

**UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING SEPTEMBER 23, 2021**

The Special Board meeting was held via teleconference, in accordance with California Executive Order N-25-20. Directors present were Bruce Kuebler, Larry Rose, Susan Rungren, Emily Ayala, Pete Kaiser, Glenn Shephard, and Diana Engle. Also, present: Executive Director Bryan Bondy, Agency Counsel Keith Lemieux, and Administrative Assistant Maureen Tucker. Identified public members present: Burt Handy, Jenny Tribo, Mary Orr, Kiernan Brtalik, Abhishek Singh, Justin Martinez, Brian Brennan, Betsy Cooper, Jim Kentosh (alternate director), Vivon Crawford, Steven Humphrey, Summer Ward, Burt Rapp (alternate director), and Mike Flood.

1) CALL TO ORDER

Chair Engle called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Executive Director Bryan Bondy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) ROLL CALL

Executive Director Bondy called roll.

Directors Present: Bruce Kuebler, Larry Rose, Susan Rungren, Pete Kaiser, Glenn Shephard, Diana Engle, Emily Ayala

Directors Absent: none

4) APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Engle asked for any proposed changes to the agenda. None were provided.

Director Kuebler moved agenda approval.

Director Kaiser seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y D. Engle – Y
 S. Rungren – Y P. Kaiser – Y E. Ayala – Y G. Shephard – Y

Directors Absent: none

5) PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEAR ON THE AGENDA

Chair Engle called for public comments on items not appearing on the agenda. No public comments were offered.

6) ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. Resolution No. 2021-05 for Implementation of AB-361 Exemption to Brown Act Teleconferencing Requirements

Agency Counsel Keith Lemieux summarized the draft resolution which, if adopted, would implement the AB-361 exemptions to the Brown Act teleconferencing requirements through as long as 2024. He explained that the Board would be required to reaffirm the findings contained in the resolution every 30-days until the Board finds it is no longer appropriate to meet remotely. He added that, even if the resolution is adopted, it does not mean the Board must meet electronically. An in-person meeting can be held at any point they feel necessary.

Chair Engle asked what happens if there is more than 30 days between meetings. Agency Counsel Lemieux said it could be handled at the beginning of the meeting. He recommends doing this at each meeting during agenda approval.

Director Kaiser asked if there is a way to automatically reaffirm the findings. Agency Counsel Lemieux said that he interprets AB 361 as requiring ongoing action to reaffirm.

Director Rose moved to adopt Resolution 2021-5. Director Ayala seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: B. Kuebler – Y L. Rose – Y D. Engle – Y
 S. Rungren – Y P. Kaiser – Y E. Ayala – Y G. Shephard – Y

Directors Absent: None.

7) GSP STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NO. 4B

Executive Director Bondy introduced Rincon Consultants staff member Kiernan Brtalik and Intera, Inc. staff member Abhishek Singh as members of the GSP development team. Executive Director Bondy explained that the draft GSP was released in early August and the Agency is soliciting comments through October 8. He explained how to make comments on the draft GSP. He then gave a presentation summarizing the draft GSP. The full presentation is posted on the Agency website at <https://uvrgroundwater.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/20210923-UVRGA-Workshop-No-4b.pdf>.

Following the presentation, several questions were asked by UVRGA Directors and the public.

Chair Engle asked for clarification that the six indicators are identified by statute, not just invented by the Board. Executive Director Bondy confirmed.

Chair Engle requested an explanation of the temporal disconnect between pumping and effects of indirect depletion on streamflow. Executive Director Bryan Bondy explained how pumping upstream of Foster Park removes groundwater from storage that might otherwise contribute to streamflow later that year or subsequent year.

Chair Engle commented that it may be possible to address indirect depletion through habitat improvements. Executive Director Bondy asked Kiernan Brtalik to confirm the controlling habitat indicator from the 2013 Foster Park study. Kiernan Brtalik said it was depth. Executive Director Bondy said that it seems that perhaps habitat improvements that improve depth might be an example of what Chair Engle is referring to.

Jim Kentosh described concerns about nitrate in groundwater. Meiners Oaks Water District stopped using Well #8 due to nitrate concentrations. He said nitrates are of human origin, not natural, so why is nitrate not considered a contaminant plume in the GSP? Executive Director Bryan Bondy said the distinction is that contaminant plumes are of a point source origin, whereas nitrate is a non-point source groundwater impact.

Jim Kentosh said there appears to be high nitrate in the bedrock aquifer in the eastern part of the Basin and he thinks it is seeping into the alluvium. He cited an example with Meiners Oaks Water District Well #4. Executive Director Bondy agreed that nitrate is more prevalent in the bedrock and older alluvium of the eastern part of the Basin, and this is because those units have low permeability and do not get flushed with fresh water recharged by the river. He explained that the variability in Well #4 nitrate concentrations is very likely controlled by how much of the well screen has saturated young alluvium at any given time.

Jim Kentosh said Meiners Oaks Water District hired a consultant to help design a solution for the nitrate in Well #8. He would like to leave that option open for further study. Executive Director Bondy said the GSP does not preclude well owners taking such actions. Water districts can perform treatment independently from the GSP. That is a drinking water management issue, not a SGMA issue. Executive Director Bryan Bondy said he would be happy to share what he has learned about nitrates with Meiners Oaks Water District's consultant.

Jim Kentosh asked about bedrock aquifers and the GSP. He said Casitas MWD and Meiners Oaks Water District are considering bedrock aquifer well projects and wondered if that is an issue. Executive Director Bondy said the GSP does not currently address

bedrock. The GSP focusses on the alluvial deposits. However, if bedrock pumping increases substantially in the future, it could potentially cause water to be drawn out of the alluvium, which could become an issue for UVRGA at some point.

Jim Kentosh asked what happens with the GSP if Lake Casitas dries up? Executive Director Bryan Bondy states that the GSP does not address “extreme” events. However, SGMA requires the Agency to assess the GSP every five years considering actual water supply conditions. UVRGA will be watching and update the plan accordingly.

Jim Kentosh said he has no more questions. He said the GSP is overall a great plan.

Director Ayala asked Jim Kentosh who he works for. Jim Kentosh said he is a Director at Meiners Oaks Water District and Ojai Valley Sanitation District and is the alternate for Chair Engle on the UVRGA Board.

Director Engle asked Executive Director Bryan Bondy to talk about the State Water Resources Control Board and UVRGA numerical flow models. Executive Director Bondy described the two models and compared their scale, resolution, and other key attributes. He said that, ideally, the models would be used together in the future because they have different strengths and, therefore, complement each other well.

Director Engle thanked Executive Director Bondy and the other GSP development team members who put the draft GSP together. Director Engle thanked the attendees and reminded them that they can visit the UVRGA website for more information and to comment on the GSP.

Information item only. The Board took no action.

8) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Action: _____

Motion: _____

B.Kuebler__ D.Engle__ P.Kaiser__ S. Rungren__ G.Shephard__ E.Ayala__ L.Rose__