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Meeting Summary

Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Sustainability Planning (GSP) Advisory Committee Meeting October 25, 2017, 4:00-6:15 pm

This meeting was the first convening of the Groundwater Sustainability Planning (GSP) Advisory Committee. It took place on October 25, 2017 at the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County.¹ The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Receive an overview of the GSP project and anticipated process.
- Conduct introductions and initial interest sharing among Advisory Committee members.
- Review and discuss draft GSP Advisory Committee Charter.
Discuss scheduling of future GSP Advisory Committee meetings.

Committee members in attendance included:

1. Kate Anderton, Environmental Representative
2. John Bargetto, Agricultural Representative
3. David Baskin, City of Santa Cruz
4. Chris Coburn, Institutional Representative
5. Bruce Jaffe, Soquel Creek Water District
6. Dana Katofsky McCarthy, Water Utility Rate Payer
7. Jon Kennedy, Private Well Representative
8. Jonathan Lear, At-Large Representative
9. Douglas P. Ley, Business Representative
10. Marco Romanini, Central Water District
11. Charlie Rous, At-Large Representative
12. Ned Spencer, At-Large Representative
13. Allyson Violante, County of Santa Cruz (replacing John Leopold)

Rich Casale (Small Water System representative) was unable to attend.

This document summarizes presentations to the Advisory Committee, Advisory Committee interest sharing, and discussion of the draft Advisory Committee Charter. It also captures clarifying questions from Advisory Committee members and Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA) staff

¹ The Advisory Committee future meeting schedule is still to be determined.



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responses, as well as an overview of public comment. It is not intended to serve as a detailed transcript of the meeting.

This document is organized into the following main sections, based on the meeting agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Project Overview
3. Introductions and Initial Interest Sharing
4. Review, Discuss and Revise Draft Advisory Committee Charter
5. Public Comment
6. Discuss Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule (2018-2019)
7. Closing and Next Steps

1. Introduction

Rosemary Menard, City of Santa Cruz, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Ms. Menard introduced members of the MGA Executive Team and staff, the MGA consultant support team, and addressed members of the public in attendance.

Eric Poncelet, Facilitator, reviewed the agenda, meeting objectives, GSP process, and proposed meeting guidelines.

2. Project Overview

John Ricker, County of Santa Cruz, provided the Advisory Committee members with a Groundwater Sustainability Planning (GSP) process overview, discussing the context for the GSP, the Committee's charge, and next steps in the process.

A Committee member asked Mr. Ricker whether the GSP requires California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance. Mr. Ricker explained that the Plan itself is exempt from CEQA, so it will not require such compliance.

3. Introductions and Initial Interest Sharing

Each Committee member had the opportunity to introduce him or herself to the group and briefly share the following:

- Interests and perspectives represented in Advisory Committee meetings (e.g., private well-owner, public, ratepayer, water purveyor, general public, etc.)
- Key areas of technical knowledge and experience each member brings to the GSP process.

A written version of each Committee member's sharing will be posted on the MGA website. Below is a summary of what each Committee member shared at the meeting (in speaking order):



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Charlie Rous, representing the public at-large shared that he has a background in hydrology, geology and civil engineering. He indicated that his studies and work as a scientist and engineer made him aware of the “appalling” level of contamination in the public water system and led him to prioritize working to protect it as a resource. Mr. Rous believes that “water is a more valuable resource than oil.” Additionally, Mr. Rous shared that he served two years on a grand jury, which gives him experience in collaborative solutions.

Marco Romanini, representing the Central Water District shared that he brings the experience of an engineer and the perspective of a community organizer to the Advisory Committee, and as such he has no technical knowledge about the issue of groundwater.

Jonathan Lear, representing the public at-large and the Santa Cruz municipal ratepayer shared that he graduated from the University of California, Santa Cruz in 1995 and built his career as a hydrologist in sea water intrusion. Mr. Lear indicated that he worked for nine years at the Monterey water resources group and is a member of the Monterey geological society.

Ned Spencer, representing the public at-large shared that he studied Physics at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Mr. Spencer shared that he was involved in the Higgs Boson grounding and shielding design discovery. Largely, Mr. Spencer explained that he is passionate about preserving the basin for wildlife.

Jon Kennedy, representing private well owners shared that he has a background in psychotherapy and statistical analysis, and has worked with regulatory agencies to manage water systems for a long time. Mr. Kennedy has lived in the Soquel hills since 1981 and has seen how water has become increasingly important to the Basin.

John Bargetto, representing agriculture shared that he also sees himself representing private well owners and ratepayers in Seascope. From his studies at the University of California, Davis, he’s developed an understanding of the public process. Mr. Bargetto has run for elected office and is hoping to work on possible solutions to the Basin’s water issues.



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David Baskin, representing the Santa Cruz water district shared that he serves on the Water Advisory of Santa Cruz (WASC). Mr. Baskin has a background in climate change and habitat conservation and is a member of the Water Commission of Santa Cruz.

Bruce Jaffe, representing the Soquel Creek Water District (in his capacity as Director) shared that he's lived in Mid-County for 35 years and is passionate about water as a resource. Mr. Jaffe's background is as a research scientist in the fields of oceanography and geology. Mr. Jaffe is excited to be a part of a community working collaboratively on preserving water as a resource with sustainability as a priority.

Dana McCarthy, representing the ratepayer shared that she's lived in Santa Cruz County for over 25 years. She studied at the University of California, Santa Cruz and has worked in environmental consulting. Ms. McCarthy is looking forward to using her expertise as an Advisory Committee member.

Allyson Violante, representing the County of Santa Cruz shared that she has background in water policy and is also currently a County alternate on the MGA.

Douglas Ley, representing business shared that he sees himself representing the interests of the general public or ratepayer, but not the private well owner. Although Mr. Ley does not have technical knowledge in water issues, he does have experience analyzing complex policy issues.

Chris Coburn, representing the institutional users shared that he is the executive director of the Resource Conservation District, working with land owners and agriculture to restore resources for the County. Mr. Coburn has a background in environmental science, water management and hydrology.

Kate Anderton, representing the environmentalists shared that she is retired attorney with Save the Redwoods and brings to the Committee a lawyers perspective in protecting resources. Ms. Anderton has additional background in land conservation, having worked on the Watsonville Slough land trust. Further, she has worked on researching the impacts of the University's water usage on the community. Ms. Anderton is interested in moving forward with this GSP effort based on facts and not assumptions.



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Rich Caselle, who was not present was introduced by John Ricker. Mr. Caselle represents the small water system in the Valencia area. He currently works with the Natural Conservation Service, providing assistance to private property owners.

4. Review, Discuss and Revise Draft Advisory Committee Charter

Eric Poncelet, facilitator, led the Committee members and staff in a section-by-section review and discussion of the draft Advisory Committee Charter. Comments and edits on the draft Charter from the Committee members, were captured live on screen during the meeting. Key comments are highlighted below:

- Additional Objectives and Responsibilities. Committee members requested that staff expound on the definitions of “interests” and “positions” under the Interest-based discussions section. The Committee members also discussed the level of engagement with their constituents and expressed the view that different members may take different approaches in coordinating with their constituents. Committee members and staff discussed how staff can support in the constituent engagement effort.
- Committee Member Additions and Withdrawal. Committee members requested additional clarifying language in the Charter regarding the process to address a member who consistently deviates from operating protocols and ground rules. Staff indicated that they will provided more clarity in this area.
- Advisory Committee Meetings. Committee members inquired to what extent they can be involved in the agenda setting process. Staff responded that it would be appropriate for the Advisory Committee to periodically assess its work and progress and share agenda setting advice. Staff will insert text to this effect.
- Ad Hoc Working Groups. Committee members spoke to the benefits of keeping working groups small and having a clear process for bringing in outside expertise into the working group process. Staff suggested that a reference be added to this section that Committee members will keep staff and the facilitator apprised of details of working group formation.
- Decision Making Process. Committee members asked for clarity on whether Advisory Committee meetings will operate under any formal rules of order (e.g., Robert’s Rules of Order). They also recommended that a clearer threshold be established for what constitutes a “recommendation” to the MGA Board on behalf of the Advisory Committee.
- Involvement of Public. Committee members requested that this section be more specific in describing protocols during public comment, including protocols for responding to public comments.
- Technical Team – HydroMetrics. Committee members expressed that they would expect technical staff to provide technical advice but not to advocate for any particular solution. Staff will work on language to clarify conflicts of interest protocols for technical staff.



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- Meeting Summaries. The Committee discussed meeting summaries and minutes compliance with the Brown Act. Staff and the facilitator will include language in the Charter to explain meeting summaries compliance in further detail.

5. Public Comment

Members of the public who attended the Advisory Committee meeting and Committee members provided comments on the following topics:

- It is important for Committee members to communicate and coordinate with the constituents they represent throughout the GSP process.
- How can interest groups express concerns to the Advisory Committee member? Do they need to coordinate such communications through staff?
- The Charter should clarify whether Committee members should conduct constituent engagement through social media. This may be at odds with the Brown Act.

Staff members noted that they would be available to support coordination between Advisory Committee members and constituent groups.

6. Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule (2018-2019)

Darcy Pruitt, Regional Water Management Foundation, led the discussion with Committee members on preferable days and times to schedule future Advisory Committee meetings for 2018 through July 2019. Committee members expressed broad support for either the third and fourth Wednesday of each month, after 4 p.m. Staff will consider this input to develop the schedule, also taking into consideration travel time/distance/convenience in choosing a venue. Ms. Pruitt will report back on the schedule's progress at the November 13 Advisory Committee meeting.

7. Closing and Next Steps

In closing, Mr. Poncelet reviewed the GSP process and the upcoming schedule of orientation sessions in 2017 (this information was distributed to participants in form of a handout). Ms. Menard closed the meeting by thanking the attendees for their participation.