

UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

Immediately prior to the meeting, Administrative Assistant Maureen Tucker administered the oath of office to Chair Kaiser for his new term.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency was held in the offices of the Ventura River Water District (VRWD), 409 Old Baldwin Road, Ojai, CA 93023 on Thursday, September 14, 2023. Chair Kaiser called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Kaiser led the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. ROLL CALL

Directors Present:

Pete Kaiser, Chair
Bruce Kuebler, Vice Chair
Arne Anselm, Secretary
Emily Ayala, Director
Vivon Crawford, Director
Jim Kentosh, Director
Jenny Tribo, Director

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present:

Bryan Bondy, Executive Director
Keith Lemieux, District Counsel
Maureen Tucker, Administrative Assistant

Identified Members of the Public:

In person: Alma Quezada (VRWD), Kelly Dyer (Casitas MWD)

Online: Michael Flood (Casitas MWD), Burt Handy, Kevin DeLano (SWRCB)

D. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Kaiser asked for any proposed changes to the agenda.

Director Ayala moved agenda approval. Director Anselm seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: E. Ayala - Y A. Anselm - Y J. Kentosh – Y
J. Tribo – Y V. Crawford – Y P. Kaiser – Y B. Kuebler – Y

Directors Absent: none

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

Chair Kaiser asked for public comments on items not appearing on the agenda.

No comments were provided.

REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a) Approve Minutes from July 13, 2023 Regular Board Meeting
- b) Approve Financial Report for July 2023
- c) Approve Financial Report for August 2023
- d) Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Year-End Budget Report

Chair Kaiser asked if any Directors wanted to pull any consent calendar items for discussion. No requests were made.

Director Kuebler moved approval of all consent items. Director Tribo seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: E. Ayala - Y A. Anselm - Y J. Kentosh – Y
J. Tribo – Y V. Crawford – Y P. Kaiser – Y B. Kuebler – Y

Directors Absent: none

2. DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Directors may provide an oral report on items not appearing on the agenda.

Director Ayala: No report.

Director Anselm: No report.

Director Crawford: Ojai Valley Land Conservancy (OVLC) met with the Resource Conservation District to discuss the second round of Ventura River Instream Flow. OVLC is preparing for an Arundo removal project this fall on the City of Ventura property. The Mountainfilm Festival was mentioned.

Director Kaiser: No report.

Director Kentosh: No report.

Director Kuebler: No report.

Director Tribo: No report.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Bondy reported on Agency matters since the last Board meeting.

Executive Director Bondy mentioned that Jim Kentosh replaced Michael Etchart as the Meiners Oaks Water District appointed director on the UVRGA Board. The new alternate director is Justin Martinez. Betsy Cooper announced her retirement from Ventura Water. Gina Dorrington is the new alternate director.

Executive Director Bondy reminded the Board about completing the AB1234 ethics training.

Director Kuebler asked about the fish mortality surveys. Executive Director Bondy said the focus is on steelhead and that none have been found thus far.

Director Ayala asked about removal of the Camino Cielo streamflow monitoring equipment before stormflows. Executive Director Bondy said the plan is to remove the equipment each year prior to the first major storms.

Director Kaiser said the Executive Director report was very complete. He also mentioned that he completed the AB1234 online training course and felt it was very good. He encouraged his fellow directors to take the course.

No public comments.

4. AGENCY COUNSEL'S REPORT

Agency counsel briefed the Board on new draft legislation AB779, which would allow anyone to request State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) review of whether a physical solution interferes with a groundwater sustainability plan.

Director Kentosh asked about AB560. Agency counsel said that is a similar bill with the primary difference being that it would limit who could request SWRCB review to the adjudication parties.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. Regular Board Meeting Schedule

Chair Kaiser summarized the purpose of the item and noted that the Casitas MWD Board room is available after 5 p.m. if more space is desired.

After a brief discussion, Director Ayala made a motion to keep the regular meetings on the second Thursday of the month and to change the start time to 1:00 p.m. Seconded by Director Anselm.

No public comments.

Roll Call Vote:	E. Ayala - Y	A. Anselm - Y	J. Kentosh – Y		
	J. Tribo – Y	V. Crawford – Y	P. Kaiser – Y	B. Kuebler – Y	

Directors Absent: none

b. Financial Reserve Investment

Director Kuebler provided a summary of his research on investment options. VRWD uses a firm called Time Value Investments and is currently invested in a combination of CDs and Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF), which are earning 3% and 3.15%, respectively. Association of Water Agencies has CDs at Premier Credit Union. Director Kuebler uses Federal Credit Union who has CDs at 5.25%. He said that the Agency’s bank, Bank of Sierra, only offers variable rate products. Lastly, he said that the Agency Treasurer recommended two entities called California Class and Stifel. Director Kuebler recommended California Class and said they would be willing to make a presentation to the Board.

Director Kaiser expressed concerns about investment advisor commissions and would prefer to work with a local bank.

Executive Director Bondy stated the Agency has \$100,000 in operational reserves and \$269,000 in capital reserves. He added that he does not have a concern about locking up the capital reserve money for a year because construction is more than a year out.

After discussion, the Board reached a consensus to request that Director Kuebler work with Executive Director Bondy to investigate options at a variety of local banks.

Alternate Director Quezada asked if online banks should be considered.

Director Kaiser asked if there are any restrictions on a governmental agency for online banking.

Agency Counsel Lemieux said he would research.

No public comments.

c. Authorized Check Signers

The Board briefly discussed Resolution 2023-04 to update the list of authorized check signers by removing Mike Etchart and adding Jim Kentosh.

Director Kuebler moved adoption of Resolution No. 2023-04, A Resolution of the Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency to Designate Check Signing Authority. Seconded by Director Ayala.

No public comments.

Roll Call Vote:	E. Ayala - Y	A. Anselm - Y	J. Kentosh – Y	
	J. Tribo – Y	V. Crawford – Y	P. Kaiser – Y	B. Kuebler – Y

Directors Absent: none

6. GSP IMPLEMENTATION ITEMS

a. Well Registration and Flowmeter Compliance Update

Executive Director Bondy provided an update on the status of well registrations and flowmeter compliance. He is continuing to work with well owners on flowmeter calibration compliance. He received updated contact information from the County Assessor and will be mailing new letters for the wells that remain unregistered.

Director Ayala said the flowmeter company McCrometer is backlogged 3 months.

No public comments.

b. Intera, Inc. Work Order No. 8 for As-Needed Services

Executive Director Bondy explained Intera previously provided as-needed services during GSP development under a prior work order. Work Order No. 8 is requested to allow for as-needed services during GSP implementation through the first five-year GSP period.

Director Ayala moved approval of Intera, Inc. Work Order No. 8 for as-needed services not to exceed \$50,000 as presented. Seconded by Director Tribo.

Director Questions: None.

No public comments.

Roll Call Vote:	E. Ayala - Y	A. Anselm - Y	J. Kentosh – Y	
	J. Tribo – Y	V. Crawford – Y	P. Kaiser – Y	B. Kuebler – Y

Directors Absent: none

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Ad Hoc Stakeholder Engagement Committee

No report.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

CLOSED SESSION

Public Comment on Closed Session: None.

The Board adjourned to closed session at 1:42 p.m.

Executive Director Bondy was excused from closed session immediately prior to his performance evaluation.

Chair Kaiser left the Board meeting at 2:21 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 2:32 p.m.

Agency Counsel Keith Lemieux reported that the Board met in closed session to receive a report on existing litigation and the Board completed a performance review of the Executive Director. No reportable action took place. Agency Counsel will make a report on the closed session at the next Board meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Action: _____

Motion: _____

A. Anslem _ E.Ayala __ V. Crawford_ P.Kaiser _ J.Kentosh_ B. Kuebler_ J. Tribo__