



SANTA CRUZ MID-COUNTY GROUNDWATER AGENCY
Board Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2017

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chair Marani.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present: C. Abramson, D. Baskin, J. Benich, Z. Friend, B. Jaffe, J. Kennedy, J. Kerr, T. LaHue, J. Leopold, R. Marani, C. Mathews (arrived late)

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

Others Present: Robert Schultz, Marco Romanini, Kate Anderton, Dana Katofsky McCarthy. There were approximately eight members of the public in attendance and five water agency staff/representatives including: Piret Harmon (Scotts Valley Water District), Brian Lockwood (Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency), Carla Christensen (Soquel Creek Water District Board), Amanda Peisch-Derby (California Department of Water Resources), and Russ McGlothlin (speaker).

3. Public Comments

Chair Marani reviewed the guidance for public comment to begin.

Brian Lockwood (Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency), provided an update on the proposed College Lake Integrated Resources Management Project Environmental Impact Review process. They will be hosting a CEQA scoping meeting on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm. He welcomed participation in the process either in person or in writing.

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Approve Minutes from September 21, 2017 Board Meeting

Dr. LaHue gave a couple of minor typos to staff to correct.

4.2 Approve Meeting Dates for 2018

No comments.

4.3 Approve Appointment of Allyson Violante as County Representative to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee

No comments.

MOTION: Dr. LaHue; Second: Mr. Leopold. To move items 4.1 to 4.3 on the consent agenda. Motion carries. Abstention: Ms. Mathews.

4.4 Designate a Joint Powers Insurance Authority Director Representative and Alternate Representative to Complete Insurance Coverage Process

The Board pulled Item 4.4 from the consent agenda to discuss. Responsibilities were discussed. At a minimum representatives would need to file a Form 700, and have the option of attending JPIA/ACWA conferences although not mandatory. Mr. Marani volunteered to be the Director Representative, and Dr. LaHue volunteered to be the Alternate.

MOTION: Mr. Baskin; Second: Mr. Friend. To designate Mr. Marani as the Joint Powers Insurance Authority Director Representative, and Dr. LaHue as the Alternate Representative. Motion carries. Abstention: Ms. Mathews.

5. Presentation

5.1 Presentation by Russ McGlothlin Regarding the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Statutory Framework, Governance & Tools

Mr. McGlothlin provided an overview of what a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) needs to accomplish. Ms. Mathews arrived at 7:13 p.m. The group discussed when and how projects could be challenged. Projects to implement a GSP are not exempt from CEQA, although there are still questions related to limiting extractions. The GSA cannot determine water rights, and SGMA is independent from water rights.

How can the GSA know how much water is being used and identify de minimis users without meters?

Look at type of use that is occurring. GSA will have deferential standard if there is court review. No further questions from the board.

Public Comment: Becky Steinbruner requested discussion on the GSA and water rights, the difference between junior and senior water rights related to groundwater, and issues related to recharge and water rights.

Mr. McGlothlin offered a brief history of the dual system of water rights in California. Although the riparian system has first priority and appropriators have second priority, it is complex. He added that the GSA should aim to set allocations consistent with how water rights are currently written. GSAs can be subject to adjudication, and will define where people can pull water out, water treatment, conveyance, and exemptions.

Carla Christensen (Soquel Creek Water District), asked for more information on how GSAs should interact with planning agencies and water districts? The law says that GSAs should work with land use agencies and districts.

Marco Romanini (Central Water District), asked whether GSAs have power over who can drill wells? Yes, GSAs can say where wells can go. However, permitting well safety resides with the counties.

Brian Lockwood (Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency), asked if the GSA decides to limit extraction allocation and the landowner sues, is it off to the courts? The courts will look to the GSA and try to work with existing structure.

Question from member of the public - Isn't the GSA the largest pumper? The idea is for people to express concerns and negotiate empathetically. Playing fair is better than adjudication. The GSA will need to have data for the basin as a whole to define thresholds and objectives. There is no mandate to control extractions, the other route is to select projects so that people can take what they need and not limit what people take.

Carla Christensen asked whether any GSAs are close to having a plan? None have plans yet. Some GSAs are currently discussing allocations, and looking at the bottom line in critically overdrafted basins.

6. Informational Updates

6.1 Treasurer's Report

Ms. Strohm reported that the status quo is being upheld, and that she had no significant updates. The auditors were out in October. She expects to bring a finished report to the next board meeting.

6.2 Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin Semi-Annual Groundwater Monitoring Report through Water Year 2017

Mr. Duncan summarized the report prepared by Cameron Tana of HydroMetrics WRI. Water levels have been rebounding, although the basin is still in overdraft. Recovery has been primarily due to decreased pumping.

6.3 Outreach Reports (Oral Report)

Ms. Ryan reported that staff have held three orientation sessions in conjunction with Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Advisory Committee. There will be a fourth orientation session on Thursday, December 7th from 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Simpkins Family Swim Center on Groundwater Modeling. Materials from the meetings and orientation sessions are being posted to the website as they become available. Ms. Ryan plans to

bring the outreach plan back to board in January with comments incorporated.

Public Comment: Becky Steinbruner noted she likes the drop-in hours, but would like the public to receive priority in their ability to ask questions.

6.4 Board Member Reports (Oral Reports)

Chair Marani attended a groundwater conference at UC Davis, and reported that he appreciated learning about the recharge work that has been done. He recommended “Watersheds, Groundwater, and Drinking Water: A Practical Guide,” by Thomas Harter and Larry Rollins (2008). He suggested inviting professors to work with the Advisory Group and meet with board members.

Mr. Baskin reporting that the GSP Advisory Committee has met twice and now has a charter.

6.5 Staff Reports (Oral Reports)

Mr. Duncan introduced Amanda Peisch-Derby from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). She is the South Central Region Office regional coordinator and Point of Contact for SGMA related items for this GSA, and is available to answer questions. She reminded the group that they can request a GSP meeting with DWR at any time before the GSP has been finalized. She also offered to help connect the MGA to financial and technical support services offered by DWR. There will be several statewide workshops in December on draft Sustainable Management Criteria Best Management Practices. The draft is available online and comments are due January 8th by 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Bracamonte reported that the County and Central Water District have designated new board alternates (e.g., Allyson Violante and Marco Romanini). Senate Bill 623 has been tabled for now. He provided an update on AB 133, sharing that the state water board has received 60 applications for water permits. To date in 2017 there have been 17 Assembly Bills and 9 Senate Bills passed related to water.

Mr. Carson reported that the grant application was submitted to the state’s Sustainable Groundwater Planning (SGWP) Grant Program requesting \$1.5 million to partially funding the GSP. The grant awards are anticipated to be announced in 2017 pending DWR’s schedule.

As a general reminder, these meetings are being recorded and will be posted online as soon as they become available.

Ms. Pruitt announced that Chris Coburn has withdrawn from the GSP Advisory Committee as the Institutional Representative for health reasons. The board will decide how to proceed. Chair Marani suggested that the

Nominating Committee reconvene to fill his position. Mr. Leopold noted that this was a hard spot to fill. Mr. Kennedy suggested that the group is already a good size if an appropriate person cannot be found. Mr. Kerr noted that institutional users are theoretically the largest users in the basin, and that it would be nice to find someone to fill that spot.

7. Future Agenda Items

- Update on the GSP Advisory Committee members re: Chris Coburn's replacement
- Request from Chair Marani that the Outreach Committee present ideas for engaging young people,
- Request from Mr. Baskin that the Outreach Committee develop materials that Advisory Committee members can use while interfacing with the communities they represent.
- Updated Outreach Plan
- 2016/17 Financial Statements Annual Audit Report
- GPS Planning Grant Application Funding Update

8. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:29 pm

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Tim Carson
Regional Water Management Foundation

Cynthia Mathews
Board Secretary
City of Santa Cruz