

**SIERRA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SIERRA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
81059 HIGHWAY 70 BECKWOURTH, CA 96129
Monday, July 18, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**

This meeting will also be available via Zoom Teleconferencing:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87847235864?pwd=YWFYaTER1BUTjA3cHFiOHUvRTcydz09>

Meeting ID:

878 4723 5864

Passcode:

647657

By Phone:

+1 (669) 900-9128

Board of Directors

Einen Grandi, Chairman
Don Wallace, Vice-Chair
Dwight Ceresola, Director
Dave Goicoechea, Director
Greg Ramelli, Director
Jim Roberti, Director
Paul Roen, Director

MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Grandi called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM

Directors present: Grandi, Goicoechea, Roberti, Ceresola

Directors absent: Wallace, Roen, Ramelli

Also present: Dwight Smith, Jim Swann, Darrin Espe, and Kathy Lafoon

Via Zoom: Debbie Spangler, Betsy Elzufon, Tracy Schohr, Tracey Ferguson, Jay Huebert, Kristi Jamason, Judie Talbot, Gus Tolley, and Carl Butz.

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 shared that recently a Director made a comment about the lack of public participation at board meetings that Swann was not happy about because he comes to most SVGMD meetings and it's not because he wants to. He stated that this valley gets an average of 10-12 inches of rain per year, but alfalfa takes 50-100 inches of rain to grow. As that water has to come from somewhere, he believes it is being taken from neighbors. Swann is a dry land farmer who used to have horses and get cuttings from his dry land. There also used to be a spring behind his house that a neighbor would use for his cattle. However, twenty five years ago two ag wells were put in below his property and within five years the damage was apparent. The spring is gone, cattle can no longer graze there due to lack of water, and his dry land no longer produces like it used to. Swann believes the ag farmers are doing damage.

Director Roberti challenged two points. He said he was the one to make the comment about the lack of public participation from those that submitted comments on the Sierra Valley GSP, but he had commended Swann publicly as the only one that does attend regularly. He also shared that alfalfa takes between 2-30 inches of water per year to grow, not 50-100 inches. Swann recognized that the higher numbers may be for areas that can grow alfalfa year round.

Let the minutes note Director Ramelli joined the meeting at 6:07 PM

3) REPORTS

A. Meter Technician Report – Jay Huebert

Huebert took well readings on July 3. He reported that, as expected, everything is down, though the levels are not as far down as they were a year ago due to a damp spring and a later start date for pumping this year. The June pumping total was 3,238 acre/feet. Potter's meter (DMS 66) has been fixed and is now measuring correctly. Director Roberti asked if Huebert has noticed any reading changes using the new meters. He responded that the new ones don't seem to fluctuate like the old meters.

The meter for Green Gulch (DMS 12) has been ordered and is being stored. Director Roberti will discuss the need for standardization with Byrd Harrison at the end of the season. If they are willing to have it installed this fall the District will cover the cost; if not, the cost burden will fall on them.

B. DWR Update – Debbie Spangler

Spangler has been working on the amendment to extend the District's grant deadline from the end of September 2022 to the end of October 2022. If there are any grant budget adjustments those can be included in the amendment. She is also working on measurement details associated with the monitoring network data to help create the new Board reports. DWR sent an email that spring data is missing for two wells, but they are wells DWR measures. There is very intermittent access to those two wells due to locked gates. DWR would like to get more consistent access, but if that's not possible maybe those two well should be removed from the monitoring network.

The Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) Survey data should be available in the next four to six weeks.

C. GSP Planning Committee Update – Judie Talbot

1. Grant Opportunities

Judie Talbot, SVGMD Outreach Facilitator, reported that an ad hoc session on GDE monitoring was held on July 7. It was very lightly attended, but LWA and their consultants were able to review McGinley's GDE proposal. Others in attendance represented the CDFW, Trout Unlimited, and the City of Loyalton. No negative concerns were raised, and the general consensus was that the approach is reasonable. Following that meeting the planning committee met to debrief the ad hoc meeting and to discuss the DWR draft grant completion report, grant funding opportunities, the monitoring well data report, and progress on the LEPA program.

The SVGMD did not receive a CDFW grant award. Betsy Eluzfon, LWA Associate, is reviewing the debriefing memo sent by CDFW. Talbot shared that the SAFER grant mentioned at last month's meeting is mostly going to non-profits for wells that failed due to contamination or drought. Currently it doesn't seem like a natural fit for the District, but it might be worth revisiting after awards have been given for the DWR round two implementation grant. Kristi Jamason encouraged the Board that it might be time to start reaching out to domestic well owners. Chairman Grandi stated that in the past the District's focus has been on large capacity wells, but that it seems the state is now pushing for domestic well involvement. Spangler agreed that the state's direction seems to indicate a need for compiling a list of domestic well users and that it would benefit the District to have that information to provide a full accounting of groundwater users within the basin. She recommended including projects like this in the DWR round two implementation grant application.

Let the minutes note Director Wallace joined the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Talbot stated that it is time for the District to begin preparing for the round two implementation grant as it will open for applications in October. The draft application and proposals need to be prepared to be ready for that submission timeline. This will be a competitive grant because critically overdraft basins can also submit for this round. Funding can cover administrative tasks like the GSP Annual Report, the GSP Five-Year Update, data collection for GDE and monument surveys, and grant administration. The grant can also cover Projects and Management Actions like the ag irrigation efficiency study, recharge assessment, a basin-wide well inventory, and model updates. Grandi would like the priorities of this grant to include items that will most help groundwater conservation and recharge. Director Goicoechea recommended the focus be on accomplishing the top five priorities of the Board. Director Ramelli agreed that the District is currently going in too many directions and that the main focus should be on replenishing groundwater levels through pumping reductions and/or recharge. A Board subcommittee was formed with Chairman Grandi, Director Wallace and Director Roen to begin prioritizing PMAs for the grant application.

4) DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

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

1. Lafoon Replacement Well for DMS 65

The Lafoons have submitted an application for a new replacement ag well. Their old well has collapsed and they are unable to get the old pump out to determine its pumping capacity. Director Roberti has been discussing that with the well driller and has come up with a solution. The owners shared that the old well pumped around 600 gallons per minute (confirmed by the SVGMD meter technician). When the well is drilled they will test pump it to match the ~600 gpm to know what size pump will be needed. The old well can either be converted into a stock well (with an approved variance request to the Board) or it must be destroyed.

Director Roberti made a motion to authorize the new replacement ag well with the contingency that the old well be destroyed according to state requirements or the owners apply to the SVGMD Board for a stock well variance, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

B. McGinley & Associates GSP Update – Dwight Smith

1. LEPA Demonstration Program

Dwight Smith, hydrogeologist with McGinley & Associates, received a bid from a vendor for LEPA equipment that came to about fifteen thousand dollars. That amount is over the limit in the District's purchasing policy, so an RFP must be developed and the project will need to go out for bids. To help curb these delays, the board clerk suggested discussing amending the purchasing policy amounts with County Counsel in relation to current issues like inflation, supply chain disruptions, and worker shortages. Smith is still waiting for the correct antenna to be sent for soil moisture readings.

2. Subsidence Network – Land Surface Elevation Survey Monument Right of Entry and Land Use Agreement

Tracey Ferguson, Plumas County Planning Director, presented the templates for both land use agreements, which have been approved as to form by Sierra County Counsel.

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the land surface elevation survey monument right of entry and land use agreement, Director Roberti 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

3. GDE Monitoring Well Site Right of Entry and Land Use Agreement

Smith is working on collecting signatures from property owners for subsidence and GDE land use. He will also be working on well permits with Plumas County for installing the drive-point piezometers.

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the GDE monitoring well site right of entry and land use agreement, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

C. Ordinance 22-01 – Enacting a Management Charge for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve Ordinance 22-01, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

D. Resolution 22-04 – District Fee Reduction in Recognition of Fiscal Emergency

Director Ramelli made a motion to approve Resolution 22-04, Director Goicoechea 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

E. Resolution 22-05 – Setting a Date for a Public Hearing to Consider the Imposition of a Large Capacity Well Management Charge for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve Resolution 22-05, Director Roberti 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

F. Resolution 22-06 – Requesting Collection of Charges on Tax Roll

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve Resolution 22-06, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

5) CORRESPONDENCE LOG

6) 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 6/20/22

B. Accept finance report/cash balance for July

C. Approve payment of bills

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

7) ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Grandi adjourned the meeting at 8:16 PM

Jenny Gant, Board Clerk