

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		

November 18, 2021

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

1. Pledge of allegiance

The OVGA Executive Director led the pledge of allegiance.

2. Public Comment

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

3. Introductions

The Board introduced themselves with one absence, Big Pine CSD, BryAnna Vaughan.

4. Approval of minutes from the September 9, 2021 Board meeting

The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2021 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes 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 – absent, Mel Joseph - Y, Mary Roper – Y. Motion passed 6 Yes, 1 absence.

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 \$363,006.41; expenses were \$2,855.45 for advertising and GSP printing costs; \$6,925.75 in consultant costs; and \$31,601.58 in staff services costs.

7. Discussion of public comments received on the Draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan and possible direction to staff regarding the response to comments

Dr. Steinwand stated the public comment period closed on November 8; 18 comments were received; today's item is for the Board to discuss the comments received; give staff direction regarding the responses; staff will update and complete the final GSP to present to your Board to consider for adoption at the December 9 hearing. He stated there were two projects, GDE monitoring and outreach in Tri-Valley, discussed and mentioned in the draft GSP and requested guidance from the Board on including those items. The Board and staff discussed this item in detail and confirmed they wished to include those two projects. Sally Manning provided a brief overview of LADWP's process of moving water in the Owens Valley; she thinks that significant public comments were received; she believes the Board is rushing to turn this plan into the state by a deadline; the Tribe, Board, and community never got together to talk about what we wanted for this valley in the long run with regard to water; we could of made a better plan for our area; she believes there is a conflict with the Inyo Co. Water Department serving as OVGA staff and also working with LADWP. Edie Trimmer stated she doesn't believe Mary Roper's comment on adjudicated lands can be resolved by more careful language; it is their unhappiness to have 2 legislations enacted at the last minute in a basin that's forever divided when it should be managed together and no amount of being careful with language is going to solve that problem. Samantha stated over history LADWP has put out a lot of false information about the valley;

press releases they put out are very one sided; and I think taking them at their word is not a smart choice; we should hold them accountable to make sure they do what they say they are doing; and if they say they are not exporting water, you should be looking at that and keeping them honest. Dr. Steinwand stated this Board and DWR will need to review this plan in five years as to whether conditions are staying above the minimum thresholds and whether there is progression through the management objectives; the Board has the ability to revise the plan based on conditions; he also provided the process of the revisions to the GSP prior to the December hearing, and if adopted, the submission deadline with DWR.

8. Action item: Request that OVGA adopt finding pursuant to AB 361 that: A) the Board reconsidered the circumstances of the existing State of Emergency issued on March 4, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and B) local officials continue to recommend measures to promote social distancing, and/or the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person

John Vallejo provided background on the above item and the requirements under this statute.

The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the request that OVGA adopt finding pursuant to AB 361 that: A) the Board reconsidered the circumstances of the existing State of Emergency issued on March 4, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and B) local officials continue to recommend measures to promote social distancing, and/or the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person. Motion to approve by Rhonda Duggan, 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 – absent, Mel Joseph – Y, Mary Roper - Y. Motion passed 6 Yes, 1 absent.

9. Discussion regarding future agenda items

Discussion of comments/response to comments of GSP; consideration of adoption of the GSP; elections for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Sally Manning stated if the GSP is sent off to the state in January and they are busy with medium and high priority basins, what we are going to do, are we going to continue to meet. Dr. Steinwand explained the items of business that would need to be taken care of the first few months of 2022 such as Board composition; jurisdictional issues; future projects, review and adoption of a budget; how many future meetings will be held annual, and how to fund the GSP.

10. Adjourn

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 3:12 pm.