

MINUTES

Owens Valley Groundwater Authority

Board Members:

INDIAN CREEK-WESTRIDGE CSD	Luis Elias	BIG PINE CSD	BryAnna Vaughan
COUNTY OF MONO	Fred Stump	LONE PINE PAIUTE SHOSHONE TRIBE	Mel Joseph
CITY OF BISHOP	Chris Costello	OWENS VALLEY COMMITTEE	Mary Roper
COUNTY OF INYO	Dan Totheroh		

November 12, 2020

The Owens Valley Groundwater Authority meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m. via videoconference.

1. Pledge of allegiance

The Chairman led the pledge of allegiance.

Vice Chairperson Vaughan shared the loss of Bob Steele of Big Pine, his years of service to the water projects, and that his passing is a great loss to the community. The Chairperson called for a moment of silence in memory of Bob Steele.

2. Public Comment

The Chairperson opened up public comment and there was no one wishing to address the Board.

3. Introductions

The Board introduced themselves with no alternates in attendance. The Chairperson introduced Rhonda Duggan of Mono County, Supervisor elect, which will be taking his place in January 2021.

4. Approval of minutes from the October 8, 2020 OVGA Board meeting

The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2020 meeting. Motion to approve by Dan Totheroh, seconded by Luis Elias. The Chairperson requested a roll call vote; Luis Elias – Y, Fred Stump – Y, Chris Costello – Y, Dan Totheroh - Y, BryAnna Vaughan – abstain, Mel Joseph - Y, Mary Roper - Y . Motion passed 6 Yes, 1 abstention.

5. Board Member Reports

Chris Costello stated unless elections results change this would be his last OVGA Board meeting representing the City of Bishop and thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve. Dan Totheroh thanked both the Chairperson and Chris Costello for their time on the OVGA Board. The Chairperson stated if anyone was interested in the spike of COVID cases on the marine base to contact him for further information.

6. OVGA staff reports

- a. Financial Report
- b. Report on website development

Aaron Steinwand, Executive Manager provided the financial report due to technical difficulties on Laura Piper's connection and stated the OVGA cash balance is \$468,010.91, with no revenue or expenses since last meeting. Aaron Steinwand stated the first draft of the website is almost complete and next week the website should be live, ovga.us.

Philip Anaya asked if there would be someone monitoring the new website and a new communication link to Aaron Steinwand. Aaron Steinwand stated yes.

7. Presentation from Daniel B. Stephens and Associates on elements of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Tony Morgan provided a brief introduction on the Owens Valley GSP update; stated the GDE and water budget will be reviewed again; and in addition will continue groundwater dependent ecosystem discussion; projected future water budgets; summary of monitoring plan and data gap analysis; the timeline schedule; and the goal is to have administrative draft of the GSP in Feb 2021. Bruce Orr reviewed the GDE background and updates since the last meeting; GDE mapping with new source data and potential GDE extent; and the vegetation mapping. Alyssa Elsworth (CDFW) inquired about VegCAMP data, and that it was still not finalized. Bruce stated there is a more formal process for review yet, but it is usable at this point for GDE data and should be considered final as a formality in the next month or two. Christian Brauderick discussed the GDE assessment, mapping and grouping of vegetation and surface water polygons, the division of preliminary GDE units; and monitoring. Philip Anaya inquired if there is a distinction between surface flow and riparian vegetation along the streams and how do you address that in GDE, and aside from runoff doesn't the natural flow that comes from the mountains make the surface flow like a continuous GDE in a sense. Christian and Bruce provided a detailed explanation. Lynn Boulton asked if there is flexibility if something is not a current GDE but becomes a GDE temporarily through a few wet years or changes in dry years, and how does the model keep up with temporary short term changes. Tony Morgan stated the plants are based on a basin wide evaluation so short interim changes in conditions are not going to be captured in a document that is looking at sustainability in 20 years. He stated the Board has an option during the 5 year updates to revise that classification. Dr. Shey Rajagopal provided a presentation and review of the future water budget for the OVGA; climate models, methods, and water budget schematics. April Zrelak stated SGMA's increase in precipitation is .3 not 3% so how do you get 5% increase in runoff in the BCM model and 10% in the basin; will DWR accept this since their estimates are so much lower; and does the contributing area include the groundwater basin. Dr. Shey Rajagopal and Gus Tolley provided a detailed explanation. April Zrelak stated the water budget will equal zero and under what condition will it become unbalanced. Tony Morgan stated for the GSP purposes the water budget isn't what they are looking at to determine sustainability; it's the lack of undesirable results. Gus Tolley provided a presentation on monitoring plan and data gaps analysis; trend analysis and future conditions, water levels, flow trends, and water quality. The Board and staff discussed these presentations in detail. Sally Manning stated it's important to know how much drought affects depth to water on the fan vs the valley floor, because the valley floor water table doesn't really change year to year and the only thing that makes it change is pumping but the fan is different, it is what's feeding the valley floor. How much pumping on the valley floor is influencing what you think is a drought effect on the fan. She stated now is a good time to look at this data for the GSP and look at what the GSP will be applied to vs DWP and what's excluded from it. She fears this GSP will come out stating DWP is doing a great job at groundwater management and storage; in terms of vegetation groundwater dependent resources on the valley floor she does not agree with that statement. April Zrelak stated in regards to the subsidence on the Owens Lake bed, more than just the costs of LADWP's infrastructure there's a long term decrease in water storage with subsidence so that really isn't just a DWP issue. Gus Tolley stated this isn't really true because typically the substance you're seeing is from the compaction of the clay layers not the aquifers. April Zrelak asked if that was controversial. Gus stated not in the hydrology community, the physics or science doesn't support it. Lynn Boulton asked how are concerns such as Sally's being noted. Gus stated this is where the GDE analysis comes in.

The Chairperson called a break at 3:47 pm and reconvened the meeting at 3:56 pm.

8. Discussion regarding future agenda items and set next OVGA meeting

Future agenda items discussed were consultants presentations; selection of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson; and an update on Indian Wells Valley.

The next meeting was scheduled for December 10, 2020 via videoconference.

11. Adjourn

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 5:02 pm.