



WEST SIDE COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE DISTRICT
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026, 7:00 P.M.
CLOSED SESSION WILL START AT 6:00 P.M.
**COMMUNITY BUILDING, KERN STREET
NEWMAN, CA 95360**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

*Board of Directors: DIRECTOR VARGAS-Absent, DIRECTOR CASTEEL, DIRECTOR GUAJARDO
VICE PRESIDENT LOPES, PRESIDENT VARNELL*

Legal Counsel-Jessica Vived

OPEN SESSION-7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Please take a moment to silence your cell phones

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

PRESENTATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the public may bring before the Board matters that are not listed on the agenda. The Board may refer such a matter to the Board Clerk to take it under advisement but shall not take action at that time. Comments will be accepted during this time concerning any action item on the agenda. The Board will consider all comments prior to taking action on the item as listed on the agenda in the Action Item section . (Gov. Sec. 54954.03). Individual speakers shall be allowed three (3) minutes to address the Board on each agenda or non-agenda items.

- ❖ Ed Brooks, Newman, CA, stated that he has made several attempts to address two outstanding bills he has with the districts. He has received no response. Referencing AB716.

CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered routine and may be approved by one action of the Board of Directors, unless any member of the Board of Directors wishes to remove an item for separate consideration.

Are there any items on the consent calendar that any member of the public would like to comment on?

1. Minutes of February 23, 2026, Regular Meeting

Recommendation: Review and Approve

2. Cash Disbursement Journal

Recommendation: Review and Approve

*President Varnell introduced the consent calendar. There was no public comment.
Director Lopes made the motion to approve the consent calendar. The motion was seconded by Director Casteel and carried by vote, 4-1, with Absent Director Vargas.*

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

1. Discussion and possible action to impose a special tax to increase the revenue for purposes of adequately fulfilling the district's responsibility to provide ambulance service.

The Board received a staff report from legal counsel regarding the district's responsibility to continue providing ambulance services. The report included a discussion of potentially directing staff to draft a proposed resolution for the November 2026 ballot to impose a special tax. The Board could also consider alternative options.

No public comment was received.

President Varnell raised the possibility of hiring a grant writer to help secure additional funding for the district and suggested delaying a ballot measure until 2028.

Financial Advisor Leo Landaverde noted that placing a measure on the November 2026 ballot would require significant effort, given the limited timeframe.

Director Casteel inquired about the cost of placing a measure on the ballot. Legal Counsel Jessica Vived responded that cost estimates from the counties are not yet available. While a request form can be submitted, counties are unable to provide immediate cost information.

Vice President Lopes made a motion to direct staff or legal counsel to draft a resolution to impose a special tax for placement on the November 2026 ballot, to be reviewed at the next board meeting. The motion was seconded by Director Guajardo and passed by a 4–1 vote, with Director Vargas absent.

2. Discussion and possible action to purchase and/or finance an ambulance for the district.

Interim Chief of Operations Michael Courtney informed the Board and the public that staff is currently exploring the purchase of two (2) used ambulances. Staff is working with vendors to secure financing, potentially up to \$150,000. Chief Courtney has identified two used ambulances available through a surplus site.

President Varnell inquired about the cost of used ambulances. Chief Courtney responded that pricing varies depending on the make, model, and equipment, with the units under consideration estimated between \$30,000 and \$60,000 each.

Financial Advisor Leo Landaverde advised that typical repayment terms range from three (3) to five (5) years, noting that the district has historically utilized a five-year term.

Chief Courtney stated that he will continue to keep the Board informed as staff progresses through the process.

Director Casteel made a motion to move forward with pre-approval and the purchase of two (2) new ambulances. The motion was seconded by Vice President Lopes and passed with a 4–1 vote, with Director Vargas absent.

3. Discussion and possible action regarding succession plan for staff position: Administrative Service Manager.

Administrative Services Manager Roberta Casteel presented the staff report.

Staff requested board approval to begin recruitment for the Administrative Services Manager position, currently held by Ms. Casteel, who will retire on June 30, 2026.

Director Casteel moved to direct staff to develop a transition plan and schedule a special meeting regarding the Administrative Services Manager position. The motion was seconded by Vice President Lopes and approved by a 4–1 vote, with Director Vargas absent.

4. Discussion and possible action to sell/auction the ION EC4 Carts.

Interim Chief of Operations Michael Courtney presented a staff report seeking the Board’s recommendation regarding the potential disposal of two (2) ION EC4 carts. The District currently owns three (3) carts; however, only one (1) is typically used for standbys and local events.

Paul Whilette Patterson, representing Patterson District Ambulance, advised the Board to review any grant-related limitations, specifically regarding how long the equipment must be retained before it can be disposed of.

Director Guajardo made a motion to have legal counsel review the agreement with San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District concerning the disposal of the ION EC4 carts and to bring the item back for consideration at the next meeting.

The motion was seconded by Vice President Lopes and passed by a 4–1 vote, with Director Vargas absent.

FINANCIAL REPORT-

1. Receive Staff Report on Ambulance Statistical and Administrative Report.

AMBULANCE REPORT

1. Receive Staff Report on Ambulance Statistical and Administrative Report.

Statistical Report: Michael Courtney presented the February 2026 operations report to the board, which outlined responses and transport for both Counties.

- *Total Responses 150, 112 transports for service*
- *2 Requests for Service to Merced resulting in 0 transport*
- *7 requests to assist AMR, resulting in 2 transports*
- *5 requests to assist Patterson, resulting in 2 transports*
- *Michael Courtney said February was another slow month for the district.*

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE MANAGER COMMENTS

DISTRICT'S LEGAL COUNSEL COMMENTS

BOARD CORRESPONDANCE/COMMENTS

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION (if needed)

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Lopes made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Casteel seconded the motion at 7:47 p.m.

1. *In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a disabled person requesting a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting must contact the district office at (209) 862-2951. Requests must be made as early as possible, preferably one full business day before the start of the meeting.*
2. *Any document provided to a majority of the Board of Directors regarding any open session item on this agenda is available for public inspection during normal business hours at the front counter of the District Office located at 990 Tulare Street, Suite C, Newman, CA. Documents or writings received after the general distribution of the agenda are also available for inspection.*

Attested by



Debbie Lopes

Vice President/Secretary