



THE WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN AUTHORITY  
FOUNDED 1992

**Special Meeting of the Water Conservation Garden Authority**  
**Tuesday, July 8, 2025, 10 a.m.**  
**Water Conservation Garden Multipurpose Room**  
**12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, California 92019**

**OPEN MEETING**

**1. Call meeting to order and roll call.**

- a. The meeting was called to order at 10:13 a.m. by Director Hedberg, who chaired the meeting.
- b. Voting members present:
  - i. Steve Castaneda, Sweetwater Authority
  - ii. Kathleen Hedberg, Helix Water District
  - iii. Lynn Neault, Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District
  - iv. Jose Lopez, Otay Water District
- c. Guests, presenters and staff members present:
  - i. Lauren Magnuson, Water Conservation Garden
  - ii. Steve Zolezzi, Garden Volunteer Coordinator
  - iii. Jennifer Bryant, Helix Water District
  - iv. Jessica Mackey, Helix Water District
  - v. Tenille Otero, Otay Water District
  - vi. Mike Uhrhammer, Helix Water District
  - vii. Dan McMillan, Helix Water District
  - viii. Andrea Beth Damsky, Helix Water District
  - ix. Tim Townsley, Water Conservation Garden
  - x. Yaily Gonzalez, Water Conservation Garden
  - xi. Delfina Gonzalez, Otay Water District

**2. Pledge of Allegiance.**

- a. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. Approve agenda (additions and/or deletions).**

- a. **Motion:** Director Castaneda moved to approve the agenda, and Director Hedberg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with Director Neault from GCCCD absent.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**4. Public comments.**

- a. There were no public comments.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **5. The board approve the June 17, 2025, special board meeting minutes.**

- a. Director Hedberg deferred approval of the minutes to the next upcoming WCGA meeting due to the absence of two of the four board attendees who were present at the June 17 meeting.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **6. The board review and discuss the Draft Guidance Plan to set direction for sustaining garden operations.**

- a. Acting Administrator Brian Olney gave a brief description on the Draft Guidance Plan and introduced Helix Water District Senior Public Affairs Representative Mike Uhrhammer, who facilitated the discussion. Mr. Uhrhammer gave a presentation on the history of the Garden and what the Garden could teach the public.
- b. The board discussed their thoughts about bringing on educational partners to teach landscaping solutions and related sustainability issues. The board agreed it was a great idea, potentially by bringing in other cities to help facilitate, working with other colleges, and reaching out to fire districts and landscaping design consultants.
- c. The board also discussed the idea of teaching landscaping and non-landscaping solutions as a way to address sustainability issues. Discussion ensued regarding organic gardening.
- d. Another topic discussed by the board included teaching a sustainable lifestyle that starts with gardening. Discussion ensued regarding online cooking shows through the GCCCD, utilizing herbs or low-water vegetables grown in the Garden and getting families and children out to visit.
- e. Mr. Uhrhammer reviewed what it would take to get public agencies, nonprofits and companies on board and asked if the new mission would bring more people to the Garden.
- f. The board agreed to update the Garden's mission statement at a future board meeting and noted a new name for the Garden could be brought up within the next few years. The board noted a JPA work/task group with staff from each agency would be beneficial. The board agreed to rotate agency administrator, board secretary and treasurer roles.
- g. One board member asked that the use of reserves be shown as a separate line item in future budget documents.

### **7. Director comments.**

- a. There were no additional comments.

### **8. President comments.**

- a. Director Hedberg had no additional comments.

### **9. Acting administrator comments.**

- a. There were no additional comments.

**10. Legal counsel comments.**

- a. There were no additional comments.

**11. Adjourn special board meeting.**

- a. The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

**Next meeting Tuesday, July 22, 2025, 3:30 p.m. at the Water Conservation Garden Multipurpose Room.**