

**UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MARCH 12, 2020**

The Board meeting was held at the Ventura River Water District Conference Room, 409 Old Baldwin Road, Ojai, CA 93023. Directors present were: Bruce Kuebler, Emily Ayala, Diana Engle, Larry Rose, Susan Rungren (arrived at 1:05 pm) and Angelo Spandrio. Also present were: Executive Director and GSP Project Manager Bryan Bondy and Agency Administrator Summer Ward. The following members of the public were present: Bert Rapp (Alternate Director), Tori Klug (Stantec). Director Glenn Shephard was absent.

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** – Chairperson Diana Engle called the meeting order at 1:02 pm.
- 2) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Chairperson Diana Engle.
- 3) **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA**

Lori Klug (Stantec), introduced herself and briefly described facilitation support services available through the Department of Water Resources.

- 4) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – No changes were proposed.
- 5) **CONSENT CALENDAR**
 - a. **Approve Minutes from February 13, 2020**
 - b. **Approve Financial Report for February 2020**

Director Rose made the motion to approve the consent calendar. Director Kuebler seconded the motion.

No public comments.

Ayes: Bruce Kuebler, Emily Ayala, Larry Rose, and Angelo Spandrio.

Absent: Glenn Shephard, Susan Rungren.

Noes: None.

- 6) **DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - a. **Directors may provide oral reports on items not appearing on the agenda.**
 - b. **Directors shall report time spent on cost-share eligible activities for the 2017 Proposition 1 Sustainability Groundwater Management Planning (SGWP) Grant.**

Director Rungren arrived during the item.

Director Spandrio: No report and no time to report.

Director Rungren: No report and no time to report.

Director Ayala: met with pumpers to share the newsletter and discussed upcoming extraction fee billing. Director Ayala requested an update regarding the concern brought forward by Mr.

Cromer, involving work with Kear Groundwater. Executive Director Bondy stated that he spoke with Jordan Kear to establish a process for mitigating future misunderstandings. Director Ayala asked if there have been any concerns from pumpers regarding the 2nd extraction fee billing. Ms. Ward replied that Tico Mutual requested clarification on the process of moving from the estimated extraction amount to metered extractions. Executive Director Bondy to follow up with counsel. Director Ayala spent 30 minutes on \Stakeholder Outreach.

Director Rose: No report and no time to report.

Director Kuebler: Attended the framework development meeting related to the Wildlife Conservation Board grant. He would like to discuss Agency representation in the framework process at the next Regular Board meeting. Director Kuebler to send the meeting information to Staff for inclusion in the next agenda. No time to report.

Director Engle: Follow-up to last meeting, Director Engle compiled and emailed to the Directors the different references concerning reaches of the Ventura River. Executive Director Bondy stated that the GSP Team is developing four segments or "zones" to describe the basin with recognizable geographic features. Director Engle requested that future meetings be scheduled in a larger meeting room to meet the new CA Department of Public Health's social distancing recommendations. Ms. Ward to research available large meeting spaces. No time to report.

7) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Bondy explained that he will be providing a written staff report for this item starting with the current Board meeting so the Board can have time to prepare questions for him at the meetings. He then reviewed the staff report with the Board.

The Board briefly discussed the scope of presentation for the April 2 Ventura River Watershed Council (VRWC) meeting. Board feedback to staff was to present an update on status, schedule, and a preview of GSP Workshop No. 1. Executive Director to coordinate with VRWC staff.

The Board briefly discussed the County General Plan update. Board feedback was agreement with staff recommendation not to comment.

No public comments.

8) ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. Legal Services Proposals

The Executive Director explained that the the Agency issued the approved RFP on January 31, with a deadline for questions and proposals were February 19 and March 4, respectively. The RFP was posted on the Agency website and sent to twelve firms. Four proposals were received. The Executive Director reviewed the summary of propals (Table 2 of the staff report) with the Board. The Board discussed the four firms.

No Public Comments

Director Rungren state that the City believes all of the firms are qualified and could do the work, but expressed concerns about the potential conflict for Lagerlof and the rates proposed by Price, Postal, and Parma.

Director Ayala stated she has minimal experience selecting an attorney, agrees with Director Rungren.

Director Keubler stated that he felt that Oliverz, Madruga, Lemieux, O'Neil was the top candidate and is prepared to select them.

Director Engle would like to get MOWD's Board and Legal Counsel input before selecting a firm and would like an interview process to be implemented.

Executive Director Bondy stated that Staff would like an opportunity to check references.

Director Spandrio agrees with Director Rungren.

Director Rose had no comment.

The Board discussed whether the list could be narrowed. The Board reached consensus to eliminate Lagerlof from further consideration due to the potential conflict issues. The Board discussed formation of an ad hoc committee as a means of addressing Director's Engle's desire to obtain MOWD feedback and conduct interviews.

Director Kuebler made the motion to schedule an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Directors Kuebler, Engle and Rose, to interview firms Klein, DeNatale & Goldner, and Olivarez, Madruga, Lemieux & O'Neill, and Price, Postal & Parma if requested by MOWD. Director Rungren seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bruce Kuebler, Emily Ayala, Larry Rose, Susan Rungren, and Angelo Spandrio.

Absent: Glenn Shephard

Noes: None.

9) GSP GRANT ELIGIBLE ITEMS

a. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Update (Grant Category (d); Task 11: GSP Development and Preparation)

Executive Director Bondy reported that work on the GSP has continued and review the staff report with the Board, including the updated GSP development schedule. The Board requested that a footer with acronym definitions be added before posting to the Agency website.

No public comments.

No motion.

b. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Workshop No.1 (Grant Category (c); Task 10: Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement)

The Executive Director reviewed the draft GSP Workshop agenda (Attachment A of the staff report) with the Board. Staff recommends scheduling the first GSP Workshop on Thursday, May 7, 2020, from 6-8 pm at the Oak View Resource Center.

Director Engle asked how Staff will capture questions and comments during the workshop. Executive Director Bondy replied that Staff would plan for workshop facilitation, including a flipchart to capture questions and comments.

Public Comments:

Tori Klug (Stantec) was interested in hearing what hot buttons items are being addressed and appreciated the comprehensive draft agenda. She recommended including opportunities for the public to share concerns or hot buttons early on in the workshop, build public confidence that their voice is being heard.

Director Kuebler made the motion to approve the GSP Workshop No.1 agenda and schedule the workshop for Thursday, May 7, 2020, from 6-8 pm at the Oak View Resource Center. Director Rose seconded the motion.

Director Ayala recommended sending out Save the Date postcards in advance of the workshop. Additionally, include a way for the public to submit questions or comments if they are unable to attend, as well as notification in Ojai Valley Newspaper.

Ayes: Bruce Kuebler, Emily Ayala, Larry Rose, Susan Rungren, and Angelo Spandrio.

Absent: Glenn Shephard

Noes: None.

c. Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (Grant Category (d); Task 11: GSP Development and Preparation)

Executive Director Bondy explained that Director Rose had requested that the Board consider adopting the Nature Conservancy (TNC) groundwater-dependent ecosystems (GDEs) guidance document to serve as procedures to be followed during Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) development. He then reviewed the staff report with the Board and explained that staff recommends generally following the TNC GDE guidance but not formally adopting it because it might create an expectation that all recommendations contained therein should or must be followed even though some recommendations may not be necessary given basin-specific considerations.

Director Engle asked a question about surface water and GDEs. Executive Director explain that, to the extent surface water is the result of rising groundwater, the ecological community in the surface water would be considered a GDE. Director Engle stated that she was trying to ask something different, but will need to reformulate her question later.

The Board was in agreement to continue using the TNC GDE guidance document as a guidance tool.

No motion.

10) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Ad Hoc Stakeholder Engagement Committee – No update.

11) ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm. The next Regular Board is scheduled for April 9, 2020, at 1:00 pm, location to be determined.

Action: _____

Motion: _____ Second: _____

B.Kuebler____ D.Engle____ A.Spandrio____ S.Rungren____ G.Shephard____ E.Ayala____ L.Rose____