

MINUTES

**TEHACHAPI-CUMMINGS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
July 15, 2026, 3:00 P.M.
22901 Banducci Road, Tehachapi, CA 93561**

- Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call**
Directors Present: Ables, Davis, Schultz **Absent:** Hall
Legal Counsel Present: Robert Kuhs
Staff Present: Catherine Adams, Jon Curry, Tom Neisler, Crystal Sampson
- Item 2. Announcement**
President Schultz announced this meeting is being audio recorded, including all Board, Staff, and Public comments.
- Item 3. Flag Salute**
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Schultz.
- Item 4. Approval of Agenda**
Director Ables moved to approve the Agenda. Director Davis seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall. Motion passed.
- Item 5. Comments by any Party on Items of Interest and Within the Subject Matter Jurisdiction of the Legislative Body**
There were none.
- Item 6. Seat New Division 1 Director**
At the July 14, 2026, Special Board Meeting, the Board of Directors did not appoint the candidate to fill the unexpired term for the Division 1 Director seat. After the 60-day appointment window closes to fill that position, a further window opens where the County may appoint a person to fill that position. The Board directed Staff to prepare a letter to the Kern County Board of Supervisors regarding the appointment. Neisler prepared such letter for the Board's consideration and signature, requesting the County not fill the vacancy but to allow it to go to the General Election in November. President Schultz asked if there were any comments and there were none.
- Item 7. Adopt Resolution 08-26, Honoring Director Joseph Sasia**
Director Sasia resigned from his seat as the Division 1 Director on May 15, 2026. He served as a Director for six years, from 2020 to 2026. Prior to his service as a Director of the District, he served as an employee in the Pipeline Department for more than 30 years and is very well-versed in the District. His grandfather, Bernard Sasia, served as one of the founding Directors in the 1960s so he has been around the District his entire life. As a Director, he had a unique perspective and always good insight and Neisler is happy he returned to the team in the Pipeline Department again.
- President Schultz stated it was always wonderful to have him on the Board, he has more time in this District than anyone in the room and thanked him for everything he has done. Director Ables will miss him not being on the Board and welcomed him back to the Pipeline Department stating with his experience and knowledge, it will be a benefit to the District and the team.

President Schultz moved for adoption of Resolution 08-26, Honoring Director Joseph Sasia. Director Ables seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall. Motion passed.

The Board presented Mr. Sasia with a framed Resolution and took a picture.

Item 8. Consent Calendar - Consent items are considered routine and are intended to be acted upon as a single item, without discussion. During this portion of the meeting, the Consent Calendar will be read aloud. Prior to approval, the President will give the Board the opportunity to remove any item from the Consent Calendar to be discussed and voted on individually. The President will also give staff and the public the opportunity to request any item be discussed individually, in which case the President will determine whether the item will be removed from the Consent Calendar. The remaining calendar will be acted upon. Any removed items will then be heard and acted upon individually.

- a. Approve Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of June 17, 2026, and Special Board Meeting of July 6, 2026
- b. Approve Financial Report and Payment of Bills
- c. Set Date of Public Hearing – Status of Vacancies, Recruitment and Retention (AB 2561)

President Schultz asked if there were any items the Board, Staff or Public would like to remove for discussion, and there were none.

Director Ables moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Director Davis seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall. Motion passed.

Item 9. General Manager's Report

Neisler reported on the following:

- The photo shows Golden Mussels attached to the scale build up in the pipes. When the system increases pumping to three engines, more scale comes off the interior of the pipe and this is what Staff is finding. Curry will talk more about this in his report. He has done a lot of work coordinating information and planning efforts to comply and learn about this new problem. This is a widespread concern that has made its way to the State thanks to Representative Vince Fong who has secured funding for the valley to address this problem.
- Governor Newsom has appointed a new DWR Director, Thomas Gibson, to replace Karla Nemeth, who moved on to the ACWA Executive Director position. Gibson is an environmental attorney who was the lead Deputy Director of DWR for the last couple of years. Prior to that, he served at the Natural Resources Agency and California DFW.
- The super El Nino predictions continue and the water temperatures in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of California are more than 3 degrees Fahrenheit above the 20th century average. Usually, those temperature changes are measured in tenths or two-tenths of a degree Fahrenheit, so that deviation, especially in July, is unprecedented. He stated these are very abnormal weather conditions and referred to the 6" to 12" of flooding in most of Texas. The District is preparing for abnormal weather. The Pipeline Department is doing a tremendous amount of work, cleaning out drainage channels, to be ready in case there are unprecedented rain conditions.
- The Pumping System Department is still working towards getting 21 CFS flow and is currently operating at just under 20 CFS. This year has been one problem after another with issues with gearheads, pumps, clogging, warranty on engines and Curry and the Operations Staff are doing great work keeping the system operating throughout these.
- Algae and scale problems in the system have declined significantly so call outs are minimized. One additional algae bloom is anticipated for the season but with a different type of algae.

- ACWA released poll results stating that 8 out of 10 California voters want a governor who prioritizes water.
- This year, 12 AF of water has been recharged into the District. In a perfect world, there would be a couple thousand acre feet of water recharged. Given the timing of the Table A Allocation, the engine project, and the demands on the system, there has not been water available to recharge at this point. He is confident as the year goes along, operations can switch over to more intensive recharge. This is the peak demand season, so all the flow that is available is going to meet the current water year demands.
- The public portal for the new GIS has been launched and is available on the District website. Brandon Kirby, GIS Technician, will provide a brief presentation at a future Board meeting to highlight some of the bells and whistles of the new system. He is currently attending the ESRI ArcGIS Users Conference remotely and reported they have more than 15,000 attendees. Neisler mentioned for scale that the ACWA conferences have between 1,600 and 1,800 attendees.
- The Safety Picnic was a success and everyone had a good time.
- He postponed the presentation to Stallion Springs CSD until their August Board meeting as he will be out of town during the July meeting. They have met their Banked Water supply requirement under the existing Term M&I Agreement and he is going to discuss where things are and where they are going.
- He shared the Lake Oroville chart showing 129% of normal year-to-date and San Luis Reservoir is 108% of normal year-to-date. Lake Shasta for the Central Valley Project is also above normal levels, so there is plenty of water.
- He offered to answer any questions the Board or Public may have and there were none.

Item 10. Operations Report

Curry reported on the following:

- As Neisler mentioned, operations has been juggling engines to keep the flow as high as possible. He provided a snapshot of a situation they experienced at the end of June describing the system alarms and process of how mechanics respond, adjust the system flow, diagnose the problems, and get the system back up to high flow. The Pumping Systems Department is doing a great job!
- Brite Lake data from July 10, 2026, was, elevation 4354.8', volume 1,175 AF, and level 28.8'. This morning the lake volume was up to 1200 AF.
- The Pumping System is operating on 3 engines at 19.8 CFS. The Pump Plant 5, Benz, Dennison and Nunes wells are operating.
- The Nunes Well repairs were finished Monday. The 12-inch liner was placed, re-gravel packed and pump was set so it is operational again.
- He described the details of the tasks and projects completed by the Pumping Systems and Pipeline Departments as listed in the Staff Report.
- The JPIA Liability Program Renewal Questionnaire was completed and submitted.
- Operations Staff attended Electrical Safety and Hand/Wrist/Finger Safety trainings.
- Work was done on the Kern Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Staff attended Golden Mussel web meetings with Kern County, Kern County Water Agency, CDFW, and Cal OES, including one today. He submitted the draft Golden Mussel Control Plan to CDFW for review and comment.
- Moving into the new budget cycle, operations is queuing up CIP projects and maintenance tasks associated with the new budget.
- He offered to answer any questions the Board or Public may have.

President Schultz asked what the flow rate is on the Nunes Well now that is back running and Curry stated it is 350 gpm, identical to the flow rate it was at before. Discussion took place on this great news and it was mentioned it had a 14-inch liner previously and now it has a 12-inch liner. President Schultz asked questions on the scenario Curry described on responding to alarms and the amount of time employees

have to respond. Curry described the automated features in place and how when a high tank level alarm is activated at Pump Plant 4, the 19-Acre and Westerly Recharge valves will automatically open and run at 1500 gpm each to allow time to respond without the system shutting down. Generally, a mechanic can get on the SCADA and slow the system down within 10-15 minutes. Further discussion took place on the details of how these situations are handled operationally.

Item 11. Conduct Public Hearing Regarding Adoption of Resolution 09-26, Determining Benefit Assessment for Tehachapi Watershed Project for Fiscal Year 2026-27
a. (Close Hearing and Return to Regular Meeting)

President's Opening Remarks:

President Schultz stated this is a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors for the purpose of considering Resolution 09-26. This Resolution asks for a Benefit Assessment in the amount of \$106,000 for the maintenance, operation, and installation of the Tehachapi Watershed Project in Fiscal Year 2026-2027. The public hearing was declared in session at 3:35 p.m.

Staff Report:

Adams stated that the Tehachapi Watershed Project was constructed with financial assistance under PL-566 through the Soil Conservation Service. As a condition of obtaining Federal funds for construction of the project, the District had to assume full responsibility for the operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of all structural measures for the project pursuant to the maintenance agreement that was dated July 7, 1983. Each year, District Staff reviews all the zoning changes, parcel splits, changes of ownership, new construction and assessed values in Zone 1 to update the land use categories and factors for each parcel. There is no State utility roll broken down by tax code area, so Staff continues to use a questionnaire that is sent to each utility company to determine any changes in value to each utility owned property. Once those are compiled, Staff assesses the new values for each property.

Adams then introduced the exhibits to the Resolution as follows:

Exhibit A: Declaration of Posting Notice- This notice was posted at Tehachapi City Hall, Golden Hills Community Services District, and Tehachapi-Cummings County Water District.

Exhibit B: Proof of Publication- This notice was published in the Tehachapi News for two weeks. (July 1st and July 8th)

Exhibit C: Written Report of Proposed Benefit Assessment for Tehachapi Watershed Project Fiscal Year 2026-2027. This is the written report that describes the history and all the changes that have been made over the years. Attached to the Written Report, is an exhibit that lists all the properties and assessed values for the tax amounts that will go on the tax roll in August. She asked if there were any comments or questions and there were none.

(Close Hearing and Return to Regular Meeting)

President Schultz declared the hearing closed at 3:37 p.m. and returned to the Regular Board Meeting.

Item 12. Accept Written Report and Adopt Resolution 09-26 Determining Benefit Assessment for Tehachapi Watershed Project for Fiscal Year 2026-27

President Schultz moved that the Board adopt the Written Report of Proposed Benefit Assessment for the Tehachapi Watershed Project for Fiscal Year 2026-27 and Adopt Resolution No. 09-26 Determining Benefit Assessment to Finance Maintenance, Operation and Installation of the Tehachapi Watershed Project in Fiscal Year 2026-27. Director Ables seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall. Motion passed.

Item 13. Adopt Resolution 10-26 Determining the Amount of Tax Required for Water Supply Contracts for Fiscal Year 2026-27 and Establishing the Tax Rate

Sampson stated adoption of this Resolution will set the Ad-Valorem tax rate for the State Water Project payment for the Fiscal Year 2026-27. Each year the Board must adopt a Resolution and provide it to the Board of Supervisors of Kern County and to the Kern County Auditor-Controller no later than August 1st. The tax revenue is used exclusively to pay the District's financial obligations for the State Water Project per the invoices that are received from the Kern County Water Agency. These invoices are billed by the California Department of Water (DWR) and are passed on to the Member Units of the Kern County Water Agency in proportion to each Member Unit's Table A Allocation. In addition to considering costs, the District considers its reserve balances when calculating the revenue requirement to meet these SWP obligations.

Exhibit A to the Resolution, is the tax rate calculation showing a 29.4% decrease over the prior year. The tax levied on a home with an assessed value of \$200,000 will go down from \$104.68 to \$73.91. During Fiscal Year 2025-26, the District received almost \$1.5 million in credits on its 2026 State Water Project costs from the DWR. Their accounting has made it difficult to estimate and forecast what amounts to expect on future billings. This Resolution proposes setting the Ad-Valorem tax rate to 0.036953% of the gross taxable assessed value of taxable property within the District and is expected to generate \$2,219,866 in revenue during Fiscal Year 2026-27.

President Schultz stated he believes in having stability and consistency for the Public when it comes to rates and taxes, and it makes him happy to see this reduction and giving back to the taxpayers.

President Schultz moved that the Board adopt Resolution 10-26, Determining the Minimum Amount Required to be Raised by Taxes to Make Payments Due Under Water Supply Contracts with the Kern County Water Agency for Fiscal Year 2026-27 and Fixing the Tax Rate for Such Purpose. Director Davis seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall. Motion passed.

Item 14. Accept Bids on Four New Vehicles and Authorize General Manager to Execute Contracts to Purchase Four Vehicles

Curry stated at the June Regular Board Meeting, the Board authorized Staff to solicit bids for the purchase of four new District vehicles. Bid notices were sent to truck dealerships on June 19th, and Staff is asking the Board to accept the bids and authorize the General Manager to purchase these four vehicles. Staff received bids from six truck dealerships by the July 8th deadline. Submitted bid details are listed on the Bidder's Solicited sheet (Attachment A). The bids are broken down into vehicle type, size, individual and combined costs, whether they met specifications or not, and a few other items. Bids were received from Jim Burke Ford, Three-Way Chevrolet, Hadad Ram, Motor City GMC, Hunter Ram, and Ken Grody Ford (Attachment B). Staff considered price, specifications and delivery times and recommends the District purchase the one ton and three half-ton vehicles from Motor City GMC in the amount of \$242,481.48 as it was the most favorable combined bid. The half-ton vehicles are in stock now. The 2026-27 CIP Budget includes a total of \$290,000 for these purchases. He offered to answer any questions and discussion took place on GMC vehicles, the dealer service, and delivery times.

Director Davis moved that the Board accept bids on four new vehicles and authorize the General Manager to execute contracts to purchase four vehicles from Motor City GMC in the amount of \$242,481.48. Director Ables seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall. Motion passed.

Item 15. Authorize Staff to Solicit Bids for Parking Lot Sealing Project

Curry stated it has been a few years since a treatment was done to the parking lot at the District yard area. With the last treatment, substantial concrete and asphalt reconstruction was done to the northeast corner to rectify some drainage issues and luckily, there is no structural work needed this time. This item is asking the Board to authorize Staff to solicit bids to apply a Type 2 slurry seal, fog seal, re-stripe and reset the parking blocks at the District yard. Usually, a Type 2 slurry seal will last five to seven years and the current seal is on its sixth year so it has lasted well. Staff will notify contractors and hold a non-mandatory job walk to review the project. Bids will be due August 13, 2026, and Staff will bring the bids to the Board at the August Regular Board Meeting for acceptance and potential contract award. The 2026-27 Capital Expenditure Budget includes \$70,000 for this project. Attachments are the Invitation to Bidders and the project map. He offered to answer questions and President Schultz asked about the thickness of Type 2 and Curry explained. Discussion took place the differences in Type 1 and 2 and on snow plowing the parking lot in the winter.

President Schultz moved that the Board authorize Staff to solicit bids for parking lot sealing project. Director Davis seconded the motion, and it was carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall. Motion passed.

Item 16. Schedule Ad-Hoc Budget Committee Meeting

Sampson stated this item is for Board direction on setting a desired date and time to hold the Ad-Hoc Budget Committee meeting to discuss the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-27. The committee consists of Directors Davis and Schultz and the draft Budget will be provided to them for review on July 31, 2026, so Staff desires to hold a meeting the following week. The Fiscal Impact is \$105 per Director per day of service.

The meeting was scheduled for August 4, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.

Item 17. Board of Directors Comments

a. Director Ables ACWA Conference Report

Director Ables thanked the Board for allowing him to delay his report until this Board meeting. He reported on the Sites Reservoir project, a proposed 1.5 million acre foot off stream reservoir. It's designed to adapt to changing climate conditions, providing a more flexible water supply for California. Future climate projections show more precipitation will come in the form of rain and not snow, but the current water management system does not have the infrastructure to capitalize on large amounts of rainfall and runoff. As a rain fed storage solution, Sites Reservoir will be able to capture water from these extreme storm events, which can be used by communities, farms, and the environment when water is scarcer. The presenter said that if it had already been built, the estimated diversion amount in year 2023 would have been over 700,000 AF, and in 2024, 840,000 AF. If they could have captured what was left over in 2025, it would have been 550,000 AF.

Unlike reservoirs of the past, the Sites Reservoir will not dam or impede a major river system and does not threaten fish migration or spawning. It will be the first reservoir in California to dedicate a portion of its water specifically for the environment to support wildlife and other habitat during drought periods. It will provide up to 372,000 AF of storage space for environmental uses, contribute to the increased freshwater flow into the delta during dry seasons, assist in the salinity management of that critical estuary, help maintain cold water for salmon and improve conditions for fish in the upper Sacramento, allow federal and state natural resource agencies to support environmental needs and their priorities when other water supplies are not plentiful. It will include 373 acres of recreation area, for day use, campgrounds and a large boat ramp. With 1.5 million acre-feet of water, this will be a massive new flat water lake for water sports.

Construction is supposed to start the end of 2026 or beginning of 2027 and it should be operational by 2033. He discussed the funding and California approved an additional \$2.68 million for the project. The estimated cost is between \$6.2 and \$6.8 billion. There are about 30 water agencies throughout California participating in the project, including Wheeler Ridge, Antelope Valley, and Rosedale-Rio Bravo. The project is going to be controlled by a project authority established in 2010, so they are not controlled by the State. They are leading the planning and development of the reservoir in collaboration with federal government, state government, and local agencies. President Schultz thanked him for his presentation.

Neisler asked to make a comment he missed reporting in his Manager's Report. The District received the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for the 17th year in a row now. This is a lot of work for Sampson to complete the application package and the requirements are stringent, so this is quite an achievement. He noted this began with John Martin and then Mindy Madenwald, the predecessors to the accounting position. He also took a moment to introduce Victor Hayden, Operations Assistant for the District as he was attending today. He noted Hayden began at the District as an intern, went on to graduate from college, and now is back working for the District.

Item 18. Adjourn to Closed Session

President to reference Closed Session items as presented on Agenda, then Board to adjourn to Closed Session.

- a. In Accordance with Exhibit A Attached hereto, TCCWD v. City of Tehachapi *Et al.*
- b. In Accordance with Exhibit B Attached hereto, TCCWD v. City of Tehachapi
- c. In Accordance with Exhibit C Attached hereto, DWR v. All Persons Interested in Authorization of WaterFix Revenue Bonds, et al.; DWR v. All Persons Interested in the Matter of the Authorization of Delta Program Revenue Bonds, et al.
- d. In Accordance with Exhibit D Attached hereto, Rosedale-Rio Bravo WSD *Et al.* v. Kern County Water Agency *Et al.*
- e. In Accordance with Exhibit E Attached hereto, City of Tehachapi vs. TCCWD
- f. In Accordance with Exhibit F Attached hereto, City of Tehachapi vs. TCCWD

The Board adjourned to Closed Session at 4:05 p.m.

Item 19. Return to Open Session

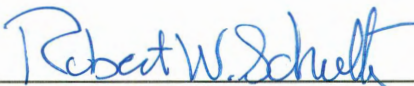
The Board returned to Open Session at 5:08 p.m.

Report Action Taken in Closed Session:

- a. No reportable action.
- b. No reportable action.
- c. No reportable action.
- d. No reportable action.
- e. No reportable action.
- f. No reportable action.

Item 20. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m. on a motion made by Director Ables, seconded by President Schultz and carried on the following vote: Ayes: Ables, Davis, Schultz; Noes: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Hall.


Robert W. Schultz, Board President


Catherine Adams, Board Secretary



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CLOSED SESSION ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

(Gov. Code § 54954.5)

A. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR (Gov. Code § 54956.8.)

Description of Property: _____
Proposed District Negotiator: _____
Negotiating Parties: _____
Subject of Conference: _____

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL (Gov. Code § 54956.9.)

1. Existing Litigation Gov. Code §54956.9(d)(1): County of Sacramento Superior Court Case No. 34-2022-80003892
Name of Case: Tehachapi-Cummings County Water District v. City of Tehachapi *Et al.*
2. Anticipated Litigation: _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(2): _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9(d) (4): _____

C. PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (Gov. Code § 54957.)

1. Appointment: _____
Title: _____
2. Employment: _____
Title: _____
3. Performance Evaluation: _____
Title: _____
4. Discipline/Dismissal/Release: _____

D. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Gov. Code § 54957.6.)

Agency Negotiator: _____
Employee Organization: _____
Unrepresented Employee: _____



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Proposed District Negotiator: _____
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Subject of Conference: _____

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL (Gov. Code § 54956.9.)

1. Existing Litigation Gov. Code §54956.9(d)(1): KCSC Case No. BCV-25-103013
Name of Case: _____
City of Tehachapi _____

2. Anticipated Litigation: _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9(d)(2): _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9(d)(4): _____

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Subject of Conference: _____

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL (Gov. Code § 54956.9.)

1. Existing Litigation Gov. Code §54956.9(d)(1): Two Cases
Names of Cases: DWR v. All Persons Interested in Authorization of WaterFix Revenue Bonds, et al.; DWR v. All Persons Interested In The Matter of the Authorization of Delta Program Revenue Bonds, et al.

2. Anticipated Litigation: _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(2): _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(4): _____

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Negotiating Parties: _____
Subject of Conference: _____

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL (Gov. Code § 54956.9.)

1. Existing Litigation Gov. Code §54956.9(d)(1): KCSC No. BCV 21100418 TSC
Name of Case: Rosedale-Rio Bravo WSD *Et al.* v. Kern County Water Agency *Et al.*

2. Anticipated Litigation: _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(2): _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(4): _____

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Proposed District Negotiator: _____
Negotiating Parties: _____
Subject of Conference: _____

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL (Gov. Code § 54956.9.)

1. Existing Litigation Gov. Code KCSC Case No. BCV-23-104134
§54956.9(d)(1): _____
Names of Cases: City of Tehachapi v. Tehachapi-Cummings County
Water District

2. Anticipated Litigation: _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(2): _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(4): _____

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Employee Organization: Not Applicable
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Subject of Conference: _____

B. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL (Gov. Code § 54956.9.)

1. Existing Litigation Gov. Code §54956.9(d)(1): KCSC Case No. BCV-24-101512
Names of Cases: City of Tehachapi vs. Tehachapi-Cummings County Water District
2. Anticipated Litigation: _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(2): _____
Gov. Code § 54956.9 (d)(4): _____

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Employee Organization: Not Applicable
Unrepresented Employee: _____