

**UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING APRIL 9, 2026**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Upper Ventura River Groundwater Agency was held at the Ventura River Water District, 409 Old Baldwin Road, Ojai, California.

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Tribo led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Executive Director Bondy called roll.

Directors Present:

Jenny Tribo, Chair
Bruce Kuebler, Vice Chair
James Kentosh, Secretary
Emily Ayala, Director
Peter Kaiser, Director
Jeff Palmer, Director
Vivon Sedgwick, Director

Alternate Directors Present: Mike Flood

Director Absent: None

Staff Present:

Bryan Bondy, Executive Director
Keith Lemieux, Agency Counsel

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

Director Kuebler moved agenda approval. Seconded by Director Kaiser.

Vote: E. Ayala -Y P. Kaiser - Y J. Kentosh - Y B. Kuebler – Y
 J. Palmer-Y V. Sedgwick – Y J. Tribo - Y

Directors Absent: None

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

Chair Tribo asked for public comments on items not appearing on the agenda. No comments were offered.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a) Approve Minutes of March 12, 2026 Regular Board Meeting
- b) Approve Financial Report for March 2026
- c) Fiscal Year Report 2025-2026 2nd Quarter Investment Report

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

Director Kuebler moved approval of the consent calendar items. Seconded by Director Kaiser.

Vote: E. Ayala -Y P. Kaiser - Y J. Kentosh - Y B. Kuebler – Y
 J. Palmer-Y V. Sedgwick – Y J. Tribo - Y

Directors Absent: None

7. DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Tribo called for Director announcements. No announcements were made.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Bondy reviewed the written staff report with the Board concerning updates on Agency activities since the last meeting.

Director Kuebler said he ran into someone working for the City of Ventura who was monitoring biological conditions on the Ventura River and asked if the data was provided to UVRGA. Director Tribo said that the City has been performing some monitoring associated with an emergency repair project and, other than that, the City is not performing any biological monitoring. Directors Kaiser and Palmer encouraged data sharing to reduce Agency costs.

Director Sedgwick asked about next steps for the GSP Periodic Evaluation. Executive Director Bondy said the draft report will be released in July or August concurrent with a workshop.

No public comments.

9. AGENCY COUNSEL'S REPORT

Agency Counsel Lemieux provide brief summary of the recent appellate court ruling in the Las Posas Valley Basin adjudication.

10. Administrative Items

a. Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Annual Budget and Multi-Year Budget Projection

Executive Director Bondy explained that he is presenting the draft budget a month early because more time was requested during last year's budgeting process to discuss options for smoothing extraction fees. The draft budget for next year and multi-year budget projection will be reviewed followed by a presentation on extraction fee variability and smoothing options.

Executive Director Bondy reviewed the draft budget for fiscal year (FY) 2026/2027 and budget projections for FY 2027/2028 through FY 2030/2031, including a summary of the Agency's budget approach and assumptions. He noted that expenses are largely controlled by professional services, particularly for field monitoring, and referred to the professional services breakdown provided in the staff report.

Following the current Board policy, FY 2026/2027 extraction fees would be based on 4,396 acre-feet (AF) of groundwater extractions, which includes the three-year average extractions of 4,178 AF for the Member Agencies. He referred to the groundwater extractions history table provided in the staff report. Based on the expenses and groundwater extractions, the groundwater extraction fee for FY 2026/2027 would be \$168/AF, which is, coincidentally, identical to the current year extraction fee. Executive Director Bondy explained that extraction fees for the projected years would be range from \$128/AF to \$204/AF if extractions remained constant. Executive Director Bondy described an alternate budget with a flat extraction fee over the next five years of \$166/AF. The alternate budget has the same expenses and groundwater extraction assumptions but averages the revenue needs over the five year period instead of balancing the budget each year.

The board asked questions about the draft budget.

Executive Director Bondy walked through a presentation on extraction fee variability and smoothing options, including explanation of the reasons for extraction fee variability, review of historical extraction fee variability, an analysis of future potential groundwater extractions and fees, and options for reducing extraction fee variability. Key takeaways from the presentation include:

1. Variability in groundwater extractions cannot be predicted but can be analyzed to understand the range of potential outcomes.
2. The City of Ventura's extractions are the chief source of variability, owing to implementation of the Interim Order Protocols. This variability can be analyzed statistically using the City's 50-year operations spreadsheet model.
3. The draft budget and multiyear projection are based on relatively high groundwater extraction rates. It is more likely than not that groundwater extractions will decrease during the projection period, which would result in higher extraction fees than shown in the multi-year budget projection.
4. Extraction fee variability and upside risk of increasing fees caused by decreasing extractions can be reduced by using a longer averaging period for Member Agency extractions and assuming lower extractions in future years.

5. Approaches are available that would essentially eliminate the impact of variable groundwater extractions on extraction fees, including (a) switching the fee basis to well capacity or (b) switching the Member Agencies to fixed annual contributions.

The presentation slides are attached to these meeting minutes.

The Board asked questions and discussed the information presented.

The Board discussed the impact of Matilija Dam removal on groundwater extractions and concluded that the dam removal timing is beyond the budget planning horizon.

Questions were asked concerning how the City of Ventura passes through the extraction fees to its ratepayers. Director Tribo explained that the City charges a blended cost for water throughout its service area.

Directors Kaiser and Palmer emphasized reducing Agency costs. It was pointed out that field monitoring costs are the single largest budget item and that there may be opportunities to use data collected by others. Executive Director Bondy cited cost saving measures, such as switching to biennial audits, and explained that the Agency is already coordinating with others on data collection but will reach out again to see if new opportunities exist.

Directors Ayala and Tribo expressed concerns about using well capacity as the basis for charging fees.

The Board consensus was to bring back the budget and multi-year projection at its next meeting using the current budgeting approach (i.e., Attachment A-1 of the staff report).

11. GSP IMPLEMENTATION ITEMS

No items this meeting.

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Director Kentosh requested that the forthcoming physical solutions be included in the next agenda. Executive Director Bondy requested more specificity for the request. After a brief discussion it was agreed that specific portions of the physical solution should be identified for discussion.

Director Kaiser departed at 2:38 p.m. Alternate Director Flood replaced Director Kaiser.

CLOSED SESSION AGENDA

No items this meeting.

REGULAR SESSION AGENDA (CONTINUED)

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

The next scheduled Board meeting is Thursday, May 14, 2026.

Action: _____

Motion: _____

E. Ayala _ P. Kaiser _ J. Kentosh_ B. Kuebler_ J. Palmer_ V.Sedgwick_ J. Tribo_