

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		

July 22, 2021

The Owens Valley Groundwater Authority meeting was called to order at 1:08 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 Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribe and Owens Valley Committee absent.

4. Approval of minutes from the April 8, 2021 Board meeting

The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2021 meeting. Motion to approve by Rhonda Duggan, 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 - absent, Dave Wagoner – absent . Motion passed 5 Yes, 2 absent.

5. Board Member Reports

The Chairperson opened up Board Member reports and there were no reports or updates provided.

6. OVGA staff reports

a. Financial Report

Laura Piper, Inyo County Water Department provided the financial report and stated the OVGA cash balance is \$410,278.92; revenues included \$304,804.81 in grant reimbursements from January-June 2021, 3rd quarter 2020/21 interest of \$399.70; expenses were insurance costs of \$2,473, \$5,987.50 to the consultant, and staff costs \$33,640.08.

b. Report on Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority activities

John Vallejo stated IWVGD has filed for a basin wide adjudicatory action to find out who has what water rights in the basin and has included the Navy in the lawsuit; contentious enforcement administrative hearings on two major pumpers, the pistachio growers and Searles Valley Minerals have continued to pump their groundwater without paying the fee; they have both filed a lawsuit challenging the fee. IWVGD authorized staff to initiate a lawsuit to bring the enforcement of shutting their pumping down into the court's jurisdiction. The IWVGD has approved the purchase of some groundwater rights from a user who has water project entitlements in Antelope Valley which they believe is the best path or deal with LADWP for water from the aqueduct. Commissioner Vaughan inquired if there were any conservation efforts in that area.

Dave Wagner joined the meeting at 1:45 pm.

c. Owens Lake update

Dr. Steinwand stated LADWP published a press release that officially postponed the pump test on Owens Lake.

d. AB 754 update

Dr. Steinwand stated RCRC notified him there was an assembly bill moving through the process that would allow DWR the discretion to extend the deadline to submit GSP's by up to six months to allow for additional stakeholder engagement.

On July 8 the bill died in the Senate Committee hearing.

e. **Tri-Valley survey update**

Dr. Steinwand stated a survey was distributed to the Tri-Valley area; approximately 500 were mailed with approximately 30 responses. Michael Draper, Mono County, stated they continue to receive surveys.

7. Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding future management actions to include in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Dr. Steinwand provided an in-depth PowerPoint presentation on proposed management actions and projects that could be included in the GSP, recognizing the basin is ranked low priority. Despite the ranking, there are some concerns in portions of the basin such as declining water levels and data gaps. This will be a roadmap to address those concerns if the GSP is implemented. The Board and staff discussed this at length. Holly Alpert discussed the IRWMP program helping with administration and grant writing. Philip Anaya made a public comment. Emily Fox, Deputy Council Mono County, representing Tri-Valley stated she appreciates seeing the matrix and Tri-Valley looks forward to providing additional comments on the jurisdictional issues. Rick Kattelmann stated the IRWMP is supportive to work with the OVGA to secure funding needs in the future.

8. Correspondence: Department of Water Resources letter and Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District request

Dr. Steinwand reviewed correspondence that Tri-Valley has requested the OVGA modify its GSA boundary to carve out the district so their request to become a GSA could go forward by DWR. The letter from DWR stated the OVGA is the exclusive GSA so it is up to this Board to consider the request and can be placed on the agenda as a future action item. The OVGA's obligation per DWR is to produce a GSP that includes the entire basin which is necessary to fulfill the grant agreement and to comply with SGMA and file a complete submission of a plan. Philip Anaya stated he believes in discussions it was apparent that each basin could have as many GSA's as they wanted with one GSP.

9. Discussion regarding future agenda items

The Board and staff discussed future agenda items; review and approval of the GSP.

10. Adjourn

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 3:20 pm.