

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		

February 10, 2022

The Owens Valley Groundwater Authority meeting was called to order at 1:59 p.m. via videoconference.

1. Pledge of allegiance

Dan Totheroh 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 no alternates in attendance.

4. 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

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 Dan Totheroh, seconded by Mary Roper. The Chairperson requested a roll call vote; Luis Elias – Y, Rhonda Duggan – abstain, Karen Kong – Y, Dan Totheroh - Y, BryAnna Vaughan – Y, Mel Joseph – Y, Mary Roper - Y. Motion passed 6 Yes, 1 abstention.

5. Approval of minutes from the January 27, 2022 Board meeting

The Chairperson requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2022 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes by Rhonda Duggan, seconded by Luis Elias. 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 unanimously.

6. Board Member Reports

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

7. Staff Member Reports

a. Financial Report

Laura Piper, Inyo County Water Department provided the financial report and stated the OVGA cash balance is \$351,775.75; revenues were 1st quarter interest of \$192.25 and a grant reimbursement of \$9,604.95; expenses were \$1,178.00 for advertising, \$6,625.00 in consultant costs; and \$17,724.24 in staff services costs. Dan Totheroh asked about the consultant costs. Dr. Steinwand stated they have approximately \$4,000 left on their contract that expired at the end of January. They will be billing their final fees for December 2021 and January 2022 against that balance.

b. Update on the Final GSP status and submittal

Dr. Steinwand stated the GSP was successfully uploaded to the Ca Dept. of Water Resources on 1/26/22; the GSP has been

posted to the SGMA portal; that starts a 75 day public comment period on the GSP; Ca Dept. of Water Resources will consider the comments and may or may not respond to them; and it can take up to two years to deny or approve the plan.

8. Status of OVGA membership and possible direction to staff regarding adjustment of the OVGA boundary.

Dr. Steinwand stated Mono County's withdrawal from the OVGA will be effective July 1, 2022; after that date the OVGA will no longer have a member of the JPA with land or water supply management authority in Mono County; and the OVGA will not have authority to implement the GSP in that portion of the basin. Stacey Simons stated Mono County will apply for GSA status to include Long Valley and separate from Tri Valley but will provide assistance and will work collectively to manage the Mono basin.- The Board and staff discussed this item in detail. Sally Manning stated regardless of the changes, the issue is still going to be LADWP and she hopes the entities keep that in focus.

The Chairperson made a motion to redraw the boundary of the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority to the Inyo/Mono county line when it is appropriate in the future, and coordinating with Mono County. Motion to approve by Dan Totheroh, seconded by Rhonda Duggan. 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 unanimously.

9. Discussion of OVGA GSP Management Actions and possible direction to staff for inclusion in the 2022-2023 budget.

Dr. Steinwand discussed the upcoming timelines and budget; required administrative actions; direction on administrative work for 2022-23; the possibility of pursuing management actions and projects; and provided a power point presentation. Luis Elias and Karen Kong stated they did not wish for the GSP to be implemented at this time. BryAnna Vaughan asked for an estimate of what the expenses would entail; Dr. Steinwand provided a power point with the details and approximate dollar amounts. Dan Totheroh stated he was in favor of implementing part of the plan within the new boundary, with regard to the OVGA grant request to fund the Tri-Valley groundwater model project. Holly Alpert stated an entity does not need to be a GSA to apply for the grant funding but needs to be an MOU signatory to the IMRWGMG, Mono County is, Tri-Valley is not. The Board and staff discussed this item in detail and requested staff create a budget to include the following:

- Well registration and reporting ordinance
- Well permit review ordinance
- Increase groundwater level monitoring network (Inyo County – Round Valley and SW Owens Lake area)
- Administration – two meetings per year for the next five years
- Acquire water quality data from ongoing monitoring programs or studies - Data base maintenance
- Provide assistance acquiring state or federal funding-coordinate with IRWMP to seek and acquire grants for OVGA
- Owens Lake Groundwater Development Project
 - Participate in the Owens Lake Groundwater Working Group
 - Designate member responsible for Owens Lake Management area

April Zrelak stated there is a conflict of interest with the County and their representation on the Owens Lake stakeholder group and the OVGA position because the county maintains that the LTWA applies there and they have not yet given that up after 20+ years. She thinks it's important that an OVGA member, not a representative of Inyo County represent in that group.

The Chairperson called a break at 3:58 pm and reconvened the meeting at 4:02 pm.

10. Discussion regarding future meeting dates and agenda items.

The next meeting was scheduled for March 10, 2022 via zoom. Dr. Steinwand stated upcoming agenda items will be primarily the budget, an update on the completion of the grant; and a staffing model when Mono County terminates membership on July 1, 2022. Karen Kong requested an update on the current and previous audit.

11. Adjourn

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4:15 pm.