>President</i>
City of Soledad	Evarista Bañuelos (<i>arrived at 6:12 p.m.</i>)
City of Greenfield	Belen Garcia
City of King	Robert Cullen

Absent

County of Monterey	Christopher M. Lopez
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Staff Member Present

Cesar Zuñiga, Interim General Manager/CAO
Ray Hendricks, Finance and Administration Manager
Brian Kennedy, Engineering and Compliance Manager
Mandy Brooks, Resource Recovery Manager
Monica Zuniga, Human Resources Supervisor
Roy C. Santos, General Legal Counsel
Rosie Ramirez, Administrative Assistant
Erika J. Trujillo, Clerk of the Board

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

(6:02) Clerk of the Board Trujillo announced the availability of translation services via Zoom and in person. No members of the public requested the service.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA (6:03)

Staff Comments: None

Board Discussion: None

Public Comment: None

Motion: Director Barajas made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Director Cullen seconded the motion.

Votes: Motion carried 7,0

Ayes: Church, Barajas, Cullen, De La Rosa, Donohue, Garcia, Silva

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Bañuelos, Lopez

INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER/CAO COMMENTS

(6:04) Interim General Manager/CAO Zuñiga provided an update on the sale of the Sun Street property and on the Crazy Horse Recycling and Transfer Station project.

DEPARTMENT MANAGER COMMENTS

(6:04) Engineering and Compliance Manager Kennedy reported on the bid opening for the Johnson Canyon Module VIII construction project, noting that the lowest bid was \$1.1 million below the engineer's estimate.

GENERAL LEGAL COUNSEL COMMENTS

(6:05) General Counsel Santos commented on the distribution of the Brown Act to the Board members in accordance with new changes to the law.

BOARD DIRECTOR COMMENTS

(6:06) Director Garcia commented on the City of Greenfield's community collaboration with the Authority's Youth Council representative on his clothing reuse project and informed the Board of the City of Greenfield Youth Council's Street Safety Project. Director Cullen commented on the Farm Day event held earlier in the day in King City. Alternate Vice President De La Rosa commented on the upcoming opening of the Hebron Heights Community Center. President Silva also commented on the opening of the new Community Center in Gonzales.

CLOSED SESSION

(6:07) President Silva invited public comment related to item A.

- A.** Pursuant to **Government Code Section 54957** to confer with General Counsel Roy C. Santos concerning appointment of public agency employee: General Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENT

(6:07) None

ADJOURNED

(6:08) President Silva adjourned the meeting to closed session.

RECONVENE

(6:27) President Silva reconvened the meeting into open session. General Counsel Santos reported that no actions were taken during the closed session. President Silva announced the Board of Directors' selection of Cesar Zuñiga as the candidate for the General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer position. She further stated that the Board authorized legal counsel to begin negotiations of an employment agreement with Mr. Zuñiga, with final appointment is anticipated for consideration at the Board of Directors meeting on February 19, 2026, contingent upon the successful completion of negotiations.

PUBLIC COMMENT

(6:27) None

ELECTION OF OFFICERS**A. 2026 Election of Officers – President, Vice President, and Alternate Vice President**

(6:06) Nominating Committee members Bañuelos and Barajas provided the recommendation of the Committee to nominate Director Silva as President, Director Church as Vice President, and Director De La Rosas Alternate Vice President.

Public: None

Board Discussion: The Board discussed the recommendations.

Motion: Director Barajas made a motion to elect Director Silva as President, Director Church as Vice President, and Director De La Rosa as Alternate Vice President. Director Cullen seconded the Motion.

Votes: Motion carried 8,0

Ayes: Bañuelos, Barajas, Church, Cullen, De La Rosa, Garcia, De La Rosal, Silva
 Noes: None
 Abstain: None
 Absent: Lopez

CONSENT AGENDA (6:23)

- 1a. Minutes of the December 18, 2025, Special Meeting.
- 1b. Minutes of the December 18, 2025 Meeting.
- 2. November 2025 Claims and Financial Report.
- 3. Receive Member and Interagency Activities Report for December 2025.
- 4. Receive December 2025 Quarterly Investments Report.
- 5. Resolution No. 2026-01 Authorizing the Submittal of Applications to Any and All Organizations for Grants for which the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority is Eligible.
- 6. Resolution No. 2026-02 Authorizing the Submittal of Applications to the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) for All Grants for which the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority is Eligible.
- 7. Resolution No. 2026-03 Awarding the Construction Contract for the Johnson Canyon Landfill Module VIII Construction (CIP 9527) to Wood Bros., Inc. in the Amount of \$5,476,650.40.
- 8. Resolution No. 2026-04 Declaring Surplus Property and Authorizing the Interim General Manager/CAO to Dispose of Property.

Public Comment: None

Board Discussion: None

Motion: Director Barajas made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Director Cullen seconded the motion.

Votes: Motion carried 8,0

Ayes: Bañuelos, Barajas, Church, Cullen, De La Rosa, Donohue, Garcia, Silva
 Noes: None
 Abstain: None
 Absent: Lopez

PUBLIC HEARING

9. A PUBLIC HEARING IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSEMBLY BILL 2561/GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 3502.3 (6:34) Human Resources Supervisor Zuniga presented the Authority's vacancies, recruitments, and retention efforts for calendar year 2025 as required by Assembly Bill 2561. The presentation demonstrated the highest vacancy rate was 6%, the lowest was 0% and the monthly average rate of vacancies was 2.1%.

Public Hearing: The Public Hearing was opened for public comment at 6:40 p.m. No public comment was received. The Public Hearing was closed at 6:41 p.m.

Board Discussion The Board discussed the presentation.

Motion: Director Donohue made a motion to accept the report. Director Barajas seconded the motion.

Votes: Motion carried 8,0

Ayes: Bañuelos, Barajas, Church, Cullen, De La Rosa, Donohue, Garcia, Silva
 Noes: None
 Abstain: None
 Absent: Lopez

PRESENTATION

10. 2025 EMPLOYEE SURVEY RESULTS

(6:41) Human Resources Supervisor Zuniga presented the results of the 2025 Annual Employee Survey. The presentation included a three-year comparison measuring morale, job attitude, general attitude, and employee engagement. The report showed improvements in both morale and engagement. Mrs. Zuniga reviewed the survey feedback, and the actions to be taken to address the challenges identified were discussed.

Public Comment: None

Board Discussion: The Board discussed the report.

Motion: None; Informational Only

11. FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 EDIBLE FOOD RECOVERY GRANT AWARD

(6:53) Resources Recovery Manager Brooks presented the fifth cycle of Countywide Edible Food Recovery grant awards, which provide funding to local food recovery organizations to expand their capacity. She also explained the grant application evaluation process, the total funding awarded, and the amounts contributed by both ReGen and the Authority.

Public Comment: None

Board Discussion: The Board discussed the report and thanked the awardees for their service to the community.

Motion: None; Informational Only

CONSIDERATION

12. REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-27 PRELIMINARY BUDGET DIRECTION

(7:41) Finance and Administration Manager Hendricks presented the preliminary budget for the fiscal year 2026-27, indicating that no major changes in operations are expected. He detailed the proposed budget increases, which include the request for two new staff positions: Equipment Maintenance Worker and Diversion Systems Maintenance Worker, the proposed rate increases necessary to fully fund the proposed budget, and the projected impacts to ratepayers were detailed.

Public Comment: None

Board Discussion: The Board discussed the report.

Motion: Director Donohue moved to accept the report and directed staff to schedule the rate hearing and final budget consideration for the February meeting, as presented. Director Bañuelos seconded the motion.

Votes: Motion carried 8,0

Ayes: Bañuelos, Barajas, Church, Cullen, De La Rosa, Donohue, Garcia, Silva

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Lopez

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (7:48)

13. AGENDA ITEMS – VIEW AHEAD SCHEDULE

Interim General Manager/CAO Zuñiga reviewed the view ahead.

ADJOURNED

(7:51) Director Bañuelos made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Barajas seconded the motion. President Silva adjourned the meeting.

Signed by:
Erika J. Trujillo
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Attest: _____
Erika J. Trujillo, Clerk of the Board

Signed by:
Liz Silva
8DC517F53795435...
APPROVED: _____
Elizabeth Silva, President