

**UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING APRIL 8, 2021**

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

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Meeting ID: 981 6255 6615

Passcode: 876820

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1) CALL TO ORDER

Chair Engle called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Executive Director Bondy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) ROLL CALL

Executive Director Bondy called roll.

Directors present: Bruce Kuebler, Larry Rose, Susan Rungren, Richard Hajas, Glenn Shephard, and Diana Engle.

Directors absent: E. Ayala

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Engle asked if there are any proposed changes to the agenda. No changes were suggested.

Director Kuebler moved approval of the agenda. Director Rungren seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y D. Engle - Y
 S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y R. Hajas– Y

Director Absent: E. Ayala

Noes: None.

5) PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

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

No public comments were offered.

6) CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Approve Minutes from March 11, 2021 Regular Board Meeting**
- b. Approve Minutes from March 25, 2021 Special Board Meeting**
- c. Approve Financial Report for March 2021**

Director Shephard moved approval of the consent calendar items. Director Rose seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y D. Engle - Y
 S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y R. Hajas– Y

Director Absent: E. Ayala.

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: No report and no time.

Director Rose: Worked on access for monitoring wells. One hour.

Director Shephard: No report and no time.

Director Rajas: Introduced himself as the Casitas Municipal Water District appointee to the UVRGA Board. Pete Kaiser is his alternate.

Director Engle: No report and no time.

8) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Director Kuebler complimented the City of Ventura on its comments on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife flow recommendations.

Director Engle asked about Staff’s recommendation to defer Camino Cielo stream gaging until spring of 2022. Executive Director Bondy explained that the modelers are primarily interested in the baseflow recession. There will not be a baseflow recession to monitor this year because there has been so little rainfall.

9) ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. Secretary Appointment

The Board discussed appointing a Member Director to fill the Board Secretary vacancy resulting from Director Angelo Spandrio’s departure. Director Hajas volunteered.

Director Kuebler moved to appoint Richard Hajas as secretary for the period April 8, 2021 through June 30, 2021. The motion was seconded by Director Rungren.

No public comment.

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|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Roll Call Vote: | B. Kuebler – Y | D. Engle – Y | L. Rose – Y |
| | S. Rungren – Y | G. Shephard – Y | R. Hajas - Y |

Noes: None.

Director Absent: E. Ayala

b. Ad Hoc Committees

Executive Director Bondy explained that Ad Hoc Budget committee recently lost two of its members. He recommended reviewing the ad hoc committees and updating them, as desired.

Alternate Director Bert Rapp said he is on the Ad Hoc Budget Committee but feels that someone more involved should be on the committee.

The board discussed the various ad hoc committees.

Agency Counsel Lemieux asked for background about the ad hoc committees. Executive Director Bondy summarized the history of the committees.

The Directors agreed the Ad Hoc Budget Committee is no longer needed. Agency Counsel Lemieux said no action is required to terminate the ad hoc committee.

The Board discussed extending the Ad Hoc Funding Committee to June 30, 2022.

Director Kuebler moved to extend the Ad Hoc Funding Committee through June 30, 2022. The motion was seconded by Director Shephard.

No public comment.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y D. Engle – Y L. Rose – Y
 S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y R. Hajas - Y

Noes: None.

Director Absent: E. Ayala

c. Bank of Sierra Authorized Check Signer and Invoice Review Procedure.

Executive Director Bondy explained that the Agency Bylaws require the signatures of any two Officers on Agency checks. Former Secretary Spandrio and Vice Chair Kuebler have been signing checks and Chair Engle is not willing. Therefore, unless the new Secretary, Director Hajas, is willing to sign checks, the Board would need to amend the Agency Bylaws. Director Hajas said he would be willing to sign checks.

Executive Director Bondy thanked Director Hajas for volunteering. He requested a motion to memorialize the discussion to provide documentation for the bank. Agency Counsel said the Board could direct the Chair and Agency Counsel execute a Board resolution to this effect.

Director Kuebler moved to authorize the Chair and Agency Counsel to execute a Board Resolution to clarify that Bruce Kuebler, Vice-Chair and Richard Hajas, Secretary are authorized to sign checks on behalf of the Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency. The motion was seconded by Director Shephard.

No public comment.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y D. Engle – Y L. Rose – Y
 S. Rungren – Y G. Shephard – Y R. Hajas - Y

Noes: None.

Director Absent: E. Ayala

Director Kuebler added that there are checks awaiting signature. Executive Director Bondy said he would work with the Agency’s Treasurer and Directors Kuebler and Hajas setup Director Hajas with the Agency’s bank.

10. GSP ITEMS

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

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

No Director comments or questions.

No public comment.

b. Sustainable Management Criteria (Grant Category (d); Task 11: GSP Development and Preparation)

Executive Director Bondy and Rincon Consultants staff members Steve Howard and Kiernan Brtalik provided a presentation concerning sustainable management criteria (SMC) for the chronic lowering of groundwater levels and reduction of groundwater storage sustainability indicators. Executive Director Bondy began the presentation with a SMC development status and schedule update. He then provided an overview of groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs) as they pertain to SMC for the GSP. Rincon then described the results of their work to identify and characterize riparian GDEs in the Basin. Two riparian GDE units were identified for consideration in SMC development. Rincon concluded that historical satellite and aerial photo data suggest that the riparian GDEs have not had permanent or prolonged impacts historically. To the extent pumping and hydrologic conditions are similar going forward, they do not expect there to be significant effects to the riparian GDEs caused by groundwater pumping. Executive Director Bondy presented modeling results and analysis of Ventura River flows and the frequency that the Basin fills completely. He suggested that the measurable objectives for the sustainability indicators should be a full basin condition in years when Ventura River flows are greater than 50% of average. He explained that riparian GDEs are the controlling factor on the minimum threshold. Based on the Rincon analysis, Executive Director Bondy suggested using historical low groundwater levels for the minimum thresholds. He reviewed graphs showing the proposed measurable objectives and minimum thresholds. He explained that there are eight groundwater level monitoring sites in the Basin with sufficient historical data to establish the SMC. He explained several options for determining when undesirable results would be considered to occur including, all eight wells, seven of the eight wells outside of the Mira Monte area, or the Foster Park well plus four out of the seven remaining wells. He recommended that the GSP include provisions for additional monitoring and modeling, a domestic well survey, and to revisit the SMC in the first 5-year GSP update. The presentation slides are posted on the UVRGA website: https://uvrgroundwater.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/04-08-21-Item-10b-SMC-Presentation_LOW_RES.pdf

Executive Director Bondy and Rincon Consultants staff answered miscellaneous questions during and following the presentation:

Director Rungren asked when the next workshop will be held. Executive Director Bondy said it is scheduled for Thursday, April 29th at 6:30 p.m.

Director Kuebler asked if there is any literature that provides information about effects on the GDEs with a lower water table or if the water table stays low longer than observed historically. How much deeper or longer before the GDEs die off? Kiernan Brtalik replied that Rincon staff reviewed available literature for the Ventura River as part of their analysis. The recommendations are based on the available information. Executive Director Bondy said that the GDEs were affected during the drought, but recovered, suggesting that lower levels or prolonged low levels could lead to potentially significant effects. He said the proposed minimum thresholds are designed to prevent potentially significant effects.

Director Kuebler asked if there is a specific NDVI value that indicates impacts. Steve Howard replied that the NDVI values are a relative indicator and that the value can be impacted by a variety of factors, including species composition changes, season, etc. He said the NDVI data are good for detecting trends, such as the rebound following droughts or flood scour events.

Director Rose asked if the NDVI data are sensitive enough to differentiate plants. Kiernan Brtalik replied that the data cannot be used to differentiate species and that they relied on aerial photos and field data to understand species.

Chair Engle asked about the NDVI resolution. Executive Director Bondy said he processed the data and provided it to Rincon. The data were obtained from The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) website. The raw satellite data are collected on an approximate 30-meter grid, however, TNC aggregates the data into an average value for each of the potential GDE polygons in the Natural Communities Commonly Associated with Groundwater (NCCAG) geographic information systems layer that is shown in the presentation. Each of the GDE units include multiple NCCAG polygons.

Chair Engle asked if the screening exercise to identify the GDE units used single examples of wet, dry, and average years. Kiernan Brtalik explained that they looked at six conditions consisting of the high and low water tables simulated by the GSP numerical model for the years 2005 (wet), 2010 (average), and 2015 (dry).

Public comments:

Burt Rapp, Ventura River Water District, said Coast Live Oaks are an upland species and are probably not a groundwater dependent ecosystem. He said if they are groundwater dependent then they should probably be co-existing with sycamores and other riparian species.

Steve Slack, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, thanked Rincon for its efforts on evaluating the GDEs. He said he wants more information about why only two GDE units were identified. Executive Director Bondy said that a memorandum will be posted on the Agency website soon.

Burt Handy said the second and third options for defining undesirable results should be presented at the next workshop.

Board Discussion:

Directors Rose, Engle and Shephard liked the second option for defining undesirable results. Director Kuebler liked the third option. Director Rungren did not express a preference.

The Board direction to staff was to proceed with presenting the information at the upcoming GSP workshop using the second option for undesirable results.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Ad Hoc Stakeholder Engagement Committee

Director Rose said the committee has no report.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Executive Director Bondy said the Board should expect a special meeting on April 22, 2021.

13. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.