

UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING APRIL 11, 2024

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, 409 Old Baldwin Road, Ojai, CA 93023 on Thursday, April 11, 2024. Chair Kaiser called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

C. ROLL CALL

Directors Present:

Gina Dorrington, Alternate Director
Pete Kaiser, Chair
James Kentosh, Director
Alma Quezada, Alternate Director
Vivon Sedgwick, Director

Directors Absent: Arne Anselm, Emily Ayala, Bruce Kuebler, and Jennifer Tribo

Staff Present:

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

Identified Members of the Public:

In Person: none

Online: Burt Handy, Mary Bergen, and Kevin Delano

D. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Kaiser asked for any proposed changes to the agenda. No changes were proposed.

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

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 offered.

REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a) Approve Minutes from March 14, 2024 Regular Board Meeting
- b) Approve Financial Report for March 2024

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

Director Kentosh moved approval of the consent calendar. Director Quezada seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kentosh – Y B. A. Quezada – Y P. Kaiser – Y
 V. Sedgwick - Y G. Dorrington - Y

Directors Absent: E. Ayala, A. Anslem

Public Comments: None

2. DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Bondy reviewed the written staff report concerning Agency matters since the last Board meeting.

Groundwater extraction fees are current except for one well owner who owes \$1,628.00 for the January 1 through June 30, 2023 semi-annual billing period.

The Ventura County Treasury investment pool account has been set up and funded with \$500,000.

Executive Director Bondy continued working on well registration.

Executive Director Bondy summarized the status of the UVRGA's field monitoring programs.

Groundwater level data downloads, Camino Cielo stream gauge deployment, and aquatic groundwater dependent ecosystem monitoring are all scheduled for May. The Ventura River is still flowing across the entire basin, so monthly visual monitoring has not been necessary.

The encroachment permit application for access to two Ventura County Watershed Protection District (VCPWD) owned monitoring wells on the Live Oak Acres Levee is under review. The board-approved contract with Layne was issued to modify the wellhead to facilitate groundwater level monitoring equipment in well 04N23W32C03S.

Executive Director Bondy summarized recent outreach efforts. Executive Director Bondy and Rincon Consultants, Inc. presented on UVRGA's field monitoring programs during the April 4

Ventura River Watershed Council (VRWC) meeting. Executive Director Bondy was invited to speak at the upcoming Groundwater Resources Association of California SGMA Implementation Summit conference concerning the SGMA depletions of interconnected surface water.

The Small GSA Coalition held a conference call on March 28.

Questions: None

No public comments.

4. AGENCY COUNSEL'S REPORT

No report.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a. Casitas Mutual Water Company Groundwater Extraction Fee Waiver

Executive Director Bondy explained that UVRGA has been invoicing groundwater extraction fees to Casitas Mutual Water Company (CMWC) based on the annual groundwater extraction volume estimate developed in 2019. CMWC has paid invoiced fees through December 2022, but has not paid the invoice for the January through June 2023 semi-annual period. Executive Director Bondy recently learned that CMWC stopped using its well due to water quality issues and has instead been obtaining water from Casitas MWD. He was able to confirm this on the CMWC's well registration. He recommended waiving the groundwater extraction fees for the January through June 2023 semi-annual period. Executive Director Bondy said CMWC would be billed based on meter readings going forward, which are anticipated to be *de minimis* and, therefore, exempt from fees.

Director Quezada asked Agency Counsel Lemieux if she must abstain because Ventura River Water District is in the process of annexing CMWC. Agency Counsel Lemieux said he does not believe there is a conflict of interest.

Director Quezada moved to waive Casitas Mutual Water Company groundwater extraction fees invoiced for the January through June 2023 semi-annual period. Seconded by Director Kentosh.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kentosh – Y B. A. Quezada – Y P. Kaiser – Y
 V. Sedgwick - Y G. Dorrington - Y

Directors Absent: E. Ayala, A. Anslem

b. Executive Director Purchasing Authority

Executive Director Bondy introduced Resolution No. 2024-03, to establish the Executive Director's purchasing authority. He informed the Board that he discussed with Chair Kaiser that the way things are now, the Board would need to have a meeting anytime unanticipated minor expenses are encountered. For example, the April 2024 Board meeting would not have been necessary to approve travel expenses for attendance at the SGMA Implementation Summit. He mentioned that

the General Manager of the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency has a \$2,500 purchasing authority and said that would be a reasonable amount for now.

Director Kentosh moved to adopt Resolution No. 2024-03 to establish that the Executive Director has purchasing authority up to \$2,500.00. Seconded by Director Sedgwick.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kentosh – Y B. A. Quezada – Y P. Kaiser – Y
V. Sedgwick - Y G. Dorrington - Y

Directors Absent: E. Ayala, A. Anslem

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. Two wells have been addressed since the March Board meeting. Thirty-one wells remain unregistered. All registered wells are in compliance with the flowmeter requirements.

Executive Director Bondy confirmed that letters notifying owners of penalty accrual were sent out per Board Direction during the March meeting.

Director Kentosh asked how UVRGA will collect penalties. Agency counsel responded there is a due process requirement and enforcement hearing.

Director Kentosh asked if the \$10 per day fee is in place yet.

Executive Director Bondy responded that the penalties will begin to accrue on May 1st for some owners and June 1st for others.

No public comments.

b. SGMA Implementation Summit

Executive Director Bondy notified the Board that he was invited to participate in a panel discussion at the upcoming Annual GSA Summit on June 5-6 in Sacramento. The conference is put on by the Groundwater Resources Association of California (GRA) in collaboration with Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Groundwater Committee. He explained that this is an annual conference designed specifically for GSAs with the goal of creating a forum for groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs), Department of Water Resources (DWR), etc. to foster progress on Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) implementation. UVRGA has received recognition by some across the State for its handling of depletions of interconnected surface water in the groundwater sustainability plan, which will be panel discussion topic. Executive Director Bondy added that he is also trying to schedule a meeting with DWR management while he is in Sacramento to discuss their comments on UVRGA's GSP.

The Board discussed approving travel expenses for an amount not-to-exceed \$2,000 for the Executive Director to attend the annual SGMA Implementation Summit as an invited speaker.

Director Quezada moved approval of travel expenses not-to-exceed \$2,000 for the Executive Director to attend the annual SGMA Implementation Summit as an invited speaker. Seconded by Alternate Director Dorrington.

Roll Call Vote: J. Kentosh – Y B. A. Quezada – Y P. Kaiser – Y
V. Sedgwick - Y G. Dorrington - Y

Directors Absent: E. Ayala, A. Anslem

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Ad Hoc Stakeholder Engagement Committee

Director Sedgwick stated there is no report.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

9. CLOSED SESSION AGENDA

The Board adjourned into closed session at 1:34 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 1:54 p.m.

Agency Counsel Lemieux reported on existing litigation: *Santa Barbara Channelkeeper v. City of San Buenaventura*. No reportable action took place.

REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:54 p.m.

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for May 9, 2024 @ 1:00 p.m.

Action: _____

Motion: _____

P. Kaiser _ B. Kuebler_ A. Anslem _ E. Ayala_ V. Sedgwick_ J. Tribo _ J. Kentosh_