

**APPROVED MINUTES
SAN DIEGO LAFCO
February 3, 2025 Regular Meeting**

1. 8:15 A.M. – CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR

**Item 1a
ROLL CALL**

The regular meeting was called to order at 8:16 a.m. by Chair Whitburn. The Commission Clerk performed the roll call with the following attendance recorded.

Regulars Present: Joel Anderson, County of San Diego
 Kristi Becker, City of Solana Beach
 Jim Desmond, County of San Diego
 Jo MacKenzie, Vista Irrigation District
 Harry Mathis, Public
 Stephen Whitburn, City of San Diego (CHAIR)
 Dane White, City of Escondido
 Barry Willis, Alpine Fire Protection District (VICE CHAIR)

Alternates Present: Brigette Browning, Public
 David Drake, Rincon Municipal Water District
 John McCann, City of Chula Vista

Members Absent: Marni von Wilpert, City of San Diego (alternate)

The Commission Clerk confirmed a quorum with eight voting members present.

Also present at the time of roll call were the following LAFCO staff: Executive Officer Keene Simonds; Assistant Executive Officer Priscilla Mumpower; Commission Counsel Holly Whatley; Local Government Analyst II Michaela Peters; Local Government Analyst I Joelle Burila; Local Government Analyst I Meghan Traynor; Communications Associate Aiden Velasquez; GIS Analyst Dieu Ngu; and Commission Clerk Erica Sellen. LAFCO Consultants Chris Cate, Tom Kennedy, Mike Stein, and Adam Wilson were also present.

Commissioner McCann arrived at 8:17 a.m.; Commissioner Anderson arrived at 8:18 a.m.; and Commissioner White arrived at 8:19 a.m.

**Item 1b
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Mathis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. STATEMENT (JUST CAUSE) AND/OR CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE REMOTELY (EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES) BY A COMMISSIONER, IF APPLICABLE

None.

3. AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Whitburn asked Executive Officer Simonds if there were any requests to remove or rearrange items on the agenda. Executive Officer Simonds stated no changes to the agenda were needed while noting there were two supplemental correspondence items for Agenda Item 6a and Agenda Item 7c.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO REQUEST DISCUSSION ON CONSENT ITEMS

Chair Whitburn invited anyone from the public to address the Commission on a matter not directly related to an agenda item and proceeded to receive comments from the following:

- Trace Wilson, Association for the City of La Jolla
- Alisha Morrison, Lincoln Acres resident (spoke at the end of the meeting)

The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no other speakers or e-mail comments.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

Item 5a

Approval of Meeting Minutes for December 2, 2024

Item presented to approve draft action minutes prepared for the Commission's December 2, 2024 meeting. Recommendation to approve.

Item 5b

Commission Ratification | Recorded Payments for November and December 2024

Item presented to ratify recorded payments made and received by the Executive Officer for the months of November and December 2024. Recommendation to ratify.

Item 5c

Progress Report on 2024-2025 Workplan + Proposed Amendments

Item presented to receive a progress report on the adopted workplan, and activities associated with the 30 special projects set for 2024-2025. Recommendation to formally receive the item and approve the proposed amendments.

- * Commissioner Anderson received confirmation from the Executive Officer that the proposed amendment to the workplan involved adding back the previously scheduled white paper evaluating public recreation opportunities involving City of San Diego owned reservoirs in the unincorporated area.

Item 5d

Biennial Report | 2023 & 2024

Sphere of Influence and Municipal Service Review Summary of Actions

Item presented to receive a biennial report chronicling sphere of influence and municipal service review actions in San Diego County. The report covers calendar years 2023 and 2024 and marks the Commission approving 26 distinct sphere actions as well as two municipal service reviews. Recommendation to receive and file.

CONSENT ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 5e

**Proposed “Ortega – Olde Highway 80 Change of Organization” |
Annexation to the San Diego County Sanitation District (CO19-04)**

Item presented to consider a change of organization proposal initiated by landowner petition (Ortega). The proposal seeks Commission approval to annex two partially developed parcels comprising 5.1 acres of unincorporated territory within Lakeside to the San Diego County Sanitation District. Recommendation to approve with standard conditions and waive protest proceedings. A categorical exemption finding was separately recommended under CEQA. Approval subject to a 30-day reconsideration period under statute.

Item 5f

**Proposed “Dragovic – Sunset Drive Out-of-Agency Wastewater Services” |
City of Vista and 1678 Sunset Drive (OAS24-10b)**

Item presented to consider a request by the City of Vista to authorize the extension of out-of-agency wastewater services to an unincorporated parcel within its sphere of influence. The 1.25-acre parcel is developed with a single-family residence. Recommendation to approve the request and related legal allowance to maintain the current wastewater service agreement along with standard terms as well as waive the special condition typically requiring the landowner to file an annexation proposal with LAFCO, based on local conditions. A categorical exemption finding was separately recommended to comply with CEQA.

Item 5g

**Notice of Administrative Approval “Hallam-Lovely Lane Out-of-Agency Wastewater
Services” | Buena Sanitation District (OAS25-01)**

Item presented to receive formal notice of an administrative approval by the Executive Officer for the Buena Sanitation District to provide out-of-agency services to an unincorporated parcel. The authorization is specific to wastewater service to an existing single-family residence at 1515 Lovely Lane and premised on abating a public health and safety threat. The approval is limited to the existing primary residential dwelling unit and is termed on the landowner submitting an annexation proposal within one year. Information only.

Item 5h

Report on Active Proposals and Related Activities

Item presented to receive a status report on active proposals currently on file as well as anticipated filings based on ongoing discussions with proponents. Information only.

Commissioner Willis motioned with a second from Commissioner White to approve the consent calendar with staff recommendations (Alternative One) as presented.

Roll call requested:

AYES: Anderson, Becker, Desmond, MacKenzie, Mathis, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES: None
ABSENT: von Wilpert
ABSTAINING: None

The Commission Clerk confirmed the motion was approved 8-0.

**6. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS |
COMMISSIONER DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS**

Item 6a

Establishment of an Interim Sphere of Influence

San Diego Unified Port District (Port of San Diego)

Item presented to consider establishing an interim sphere of influence (SOI) for the San Diego Unified Port District. The item follows the Commission’s March 2024 determination that the Port is an independent special district under LAFCO oversight as well as the December 2024 approval of a memorandum of understanding with the Port outlining next steps. The interim SOI matches the existing sphere designations of the Port’s five member cities – Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, San Diego, and National City – and other territory conveyed to the Port under the Port Act. A permanent SOI will be considered following an inaugural municipal service review covering the Port. Recommendation to approve establishment of an interim SOI as presented and make a categorical exemption finding under CEQA. Approval subject to a 30-day reconsideration period under statute.

Chair Whitburn invited any disclosures from Commissioners on material ex parte communications. No disclosures were reported.

Local Government Analyst II Peters provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn proceeded to open the hearing and invited comments from the public. The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no registered speakers (audience or remote) or live e-mail comments.

Chair Whitburn proceeded to invite questions and comments from the Commissioners. Commissioner Desmond thanked Chair Whitburn and staff for working together with the Port.

The Chair thanked Commissioner Desmond for the comments and extended his appreciation to the Port’s Job Nelson, Vice President of Strategy & Policy and Scott Chadwick, President and Chief Executive Officer who were present in the audience.

The Chair proceeded to close the hearing and made a motion to approve.

Commissioner Whitburn motioned with a second from Commissioner Willis to approve the staff recommendation (Alternative One) as listed in the agenda report.

Roll call requested:

AYES:	Anderson, Becker, Desmond, MacKenzie, Mathis, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	von Wilpert
ABSTAINING:	None

The Commission Clerk confirmed the motion was approved 8-0.

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

Item 7a

Proposed Policy on Public Member Appointments

Item presented to consider approving a policy to establish rules and procedures for making regular and alternate public member appointments. This item ties to the adopted workplan and returns to the Commission with revisions following its draft presentation in December 2024 and a public review and comment period. The proposed policy aims to create a clear, transparent process for appointments with limited revisions to expand candidate eligibility as well as allow the Commission to draw from a prior recruitment pool under certain conditions. Staff also forwarded a recommendation by the Cities Advisory Committee for the Commission to consider term limits for public members. Recommendation to approve the proposed policy with any revisions as identified.

Assistant Executive Officer Mumpower provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn invited public comments. The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no registered speakers and no live e-mail comments.

Chair Whitburn proceeded to invite questions and comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Desmond suggested the appointees be geographically balanced with one from the unincorporated area and the other from an incorporated area. Commissioner Becker suggested discussing the potential term limits. Commissioner Mathis expressed hesitation towards establishing term limits given it can take time to understand the LAFCO process. Commission discussion followed with consensus to proceed with adding a geographic requirement to divide appointments between an unincorporated and incorporated member.

On behalf of the Chair, Executive Officer Simonds suggested a May 5, 2025 effective date.

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Commissioner Desmond motioned with a second from Commissioner White to approve the staff recommendation (Alternative One) as listed in the agenda report with the addition of requiring the public members be from each an incorporated area and unincorporated area, with an effective date of May 5, 2025.

Roll call requested:

AYES:	Anderson, Becker, Desmond, Mathis, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	von Wilpert
ABSTAINING:	None

The Commission Clerk confirmed the motion was approved 8-0.

BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 7b

**Proposed Amendments to Rule No. 6 |
Changes to Employee Leave Allowances**

Item presented to consider approving proposed amendments to Rule No. 6 involving sick and vacation leave accruals to align with comparable job classifications with the County of San Diego. The amendments follow internal discussions aimed at creating administrative consistency with other benefits, such as group insurance, provided to LAFCO employees through the County. Amendments headlined by increasing the entry vacation accrual rate by two days per year, from 10 to 12 days, for most filled positions at LAFCO. Recommendation to approve with any revisions.

Assistant Executive Officer Mumpower provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn invited public comments. The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no registered speakers and no live e-mail comments.

Chair Whitburn proceeded to invite questions and comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner MacKenzie asked what the effective date would be. Executive Officer Simonds stated it would be effective starting at the next pay period on February 7, 2025.

Commissioner Browning suggested making the amendments for all employees and not limited to the management employee classification. Executive Officer noted the amendments are to align with the County and their labor negotiations. Commission discussion followed.

Chair Whitburn made a request for information at a later date on what it would take to expand the amendments to include the non-management class.

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Commissioner Willis motioned with a second from Commissioner MacKenzie to approve the staff recommendation (Alternative One) as listed in the agenda report.

Roll call requested:

AYES:	Anderson, Becker, Desmond, Mathis, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	von Wilpert
ABSTAINING:	None

The Commission Clerk confirmed the motion was approved 8-0.

BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 7c

CALAFCO Update and Non-Renewal of Membership in FY2026

Item presented to receive an update on CALAFCO regarding previously reported governance and administrative concerns. The update substantiates these concerns in greater depth and are marked by increasing Board underperformance and – by direct extension – diminishing membership services. As a result, and consistent with policy delegations and earlier telegraphing, staff intends to provide notice that LAFCO will not renew its annual CALAFCO membership for the upcoming fiscal year. The expected savings totals \$30,000, which staff will redirect towards partnering with other LAFCOs that have and/or expected to take similar actions to leave CALAFCO. Information only.

Local Government Analyst I Burila provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn invited public comments. The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no registered speakers and no live e-mail comments.

Chair Whitburn asked if there would still be educational opportunities and a presence in Sacramento if San Diego LAFCO left CALAFCO. Analyst Burila confirmed that San Diego LAFCO could attend CALAFCO trainings as a non-member. Assistant Executive Officer Mumpower added that CALAFCO's educational offerings and Sacramento presence have declined. Chair Whitburn inquired about alternative options, and Executive Officer Simonds explained that San Diego LAFCO is working with other like-minded LAFCOs to provide similar opportunities.

Commissioner White asked about the process for rejoining CALAFCO. Executive Officer Simonds responded that it is staff's expectation to continue to monitor CALAFCO activities and would be interested in rejoining the organization should they follow through on the changes already requested by many members and return to bottom-up policy prioritization.

Commissioner MacKenzie acknowledged CALAFCO's board dysfunction but suggested it would be better for San Diego to stay with the organization and advocate for changes as a member rather than as an outsider.

Commissioner Becker supported staff's recommendation to not renew CALAFCO membership, noting that San Diego LAFCO had already raised its concerns and the Board's inaction at its most recent meeting suggest the organization is not listening.

Commissioner Willis agreed with Commissioner Becker and commented the membership dues could be better spent serving San Diego LAFCO's needs.

Commissioner Desmond asked for specific examples of concerns with CALAFCO with responses provided by Executive Officer Simonds and Assistant Executive Officer Mumpower.

In closing the discussion, Chair Whitburn stated his support for staff proceeding as planned with a request for future updates on developing alternative education and legislative advocacy services be provided going forward.

BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 7d

Update on Current Grant Activities + Related Opportunities | Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Planning Grant 2.0

Item presented to receive an update on its ongoing SALC planning grant – “SALC 2.0” – in partnership with the County of San Diego’s Planning and Development Services (PDS). Since the last update provided in May 2024, LAFCO’s consultant, Agricultural Impact Associates, has completed draft reports for Task 2 (Market Analysis) and Task 3 (Gap Analysis). The focus is now on Tasks 4 (Outreach) and 5 (Strategic Planning), with support from RICK Engineering. The final report is expected by September 2025, in line with the original timeline. Staff is also exploring the possibility of submitting a third grant application to advance a recommendation from the SALC 1.0 report to fund an agricultural liaison position to assist farmers with grant writing and regulatory compliance. Information only.

Local Government Analyst I Traynor provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn invited public comments. The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no registered speakers and no live e-mail comments.

Chair Whitburn proceeded to invite questions and comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Willis expressed appreciation with the direction LAFCO is heading by helping San Diego County farmers.

Commissioner Desmond inquired about the merits of proceeding with a new grant and asked if the agricultural liaison position is mission creep for LAFCO and whether the position would be better suited for a different type of organization – such as the Farm Bureau. Executive Officer Simonds responded the Commission collectively determines LAFCO’s mission in meeting its statutory duties and staff believes a liaison position is a reasonable extension of LAFCO’s interests in balancing thriving urban and non-urban uses. Executive Officer Simonds added staff has been in contact with the Farm Bureau and the actual placement of a liaison position remains open-ended.

Chair Whitburn thanked the Commission for the feedback and asked staff to proceed accordingly.

Item 7e

Notice of Administrative Approval of “Benter - Alto Drive Out-of-Agency Services: Wastewater” | City of La Mesa (OAS24-04)

Item presented to receive notice of an administrative approval by the Executive Officer for the City of La Mesa to provide out-of-agency wastewater services to the unincorporated property at 9365 Alto Drive. The approval is limited to serving an existing 1,783 square-foot single-family residence and a planned accessory dwelling unit (ADU). This decision addresses a public health and safety threat, as the current septic system is near the end of its lifespan, unable to support the ADU, and the existing collection system can accommodate the connection without new infrastructure. Information only with a request for discussion to ensure the administrative approval and associated public health and safety determination is appropriate going forward.

BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED...

Continued Item 7e

Notice of Administrative Approval of “Benter - Alto Drive Out-of-Agency Services: Wastewater” | City of La Mesa (OAS24-04)

Local Government Analyst II Peters provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn invited public comments. The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no registered speakers and no live e-mail comments.

Chair Whitburn proceeded to invite questions and comments from the Commissioners.

Commission discussion followed with no objections raised with staff’s decision-making.

Item 7f

Chair and Vice Chair Appointments

Item presented to consider making officer appointments and select a chair and vice chair consistent with adopted policy. The appointees will serve the balance of 2025 consistent with policy unless otherwise specified.

Chair Whitburn invited public comments. The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no registered speakers and no live e-mail comments.

Commissioner Desmond nominated reappointments for Chair Whitburn and Vice Chair Willis to continue in their roles for another year.

Chair Whitburn proceeded to invite discussion from the Commissioners.

Commission Anderson thanked the current Chair and Vice Chair for their work on the Port of San Diego, and noted he is looking forward to their leadership throughout the year.

Chair Whitburn thanked the Commission for the opportunity.

Commissioner Desmond motioned with a second from Commissioner MacKenzie to approve the staff recommendation (Alternative One) as listed in the agenda report.

Roll call requested:

AYES:	Anderson, Becker, Desmond, Mathis, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	von Wilpert
ABSTAINING:	None

The Commission Clerk confirmed the motion was approved 8-0.

8. EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Executive Officer Keene Simonds noted the following items:

- Recent meetings of the Cities and Special Districts Advisory Committees
- Introduced new LAFCO Consultants Mike Stein and Tom Kennedy.

9. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS | REQUESTS FOR FUTURE ITEMS

Commissioner Drake announced that Tom Kennedy was appointed to the Rincon del Diablo MWD board. Commissioner Drake also noted that a presentation he made at the last Palomar Healthcare District meeting made the newspaper.

10. ADJOURNMENT TO NEXT MEETING

With no further business, Chair Whitburn adjourned the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

I hereby attest the minutes above accurately reflect the deliberations of the Commission at its February 3, 2025 meeting.

ATTEST,

Erica Sellen
Commission Clerk