

MINUTES

Owens Valley Groundwater Authority

Board Members:

INDIAN CREEK-WESTRIDGE CSD	Luis Elias	BIG PINE CSD	BryAnna Vaughan
COUNTY OF MONO	Rhonda Duggan	LONE PINE PAIUTE SHOSHONE TRIBE	Mel Joseph
CITY OF BISHOP	Karen Kong	OWENS VALLEY COMMITTEE	Mary Roper
COUNTY OF INYO	Dan Totheroh		

April 8, 2021

The Owens Valley Groundwater Authority meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. via videoconference.

1. Pledge of allegiance

The Chairperson led the pledge of allegiance.

2. Public Comment

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

3. Introductions

The Board introduced themselves with no alternates in attendance.

4. Approval of minutes from the March 11, 2021 Board meeting

The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2021 meeting. Motion to approve by Rhonda Duggan, seconded by Dan Totheroh. The Chairperson requested a roll call vote; Luis Elias – Y, Rhonda Duggan – Y, Karen Kong – Y, Dan Totheroh - Y, BryAnna Vaughan – Y, Mel Joseph - Y, Mary Roper - Y . Motion passed 7 Yes.

5. Board Member Reports

Rhonda Duggan stated she took a tour of the Owens Dry Lake with GBSPCD officer Phil Kiddoo which was very informative; and Mono is preparing for fishing season opener with really increased traffic already. BryAnna Vaughan stated the BPCSD put water conservation efforts in approximately four years ago and have kept them and would promote that everyone conserve water.

6. OVGA staff reports

a. Financial Report

Laura Piper, Inyo County Water Department provided the financial report and stated the OVGA cash balance is \$147,174.99; expenses were \$16,699.25 to the consultant, staff costs \$18,767.23, and advertising costs of \$597.52; a grant reimbursement was received that will be reflected on next meetings financial report; and stated the audit was received and there were no findings and would be presented at a future meeting for review.

7. Stakeholder engagement update

Dr. Steinwand stated he reached out to the four tribes in the Owens Valley; the Item #10 arose out of the meeting with Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribe; gave a presentation to the Bishop Tribal Council and was recommended to work with the Owens Valley Indian Water Commission; a meeting is scheduled with the Environmental Director of the Fort Independence Tribe in April; comments of the stakeholder outreach will be provided to the Board in a memo.

8. Consideration of final 2021-2022 OVGA budget

Dr. Steinwand presented the proposed final 2021-2022 OVGA budget. The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the 2021-2022 OVGA budget. Motion to approve by Dan Totheroh, seconded by Mary Roper. The Chairperson requested a roll call vote; Luis Elias –

Y, Rhonda Duggan – Y, Karen Kong – Y, Dan Totheroh - Y, BryAnna Vaughan – Y, Mel Joseph - Y, Mary Roper - Y . Motion passed 7 Yes.

9. Adopt First Amendment to the OVGA Conflict of Interest Code

John Vallejo stated at the February meeting the proposed Conflict of Interest Code was presented; there was a 45 day comment period for public and staff; and is presented today for the Boards approval. The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the Conflict of Interest Code. Motion to approve by Luis Elias, seconded by Karen Kong. The Chairperson requested a roll call vote; Luis Elias – Y, Rhonda Duggan – Y, Karen Kong – Y, Dan Totheroh - Y, BryAnna Vaughan – Y, Mel Joseph - Y, Mary Roper - Y . Motion passed 7 Yes.

10. Discussion of Owens Lake Management Area

Dr. Steinwand stated this item was requested at the last meeting as a follow up from a discussion with the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribal staff and Chairperson; requesting further discussion on jurisdictional and environmental issues. He provided a PowerPoint presentation with review on the items requested; discussed the three management areas; and a review of LADWP's proposed groundwater development project. Mel Joseph stated the issue is LADWP wants to water bank on LADWP property between the Owens Lake bed and the reservation; they are aware the GSP cannot regulate because it's outside of their jurisdiction, they feel the GSP should monitor the water banking for potential contamination of aquifers and environmental degradation on the adjoining lands. Sally Manning stated the presentation made her wonder if State Lands can regulate groundwater independent of the GSP and Inyo County; she stated the tribe submitted comments on LADWP's proposed pumping of this well; and you can't pump a new area and expect no impacts. Nancy Masters stated it's the first time she's heard about the water banking by LADWP in the south county in this area; Dr. Steinwand stated it's in the conceptual stage. The Board and staff discussed this item in detail. Sally Manning stated LADWP's project is to water bank excess water.

11. Direction to staff to submit a project for Tri-Valley groundwater model development to the IRWMP for consideration in the next round of Proposition 1 IRWM funding

Dr. Steinwand stated the IRWMP has a competitive grant program through Prop 1 funding; there is no obligation to have a project added to a list for future consideration; He is requesting approval to put this project on the eligibility list and this would be helpful to the data gaps with the GSP. Wendy Sugimura stated initially Mono County brought this to the TVGMD to see if they had interest in putting this project on the eligibility list of which they were opposed too; and felt they could not take on pursuing a grant. Holly Alpert provided information on the process of the grant; eligibility list; and when the funding is expected. Tony Morgan stated OVGA has the ability to bundle other needs under this grant such as new monitoring wells if necessary as well. Peter Stickells stated Wendy summed up well the Tri Valley Board meeting discussion; the Tri-Valley considers it their authority to apply for this grant and not the OVGA. The Board and staff discussed this item in detail. Alisa Ellsworth wanted to add the perspective that although they respect the legislative authority of the TVGMD they really have admitted they don't have the ability to manage their groundwater resources and the Ca Dept. of Fish & Wildlife believes there is an immediate threat to Fish Slough through groundwater pumping and they would support moving forward with this grant. Carol Ann Mitchell stated the TVGMD is awaiting a decision on their request to have their GSA status reinstated and that uncertainty affected the Tri-Valley Board's decision. Dr. Steinwand stated we are waiting on a information in writing from DWR regarding the matter. The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the submittal of a project for Tri-Valley groundwater model development to the IRWMP for consideration. Motion to approve by Dan Totheroh, seconded by Mary Roper. The Chairperson requested a roll call vote; Luis Elias – Y, Rhonda Duggan – N, Karen Kong – Y, Dan Totheroh - Y, BryAnna Vaughan – Y, Mel Joseph - Y, Mary Roper - Y . Motion passed 6 Yes, 1 No.

12. Discussion regarding future agenda items

Dr. Steinwand stated a member of the State Lands Commission offered to have a future agenda item to explain the jurisdictional issues and address questions on how pumping will be handled; stated there may not be a need to have a meeting until the administrative draft of the GSP is available; and there is no pressing business at this time. Dan Totheroh requested an update on Indian Wells Valley, runoff forecast and snowpack. Edie Trimmer asked if the LADWP pumping plan will impact the areas governed by the OVGA and is that something that needs to be on the agenda. Dr. Steinwand stated there is no formal involvement for the OVGA regarding the pumping plan.

13. Adjourn

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 3:31 pm.