



SANTA CRUZ MID-COUNTY GROUNDWATER AGENCY
Final Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2016

1. Call To Order

Dr. Jaffe called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present: B. Jaffe, R. Marani, C. Abramson, J. Benich, Z. Friend, J. Kennedy, J. Kerr, T. LaHue, R. Menard (for C. Mathews), J. Ricker (for J. Leopold)

Staff Present: L. Strohm, R. Bracamonte, T. Carson, R. Duncan, J. Townsend, S. Ryan, M. Schumacher

Others Present: Robert Schultz (Trout Gulch Mutual Water), Amanda Peisch-Derby (California Department of Water Resources)

Board Members Absent: C. Mathews, D. Lane, J. Leopold

There were approximately 15 members of the public in attendance.

Presentations

“Item 5.3: Biennial Report Scope of Work”
by Cameron Tana, HydroMetrics WRI

“Item 6.1: Model Simulations and Climate Change Scenario”
by Cameron Tana, HydroMetrics WRI

“Item 6.2: Model Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Notes”
by Cameron Tana, HydroMetrics WRI

“Item 6.3: Pure Water Soquel”
by Melanie Mow Schumacher, Soquel Creek Water District

3. Oral Communications Related to Items Not on the Agenda

Marilyn Garrett, an Aptos resident and retired school teacher shared her concerns that wireless technology is causing adverse health effects. She stated that voluntary and continuous radiation damages community health and violates privacy rights. Ms. Garrett expressed her opposition to wireless meters and wireless technology upgrades. She shared several

handouts (Exhibit A) and urged agency representatives present to remove the harm associated with wireless technologies.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4.1 Accept Minutes from September 15, 2016 MGA Meeting

The group suggested the edits listed below:

- On p.4 change to “anadromous salmonid streams.”
- On p. 5 change to “...was submitted to DWR and is anticipated to be accepted on September 21, 2016.”
- On p. 6 change to “Mr. Ricker replied that the group will be interacting with...”

The new California Department of Water Resources Regional Coordinator, Amanda Peisch-Derby acknowledged that she had a few corrections for the September minutes. The Chair asked her to submit her clarifications in writing to be added to the final record.

MOTION: Mr. LaHue; Second: Mr. Marani. To approve the minutes of September 15, 2016 with edits as written above. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Administrative Items

5.1 Appointment of Alternate Private Well Owner Representative

Mr. Ricker reviewed the process, and reported that the Executive Team recommends that the board appoint Robert Schultz from the Trout Gulch Water System as the alternate. He added that the four representatives should draw straws to determine who has four year and two year terms.

Becky Steinbruner urged the board to change the bylaws to allow private well owners to select their own representatives. She added that she welcomes the appointment of Mr. Schultz.

Mr. Ricker responded briefly by referencing the staff report on this item. He is open to discussing the matter further, but is not aware of a current formal mechanism for that sort of election. Mr. LaHue commented that the group is open to hearing other ideas, but for now advertising well and allowing everyone to apply is the best solution.

The PWO Representatives then drew straws with the following outcome:

- Mr. Kennedy & Mr. Abramson – four year terms; and
- Mr. Kerr & Mr. Schultz – two year terms.

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy; Second: Mr. LaHue. To appoint Robert Schultz as the Alternate Private Well Owner Representative. Motion passed unanimously.
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5.2 Proposal to Create a Temporary Board Working Group to

Work With Staff to Develop a Detailed Plan for Preparing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Ms. Menard shared the intention to create a working group to create a plan for the plan, identify the resources required, and figure out the membership and charter for the group. She invited board members to work with staff in the working group. The plan is to bring information to the board in January on the resource requirements, and in March on the budget and planning process. In the spring the working group will bring recommendations to the board on the membership and charter for the subcommittee. The working group will be temporary and made up of a minority of board members, and therefore not beholden to the Brown Act. It will include representation from each agency as well as Private Well Owner Representatives.

Volunteers: Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Benich, Mr. Ricker, Dr. Jaffe, Ms. Menard. Others may participate (e.g., Executive Team Members and a representative from the City of Santa Cruz.)

MOTION: Mr. LaHue; Second: Mr. Marani. To appoint a temporary board working group as defined in the bylaws to develop a detailed plan for preparing the GSP. Motion passed unanimously.

5.3 Approve HydroMetrics WRI Scope of Work and Budget for Biennial Report

Mr. Duncan reviewed the motions listed below. Mr. Tana from HydroMetrics WRI provided a presentation (see Appendix A for slides).

Why doesn't the report include recommendations?

- Mr. Tana replied that he is open to the possibility if it would be useful for discussion and the board's process. The suggestion was made to call those recommendations "Items for Consideration."

Has the work of HydroMetrics WRI been put out to bid? Are there any conflicts of interest with the former general manager from Soquel Creek Water District serving as a consultant for HydroMetrics WRI?

- Mr. LaHue responded that he is in favor of putting things out to bid, although in this case it would have slowed down the process. Mr. Duncan added that every 3-5 years the HydroMetrics WRI contract goes out to bid through the Soquel Creek Water District. Mr. Tana responded that Laura Brown consults for HydroMetrics WRI on other contracts and not the MGA. Mr. Duncan replied that there would be nothing incorrect about her consulting on this project.

MOTION: Mr. LaHue; Second: Ms. Menard. To waive the MGA's standard purchasing policy requirements. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. LaHue; Second: Ms. Menard. To approve the Scope of Work as presented by HydroMetrics WRI and authorize staff representatives to sign a purchase order in the amount not to exceed \$49,640. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Information Items

6.1 HydroMetrics WRI Update on Climate Change Approach & Scenarios

Mr. Tana provided a presentation and noted that the model will be used to evaluate groundwater alternatives and strategies to help with sustainability planning. Assumptions about specific numbers and locations will be based on preliminary feasibility evaluations that are already available. The overall focus is on basin-wide sustainability. The first main question will be to look at saltwater intrusion and model what happens to the seawater interface with various management strategies.

The group discussed the baseline assumptions and the need to be able to compare the possibilities objectively across various metrics and scales. Ms. Menard mentioned that the Water Supply Advisory Committee looked at how to make options more comparable (e.g., average cost per acre foot of yield).

What is the limit on the number of simulations that can be run?

- Once the model is built it will belong to the MGA and anyone who is trained and qualified can use it for future analysis. The goal is to evaluate the main strategies under consideration and provide an early guide to evaluate future planning options.

Bruce Daniels spoke about the need to calibrate the model and identify sensitivities that will need to be adjusted which will happen naturally in the process of building the model. It will be worth exploring external sensitivities as well.

Marilyn Garrett commented that she attended the Soquel Creek Water District board meeting last Tuesday, and found “Pure Water” to be a misleading term for treated water. She expressed her concerns regarding the potentially toxic nature of treated water that would be injected into the groundwater. Ms. Garrett urged the group to look at the main causes of groundwater depletion (e.g., industrial agriculture), and expressed her desire to see an ecological approach.

Is Aquifer Storage and Recharge possible in the Purisima formation?

- It is possible to store recharge in the Purisima and recover it later within limits. Aquifer Storage and Recharge (ASR) will be evaluated in the model. The City of Santa Cruz is looking into ASR as a potential strategy and will be testing injection wells in 2018.

Will the models include recharge from septic systems? How do natural percolation strategies fit into the process?

- Recharge from septic systems will be included in the model. If there is a viable percolation plan, there is no reason not to include it in future runs of the model. Soquel Creek Water District, Dr. Fisher and others are looking at natural percolation methods.

Mr. Tana continued to present on future climate scenarios and provided background on the temperature calculations included. Mr. Jaffe acknowledged the value of this effort, and the input of top notch scientists at the USGS as well as the Technical Advisory Committee. Mr. Daniels acknowledged that the model assumes the worst which will make it harder to get a solution, but if the estimates are wrong the solution should still work. The group discussed the possibility of including a factor of risk or uncertainty into the model.

6.2 Receive Notes from Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 for Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency Groundwater Model

Mr. Tana reviewed the advice received and subsequent adjustments to the notes from the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting in August. There were two main technical notes: 1) regarding concerns about the offshore extent of the model which can be extended if so desired; and 2) related to how rainfall is being distributed throughout the basin.

6.3 Update on Soquel Creek Water District's Pure Water Soquel Project

Melanie Mow Schumacher presented on the Soquel Creek Water District's (SqCWD) Pure Water Soquel project and provided a handout (Exhibit B). The SqCWD Board of Directors is currently exploring desalination, river water transfers and water purification for groundwater replenishment as water supply options. For the Pure Water Soquel Project, the water that would be used for groundwater recharge would go through more steps than typical conventional treatment (e.g., microfiltration, reverse osmosis, ultraviolet treatment, and advanced oxidation). Ms. Schumacher reviewed the historical context and referenced similar projects in California. She recommended that individuals visit similar facilities in the area to learn more about the purification process (e.g., Pure Water Monterey Pilot or Silicon Valley Water Purification Center). Mr. Friend left the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Ms. Schumacher concluded by noting that the District applied

for a grant under Proposition 1 for pilot testing. She encouraged individuals to submit their comments and concerns as part of the CEQA process. A draft Environmental Impact Report is scheduled to be released in summer of 2017.

Ms. Steinbruner submitted a petition to the Chair (Exhibit C) requesting that residents of Santa Cruz County be allowed to vote by ballot on injecting treated water into the local groundwater supply. She acknowledged that submitting the petition as part of this meeting does not ensure that it will be included as part of the District's scoping process which is a separate mechanism.

6.4 Receive Department of Water Resources Best Management Practices and Guidance Documents

Mr. Duncan reported that the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) recently released their Best Management Practices (BMPs). Amanda Peisch-Derby asked to say a few words as the new Regional Coordinator for DWR. While the BMPs can be used to meet SGMA compliance and GSP regulatory requirements, they are optional and not prescriptive. The BMPs also address GSP regulations in Section 352.2 (Monitoring Protocols) and Section 352.4 (Data and Reporting Standards) that are required, but there is still flexibility for GSAs to develop their own BMPs. DWR is currently requesting comments by November 28th which can be submitted by email, mail, or through the website. She offered to provide additional information and added that the guidance documents are still in development and open for input.

6.5 Treasurer's Report

Ms. Strohm provided a brief update and reviewed the numbers in the Treasurer's Report for September and October. She added that transactions have been minimal and welcomed any questions.

7. Oral Reports

7.1 Outreach Reports

Ms. Ryan shared the latest outreach efforts and website analytics. Approximately 44% of visitors are new users that tend to see three pages per session. The monthly e-blast is now going out to 750 users. The monthly drop-in hours have had low attendance, but the group is hoping that will increase over time. Mr. Kerr acknowledged the value in providing the opportunity for members of the public to ask questions in an informal setting. The county will host an informal meeting of agricultural and commercial PWOs in late January focusing on how they can engage in the process. The Resources Conservation District and county are starting to offer well sounding and water use assessments to PWOs within the basin.

7.2 Status Update on Hiring of Senior Water Resource Planner

Mr. Carson reported that the position reopened in August, and the hiring team conducted two rounds of interviews. The interview panel consisted of the Executive Team, Mr. Carson, and Susan Farrar (CFO and Administration Director at the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County). The hiring team is in the midst of negotiations, and hopes to have the new hire on board by early 2017.

7.3 Board Member Reports

Ms. Menard encouraged board members and PWO Representatives to attend the ethics training at Capitola City Hall on January 17th.

7.4 Staff Reports

There were no staff reports provided.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m. The next meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 19th at the Simpkins Family Swim Center unless otherwise posted on the MGA website.

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Julia Townsend
Program Associate
Regional Water Management Foundation

Cynthia Mathews
Board Secretary
City of Santa Cruz