

**APPROVED MINUTES
SAN DIEGO LAFCO
October 6, 2025 REGULAR MEETING**

1. 8:15 A.M. – CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR

Item 1a

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

The regular meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Chair Whitburn. The Commission Clerk performed the roll call with the following attendance recorded.

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

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

Members Absent: Monica Montgomery Steppe, County of San Diego (alternate)
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 members: Executive Officer Keene Simonds, Assistant Executive Officer Priscilla Mumpower, Commission Counsel Aleks Giragosian, Local Government Analyst II Michaela Peters, Local Government Analyst I Meghan Traynor, Communications Associate Aiden Velasquez, GIS Analyst Dieu Ngu, and Commission Clerk Erica Sellen. LAFCO Consultants Patrick Bouteller, Mike Stein, and Adam Wilson were also present.

Item 1b

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Becker 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 also noting two pieces of supplemental correspondence involving 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.

The following registered speakers addressed the Commission:

- Kurt Worden, Lower Sweetwater Fire Protection District
- Tedi Jackson, Protect Rural Escondido

The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no other registered speakers (audience or remote) or live e-mail comments.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

Item 5a

Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 4, 2025

Item presented to approve draft action minutes prepared for the Commission's August 4, 2025 meeting. Recommendation to approve.

Item 5b

Commission Ratification | Recorded Payments for July and August 2025

Item presented to ratify recorded payments made and received by the Executive Officer for the months of July and August 2025. Recommendation to ratify.

Item 5c

4th Quarter Budget Report for 2024-2025 |

Close of the Fiscal Year and Corrective Amendments

Item presented to review a fourth quarter budget report for 2024-2025. The Commission ended with a net deficit of (\$121,839), or (4.4%), primarily due to higher-than-budgeted professional service costs. Recommendation to accept the report and approve close-of-year amendments to ensure all expense units have authorized balances.

Item 5d

Proposed Fund Balance Designations for 2025-2026

Item presented to conduct an annual review of fund balance designations for the new fiscal year. As of July 1, 2025, the total spendable cash fund balance is \$1,671,791. Staff proposes maintaining the same designations as the prior fiscal year with one exception: releasing \$100,000 from committed to unassigned funds. This adjustment ensures the...

CONSENT ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 5d Continued...

Agency meets its minimum fund balance benchmark of at least 33% of operating costs in unassigned funds. Recommendation to approve.

Commissioner Willis requested to pull items 5c and 5d for discussion.

Executive Officer Simonds provided a verbal staff presentation and discussed the items.

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Commissioner Willis motioned with a second from Commissioner Whitburn to approve consent calendar items 5c and 5d with staff recommendation as presented.

Roll call requested:

AYES: Aguirre, Anderson, Becker, Browning, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES: None
ABSENT: Montgomery Steppe & von Wilpert
ABSTAINING: None

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

Item 5e

**Proposed “Miller & Hall – Vulcan Avenue Change of Organization” |
Annexation to Leucadia Wastewater District (CO25-10) (action)**

Item presented to consider a change of organization proposal initiated by Leucadia Wastewater District on behalf of interested landowners. The proposal seeks to annex 0.22 incorporated acres within the City of Encinitas to Leucadia consisting of one developed parcel at 327 North Vulcan Avenue (256-300-40). The annexation would establish public wastewater service for an existing single-family residence currently served by an on-site septic system and accommodate a planned accessory dwelling unit. Recommendation to conditionally approve with a boundary modification to include an adjacent 0.01-acre parcel (256-300-39) comprising the driveway. It is also recommended to waive protest proceedings and find the project exempt under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15303(a).

Item 5f

Notice of Administrative Approval |

“Iannacone–La Cruz Drive Out-of-Agency Wastewater” City of La Mesa (OAS24-06)

Item presented to receive notice of an administrative approval authorizing the City of La Mesa to provide out-of-agency wastewater service to an unincorporated property within its sphere of influence at 4950 La Cruz Drive (495-200-07). The authorization is limited to an existing single-family residence based on documentation of a public health threat from a failed septic system. The approval waives the standard annexation requirement given local conditions as detailed. The project is exempt from environmental review under CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c). Information only.

CONSENT ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 5g

Request to Release Approval Condition |

“County Service Area No. 135 Islands Reorganization” (RO16-20)

Item presented to consider its Executive Officer's request to remove a condition from a previously approved five-agency reorganization affecting integrated fire protection, rescue, and emergency medical services for 21,000 acres of unincorporated land in eastern San Diego County. The still-active condition requires the County of San Diego to initiate annexation of 3,274 acres to County Service Area No. 69 for ambulance transport services, but subsequent events have rendered it moot as detailed. Recommendation to approve.

Item 5h

Report on Applicant Proposals

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

Members of the public requested to pull item 5h for discussion.

Executive Officer Simonds provided a verbal staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn invited public comments from the following registered speakers with stated positions to the staff recommendation noted in parenthesis:

- Luisa McCarthy (oppose)
- Doyle Morrison (oppose)
- Alisha Morrison (oppose)
- Luis Sainz (oppose)

The above speakers provided opposition specific to a conditioned annexation to National City involving LAFCO proposal “Delgado-Andrade-24th Street Outside-of-Agency Service Agreement” (OAS/RO24-12).

The Commission Clerk confirmed there were no other registered speakers (audience or remote) or live e-mail comments.

Executive Officer Simonds noted Analyst Meghan Traynor as an appropriate contact for the speakers. General discussion followed. Informational item only. No action.

Item 5i

2025-2026 Workplan Status

Item presented to receive an update on the adopted 2025-2026 workplan and related activities. As the fiscal year enters the second quarter, 10 of 30 special projects are substantively underway, with most activity focused on the Commission's top 10 priorities including municipal service reviews of wholesale water providers, local healthcare districts, and SANDAG. Recommendation to receive and file.

CONSENT ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 5j

Cost-of-Living Adjustments and Related Benefit Changes

Item presented to consider a compensation package aligned with recent County of San Diego actions, including 3.0% annual COLAs for all eight budgeted positions over each of the next three fiscal years (FY 2025 to FY2028) and annual increases to flexible benefit allocations starting January 1, 2026. The package will cost an estimated \$148,000 over three years. Recommendation to approve.

Item 5k

Legislative Report (information)

Item presented to receive an update on active legislation relevant to the agency's regulatory and planning responsibilities. Information only.

Item 5l

Request to Join an Amicus Brief in Support of Monterey LAFCO (action)

Item presented to consider a request from Monterey LAFCO to join an amicus brief supporting an appeal of a trial court decision with potential precedent-setting implications for all LAFCOs. The request includes contributing up to \$1,200 toward proportional funding of the legal filing to be prepared by Nossaman LLP. Recommendation to approve based on the benefit of establishing legal precedent affirming that LAFCO actions need only be supported by substantial evidence under LAFCO law, rather than more restrictive standards that could limit LAFCO authority.

Commissioner Becker requested to pull item 5l for discussion.

Commission Counsel Aleks Giragosian provided a verbal staff presentation.

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Commissioner Becker motioned with a second from Commissioner Willis to approve consent calendar item 5l with staff recommendation as presented.

Roll call requested:

AYES: Aguirre, Anderson, Becker, Browning, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES: None
ABSENT: Montgomery Steppe & von Wilpert
ABSTAINING: None

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

[...]

CONSENT ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 5m

Report on Recent Committee Meeting |

Cities Advisory Committee's September 18, 2025 Meeting

Item presented to receive a report on the most recent meeting of its Cities Advisory Committee held on September 18th. The report is in the form of draft minutes and presented consistent with a request by Commissioner MacKenzie. Information only.

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

Roll call requested:

AYES: Aguirre, Anderson, Becker, Browning, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES: None
ABSENT: Montgomery Steppe & 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

Proposed "Valiano – Eden Hills Reorganization" |

Annexation to the San Marcos Fire Protection District, Detachment from Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and Related Actions (RO/OAS19-26)

Item presented to consider a landowner-initiated reorganization proposal to accommodate the planned 243-unit "Valiano" residential development in Harmony Grove. The proposal involves detaching approximately 11 acres consisting of one parcel located at 1805 Country Club Drive (232-500-24) from the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District (FPD) and annexing it to San Marcos FPD to place the entire 239-acre project site under one fire agency's jurisdiction. Recommendation to conditionally approve with a conforming sphere of influence amendment for Rancho Santa Fe FPD. Conditions include requiring the two subject agencies to submit an OAS agreement as detailed. It is also recommended to waive protest proceedings and Policy L-106, which would otherwise require a new municipal service review to be prepared. CEQA findings are also proposed.

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

Local Government Analyst II Peters provided the staff presentation.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 6a Continued...

Chair Whitburn opened the hearing and invited public comments from the following online speaker:

- JP Theberge, Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council

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.

Commission Mackenzie requested clarification on LAFCOs role in the execution of the OAS. Executive Officer Simonds confirmed LAFCO would not have a role under the presumption of utilizing the statutory provision in Government Code Section 56133(e).

The Chair proceeded to close the hearing.

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

Roll call requested:

AYES:	Aguirre, Anderson, Becker, Browning, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Montgomery Steppe & von Wilpert
ABSTAINING:	None

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

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

Item 7a

Proposed “Brown – Quarry Road LLC Change of Organization” |

Annexation to San Diego County Sanitation District & Related Actions (CO24-14)

Item presented to consider a landowner-initiated proposal to annex 10.7 acres of unincorporated territory in Bonita to the San Diego County Sanitation District. The affected territory consists of one vacant parcel at 5780 Quarry Road (586-050-62). The annexation would provide public wastewater service to accommodate a planned self-storage facility and ancillary improvements, allowed by major use permit under the existing residential zoning. Recommendation of conditional approval without modifications, waiving protest proceedings, and adopting CEQA findings. Staff separately recommended foregoing a sphere of influence amendment given local conditions.

Local Government Analyst I Traynor provided the staff presentation.

BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 7a Continued...

Chair Whitburn 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. No discussion.

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

Roll call requested:

AYES: Aguirre, Anderson, Becker, Browning, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES: None
ABSENT: Montgomery Steppe & von Wilpert
ABSTAINING: None

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

Item 7b

Proposed Update to Rolling Five-Year Study Schedule

Item presented to consider updating its five-year municipal service review (MSR) schedule. The proposed update resets the coverage period from FY 2026 through FY 2030 and constitutes a roll-forward of the existing schedule. Two notable adjustments include removing the completed Oceanside regional review and adding several new reviews, most placed in the latter years. The first two years (FY 2026–2027) correspond to MSRs already authorized and funded in the workplan, including the newly added San Diego Unified Port District review. The final three years (FY 2028–2030) signal long-term intentions and provide notice of upcoming reviews to local agencies and the public. Recommendation to approve, subject to any desired modifications.

Assistant Executive Officer Mumpower provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn 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 Commissioners. No discussion.

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

BUSINESS ITEMS CONTINUED...

Item 7b Continued...

Roll call requested:

AYES: Aguirre, Anderson, Becker, Browning, MacKenzie, Whitburn, White, & Willis
NOES: None
ABSENT: Montgomery Steppe & von Wilpert
ABSTAINING: None

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

Item 7c

Update on High Priority Project |

Municipal Service Review on Wholesale Water Agencies in San Diego County

Item presented to receive an update on LAFCO's scheduled municipal service review of wholesale water agencies in San Diego County – one of 10 high-priority projects in the approved work plan. This project includes a comprehensive review of the San Diego County Water Authority and proportional review of the MWD. The update is provided for discussion with an opportunity to provide feedback; with the current expectation of delivering a complete draft report as early as March 2026.

Assistant Executive Officer Mumpower provided the staff presentation.

Chair Whitburn 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.

Commissioners discussed the regional impacts of rising water rates, emphasizing equity, transparency, and affordability considerations. Several Commissioners noted the importance of long-term planning, capturing current policy changes, and exploring potential consolidation opportunities among water agencies. Additional comments referenced ongoing leadership transitions, the recent CWA-MWD settlement, and state legislation affecting the CWA.

No action.

8. EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Executive Officer Simonds made the following comments:

- Introduced Supervisor Aguirre's new Policy Advisor, Kyle LaVelle.

9. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS & REQUESTS FOR FUTURE ITEMS

Commissioners made the following comments:

- Commissioner Aguirre kindly requested the agenda be available earlier.
- Commissioner MacKenzie seconded Commissioner Aguirre's comment and requested a policy to address old proposals.
- Commissioner Willis thanked LAFCO staff for the SALC 1.0 brochure.

10. ADJOURNMENT TO NEXT MEETING

With no further business, Chair Whitburn adjourned the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

I hereby attest the minutes above accurately reflect the deliberations of the Commission at its October 6, 2025 meeting.

ATTEST,

Erica Sellen
Commission Clerk