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## SANTA CRUZ MID-COUNTY GROUNDWATER AGENCY (MGA)

### Board of Directors Remote-Access Special Meeting Thursday, August 18, 2022

#### MINUTES

#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair LaHue.

#### 2. Roll Call

Directors present: Curt Abramson, David Baskin, Jim Kerr, Tom LaHue, and Marco Romanini. Alternate Directors present: John Benich, Doug Engfer, and Allyson Violante.

Directors absent: Zach Friend, Bruce Jaffe, Manu Koenig, Donna Meyers, and Rob Marani.

Staff present: Ron Duncan, Rosemary Menard, Sierra Ryan, Tim Carson, and Laura Partch.

Others present: Amanda Peisch-Derby (DWR representative) and a member of the public.

#### 3. Oral Communications Related to Items Not on the Agenda

*Issues within the purview of the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA). Guidelines attached.*

None.

#### 4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Approve Minutes of August 18, 2022 Special Board Meeting (no memo)

MOTION: Director Baskin; Second, Director Romanini. To approve the consent agenda. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote; Alternate Directors Benich and Engfer abstained.

## 5. General Business

### 5.1 Consider Board Resolution No. 22-03 to Authorize Remote Meeting

MOTION: Director Romanini; Second, Director Kerr. To adopt Resolution 22-03 authorizing the next Board meeting to be held virtually in accordance with Government Code § 54953(e). Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

### 5.2 Approve MGA Response to Santa Cruz Civil Grand Jury Report

Staff introduced the MGA response which incorporated comments from the MGA Board at its June meeting and was drafted in collaboration with the City of Santa Cruz, the Soquel Creek Water District, and the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency. While agreeing with overall Grand Jury conclusions of a need for water supply projects in the Santa Cruz County Basin (Basin) and that conservation alone is not a solution, the MGA response took issue with several of the Grand Jury recommendations and findings. The response includes two sections, one required by the Board, and a second optional response by the Basin Point of Contact, which addressed three findings not included in the Board response. The Board motion included the optional response of the Basin Point of Contact.

MOTION: Director Baskin; Second, Director Engfer. To approve and authorize the staff to submit the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency response to the Santa Cruz Civil Grand Jury Report: *Our water Account is Overdrawn – Beyond Conservation: Achieving Drought Resilience*, on or before August 22, 2022.

### 5.3 Provide Guidance for Process to Respond to Well Permit Applications Under Governor’s Executive Order N-7-22

Staff reported that Executive Order N-7-22 was issued in response to expanding drought conditions and under Paragraph 9, requires that before the County of Santa Cruz (County) can approve a well permit application, the appropriate Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) must determine if the proposed well would be consistent or inconsistent with the Groundwater Sustainability Plan. The Order does not apply to wells that use less than 2-acre feet per year, or to wells that provide a public water supply. Pending legislation may make permanent a similar approach to GSA review of well permit applications.

The County has identified its process for implementing the requirements of Executive Order N-7-22. As the MGA develops its process, staff sought input from the Board for a proposed policy to come to the Board in September.

Board members raised issues including cost recovery, the status of state small water systems, analysis required by the MGA and the possible use of consultants, criteria for approvals handled at the staff level, consistency among the Santa Cruz County GSAs, the impact of MGA Board quarterly meetings, and concerns raised by possibility of appeals.

Staff plans to consult with other GSAs and come back with a tentative policy in September.

No Board action taken.

**6. Informational Updates**

**6.1 Oral Reports**

Santa Margarita Groundwater will be hosting a public workshop on Managed Aquifer Recharge on September 7<sup>th</sup>. Invitations will be sent to MGA Board members and more information will be available on the MGA website.

Staff announced that an experienced Senior Planner has been hired and will begin working in mid-October.

**7. Future Agenda Items**

**8. Written Communications and Submitted Materials**

**9. Adjournment**

Chair LaHue adjourned the meeting at 6:53 PM.

**Next Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting:** September 15, 2022