

**UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MARCH 11, 2021**

The Board meeting was held via teleconference, in accordance with California Executive Order N-25-20. Directors present were Bruce Kuebler, Larry Rose, Emily Ayala, Susan Rungren, Angelo Spandrio, Glenn Shephard, and Chair Diana Engle. Also present: Executive Director Bryan Bondy, Agency Counsel Keith Lemieux, and Administrative Assistant Maureen Tucker.

ON-LINE OR TELECONFERENCE:

DIAL-IN (US TOLL FREE) 1-669-900-6833

DIAL-IN (US TOLL FREE) 1-669-900-6833 Find your local number:

<https://zoom.us/j/93878854989?pwd=cGFINmR5NVJ1dTBwNXo4ZW5vVE9TQT09> Meeting ID: 938 7885 4989 Passcode: 985632

1) CALL TO ORDER

Chair Engle called the meeting to order at 1:01p.m.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Engle led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) ROLL CALL

Executive Director Bondy called roll.

Directors present: Bruce Kuebler, Larry Rose, Susan Rungren, Angelo Spandrio, Glenn Shephard, Emily Ayala, Diana Engle.

Directors absent: none

Public: Burt Handy and Steve Slack

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Engle asked if there are any proposed changes to the agenda. Executive Director Bondy recommended deferring Item 10b to a future meeting. The model results are not quite ready for presentation.

Director Kuebler moved agenda approval with the requested adjustment. Director Shepherd seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y E. Ayala – Y D. Engle - Y
S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y A. Spandrio – Y

Absent: None

Noes: None.

5) PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

Chair Engle asked if there are any public comments on items not appearing on the agenda.

No public comments were offered.

6) CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Approve Minutes from February 11, 2021 Regular Board Meeting**
- b. Approve Minutes from March 2, 2021 Special Board Meeting**
- c. Approve Financial Report for February 2021**

Director Kuebler moved to approve the consent calendar items. Director Rose seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y E. Ayala – Y D. Engle - Y
S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y A. Spandrio – Y

Absent: None.

Noes: None.

7) DIRECTORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Director Kuebler: No report and no time.

Director Rungren: Ventura Water Commission recommended a 7% increase on water rates and a 6% increase on wastewater rate for the next five years. City Council will consider approving on March 22. No time.

Director Rose: Spent two hours working on access for monitoring wells.

Director Shephard: No report and no time.

Director Spandrio stated that he will be resigning his directorship at Casitas MWD effective March 26, 2021. No time.

Director Ayala: No report and no time.

Director Engle: No report and no time.

The Board thanked Director Spandrio for his service on the Board.

8) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Bondy briefly reviewed the written staff report with the Board.

Chair Engle asked for Director comments.

Director Ayala expressed an interest in the Camino Cielo surface water gage startup and requested notification so she could observe.

Public: Burt Handy asked about the status of the monitoring wells at the Ojai Burn Dump site. Director Shephard said that his staff is looking into it.

9) ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption for Wildlife Conservation Board Grant Monitoring Sites (Resolution 2021-01)

Executive Director Bondy reviewed the proposed notice of exemption (NOE) for the monitoring sites included in the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application. He explained the NOE is supported by an analysis completed by Rincon Consultants that confirms the applicability of the statutory exemptions. He added that the Rincon memorandum also describes avoidance and minimization measures that will be used to ensure the project does not have a significant impact to the environment.

Chair Engle asked for Director comments or questions.

Directors Kuebler and Ayala said they were surprised by the detailed in the memo. Director Rose said it was very thorough. Director Kuebler asked about the costs for the monitoring recommended by Rincon. Executive Director Bondy explained that he reviewed the entire memo and worked with Rincon to come up with a more streamlined approach to control costs commensurate with the risk for the type of work proposed. He added that the memo errs on the side of caution because WCB has the discretion to determine whether our CEQA analysis is adequate as part of their grant award process. Chair Engle said she is grateful for the thoroughness and feels comfortable knowing that Executive Director Bondy reviewed the recommendations.

Director Rose moved to adopt Resolution 2021-01. Seconded by Director Ayala.

No public comment.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y E. Ayala – Y D. Engle - Y
 S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y A. Spandrio – Y

Noes: None.

Absent: None

b. California Department of Fish and Wildlife Draft Instream Flow Regime Recommendations for the Lower Ventura River, Ventura County

Executive Director Bondy explained that the Board asked for an agenda item to discuss whether the Agency should submit comments on the CDFW Draft Instream Flow Regime Recommendations. He explained that staff feels CDWF is addressing a related, but different problem than UVRGA. He explained that SMGA requirements are focused on avoiding undesirable results, which occur at low flow. In contrast CDWF appears to be establishing flowrates for ideal habitat conditions. For that reason, he was unsure whether UVRGA is the appropriate agency to comment and added that the Member Agencies may be in a better position to comment.

Chair Engle said she has similar thoughts as the Executive Director. She then asked for Director comments.

Director Shephard agreed with Chair Engle and the Executive Director

Director Kuebler said that the Agency should comment on the lack of consideration of habit issues. He also expressed concerns about the recommendation to halt diversions and pumping when flows are less than the recommendations.

Director Ayala said that the water users are looking to the public agencies to comment and feels the Agency should prepare comments.

Director Rungren said that it would not hurt to submit a comment letter to address the concerns raised earlier.

Chair Engle asked for public comments.

Burt Handy expressed support for a comment letter.

Steve Slack, CDFW said that his Agency is very interested in obtaining feedback on the flow recommendations and encouraged UVRGA to comment.

Executive Director Bondy said he would prepare a draft comment letter based on what he heard and bring it to the Board for consideration. He added that a special meeting will be needed before the March 29 comment deadline, which will be addressed later in the meeting.

Chair Engle asked if any directors would object to a letter, pending Board review. No objections were made.

10) GSP ITEMS

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

Executive Director Bondy reviewed the written staff report and attached GSP schedule.

Chair Engle asked for Director comments or questions. None were offered.

Chair Engle asked for public comments.

Burt Handy mentioned a recent Maven Article that may be of interest.

b. Groundwater Modeling Results (Grant Category (d); Task 11: GSP Development and Preparation)

This item was removed from the agenda during agenda review (Item 4).

c. Degraded Water Quality Sustainable Management Criteria (Grant Category (d); Task 11: GSP Development and Preparation)

Executive Director Bondy explained that staff is seeking Board approval to move forward with incorporating the draft Degraded Water Quality sustainable management criteria (SCM) into the draft GSP. He then reviewed key slides from the recent GSP Workshop No. 2 pertaining to the Degraded Water Quality Sustainable Management Criteria (slides were included in the Board meeting packet). He explained that positive feedback was received during the workshop.

Chair Engle asked for Director comments or questions.

Director Kuebler asked if any additional feedback was received. Executive Director Bondy said one comment was received on-line. The on-line comment was about surface water temperature and dissolved oxygen, which he felt will be more appropriately addressed in the SCM for Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water sustainability indicator. Director Kuebler said he supports the proposed SMC and thanked Executive Director Bondy.

Chair Engle asked for public comments. None were offered.

Director Rose moved to approve sustainable management criteria for the degraded water quality sustainability indicator for inclusion in forthcoming draft groundwater sustainability plan. Seconded by Director Shephard.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y E. Ayala – Y D. Engle - Y
 S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y A. Spandrio – Y

Noes: None.

Absent: None

d. Special Board Meetings (Grant Category (c); Task 10; Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement)

Executive Director Bondy said that special meetings will be needed to address the forthcoming decisions necessary to complete the GSP. He recommends setting a monthly special meeting date for the remainder of the calendar year to be used on an as-needed basis.

The Board discussed the special meeting options provided in the staff report. The Board identified the 4th Thursday of the month as the best option. The Chair and Executive Director will schedule special meetings on the 4th Thursday of the month, as needed.

Chair Engle asked for public comments. None were offered.

No motion.

e. GSP Workshop No. 3 (Grant Category (c); Task 10; Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement)

Executive Director Bondy recommended scheduling the GSP Workshop No. 3 in late April to obtain feedback on the SMC. The Board discussed the dates provided in the staff report. Thursday April 29 at 6:30 PM was identified as the best date and time for the Directors’ schedules.

No motion.

11) COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Ad Hoc Stakeholder Engagement Committee

The Committee had no report, but the members provided a few suggestions to staff for the next workshop. Director Ayala suggested sending out an e-mail reminder a few days before the workshop and Director Rose suggested a “day of” reminder. It was also suggested that the registration process be skipped because it may be a barrier to attendance for some people. Executive Director Bondy thanked the Directors for the feedback and said we would implement the recommendations.

12) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Director Ayala said she will not be available for April 8th meeting.

Executive Director Bondy said that Board will need to appoint a new secretary to replace Director Spandrio.

13) ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.

Action: _____

Motion: _____ Second: _____

B.Kuebler____ D.Engle____ R. Hajas____ S.Rungren____ G.Shephard____ E.Ayala____ L.Rose____