

**SIERRA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SIERRA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
81059 HIGHWAY 70 BECKWOURTH, CA 96129
Monday, June 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.**

This meeting will also be available via Zoom Teleconferencing:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87847235864?pwd=YWFYATERR1BUTjA3cHFiOHUvRTcydz09>

Meeting ID:
878 4723 5864
Passcode:
647657
By Phone:
+1 (669) 900-9128

Board of Directors
Einen Grandi, Chairman
Jim Roberti, Vice-Chairman
Dwight Ceresola, Director
Dave Goicoechea, Director
Matt Kilmurray, Director
Greg Ramelli, Director
Paul Roen, Director

MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Grandi called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Directors present: Grandi, Goicoechea, Roen, Kilmurray, Ramelli

Directors absent: Roberti, Ceresola

Also present: Ben Volk, Drew Myers, Judie Talbot, Betsy Elzufon, Steve Reich, Jim Swann, and Katie Tanner

Via Zoom: Jay Huebert, Tracey Ferguson, Gus Tolley, Dwight Smith, Jim Thomas, and Debbie Spangler

2) PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY – limited to 5 minutes per speaker

At this time, members of the public may comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon by the Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District Board of Directors at this time.

Jim Swann commented that he enjoyed the last meeting and the comment about getting so much snow the last two years. He recalled the winter of 1993/94 when Leonard's collapsed and he was the one that stamped the plans to get it back up again. He said he is familiar with the word "secret" as he used to work with a company that built missiles. The appropriate term is "confidential", but as a member of the public he shared having things hidden is part of the problem and that there shouldn't be anything happening here that should be secret, or even confidential.

3) REPORTS

A. Meter Technician Report – Jay Huebert

Huebert took readings on June 1st. He reported that, with a few exceptions, water levels are holding steady or even up a bit from last year. By the first of June about 15 wells were being pumped. There was 649 acre-feet pumped in May, compared to 146 acre-feet pumped last year in May. Huebert said this was due to a bigger winter and irrigators started pumping later last year. A new computer board and batteries have been installed on the meter at DMS 12 (Green Gulch) so that is working again.

B. DWR Update – Debbie Spangler

Spangler share that the first invoice for the Round 2 Implementation Grant has already been paid. She is still working on the continuous subsidence monitoring site (at Brian Griffin's) and the TSS monitoring well site (near Smithneck). An environmental review needs to be done for both of those locations. A surveyor determined that the entrance gate to the monitoring well site belongs to Sierra County.

C. LWA Team Project Update

Betsy Elzufon, LWA Associate, reported that the focus of the LWA team has been on the Smithneck Creek recharge project and how to set it up for next year. Today they went to look for Little Last Chance Creek recharge areas. The current struggle is communication issues with the Water Master and gathering water rights data for Smithneck, Little Last Chance, and Staberville. In order to get an off season permit when there are not adjudicated water rights, a letter is needed from the Water Master that lists the conditions of the permit and states that no water rights will be infringed on during those months. But the Water Master will not sign the letter. Director Ramelli said he will contact him to try

to explain the project and what is needed. Director Goicoechea said there should be no impact to Smithneck Creek users because recharge would be done before the irrigation season.

D. Stetson & DRI Team Project Update – Steve Reich/Jim Thomas

Jim Thomas, Project Manager for DRI, reported that soil moisture meters will be installed on the Roberti Ranch pilot study fields the first week of July. The GIS (geographic information system) team is gathering data to put together an overall history of water use from irrigation. The irrigation efficiency pilot study will be expanded to include a couple of other ranches soon, and then when that is going well it will be extended to others in the basin.

Steve Reich, Principal of Stetson Engineers, shared that they would like to include Goodwin's Ranch in the pilot study because those pivots are only using groundwater. Reich received a quote for a magmeter for Roberti's pivot 13, but Huebert shared that he already delivered two new magmeters to the ranch the other day, and he hopes to get them on this weekend. The broken meters are still under warranty so they will be sent back to TechnoFlo.

Reich said they aim to finish the farm assessment at Roberti's this week and then will be at Goodwin's and Grandi's. Then they will follow up with any else that is available. The team will put together maps of everyone's property to record and identify each aspect of the farm assessment and they will work with the farmers to gather any missing information.

4) DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

A. Plumas/Sierra County Well Permit Application Review (if any)

- 1. New domestic well in Beckwourth – William Zimmer**
- 2. New domestic well in Portola (Grizzly Ranch) – Kevin Kuhns**
- 3. New domestic well in Calpine – Anna Harvey**
- 4. New domestic well in Beckwourth – Folchi Logging & Construction**
- 5. New domestic well in Chilcoot – Dwayne Edwards**

Director Roen made a motion to allow the Chairman to approve domestic well applications and then bring them before the Board for ratification, Director Goicoechea 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

Director Roen made a motion to ratify these five well permits, Director Goicoechea 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

B. Smithneck Recharge Project

Chairman Grandi shared that some of the water right issues that have arisen are because the Smithneck Creek pilot project approved by the Board was for diverting water in the off season. However, by the time the permit was issued there were only a couple of days left before the irrigation season began so the project began operating on Arnold Potter's adjudicated rights. Moving forward, Grandi believes the recharge project needs to be separate from the irrigation season and that March 15 is the stop date. He said it's really important that there needs to be a dedicated recharge and diversion point that cannot be used for irrigation.

Elzufon shared that this was more of a proof of concept to show that recharge is at least physically possible. Ben Volk, J-U-B Engineers Program Manager, reported that water was pumped at 80 to 100 gallons per minute, with a total pumped volume of about 15 acre-feet.

Director Goicochea said using adjudicated water rights was beyond the project's intent and has put the Board and recharge project in a negative light. Elzufon said the only reason it was done that way this year was because of the limited time frame from when the permit was issued and the grant's timeframe. This year they were hoping to determine whether water could be diverted from that point to a point where recharge could occur and do so quietly.

Director Goicoechea made a motion to stop this project and not continue the project in the irrigation season again, there was no second, motion withdrew.

Volk said that there's another five days or so of fuel left, then the project will be shut down. To really show an effect would require a bigger pump, a bigger pipe, and the right off season conditions to even be able to divert. This past winter never reached the 90th percentile flow level required by the permit, so water couldn't have been diverted in this off season. Grandi asked if the project could ever get enough water to make a difference since the permit has such tight restrictions? Elzufon said that water rights issues prevent getting the next level permit with fewer restrictions. Grandi said another option needs to be found for the coming year.

Let the minutes note Director Ceresola joined the meeting at 6:52

**C. Permission to Use Land for Groundwater Recharge Feasibility Study -
Right of Entry and Land Use Agreement with Richard Griffin**

Tracey Ferguson, Plumas County Planning Director, presented the land use agreement to the Board, which includes changes made at the request of Mr. Griffin. The agreement has been signed by District Counsel and Laura Foglia of LWA.

Director Roen motion to accept the land use agreement and authorized the Chairman to sign, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

D. Resolution 24-01 – Setting a Date for a Public Hearing re: Management Charge

Director Goicoechea motion to approve Resolution 24-01, Director Roen 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

E. Resolution 24-02– Adoption of 2024-2025 Budget

Director Roen motion to approve the budget Resolution 24-02 as presented, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, Directors Ceresola, Roen, Grandi, Goicoechea, Ramelli, and Kilmurray in favor.

F. Resolution 24-03 – Requesting Collection of Charges on Tax Roll

Director Goicoechea motion to approve Resolution 24-03, Director Roen 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

5) CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the Consent Calendar shall be considered routine and will be enacted by one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Board member requests that specific items be removed from the Consent Calendar for separate action. Any item removed from the consent calendar will be considered after the regular business items.

A. Approval of The Minutes as Read/Distributed for 4/15/24 and 5/20/24

B. Approve payment of bills and finance reports

Director Roen made a motion to approve the consent calendar, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

6) ADJOURNMENT

Director Grandi adjourned the meeting at 7:25 PM

Jenny Gant, Board Clerk