



# Owens Valley Groundwater Authority

Board Members:

<b>INDIAN CREEK-WESTRIDGE CSD</b>	Luis Elias	<b>BIG PINE CSD</b>	BryAnna Vaughan
<b>CITY OF BISHOP</b>	Karen Kong	<b>LONE PINE PAIUTE SHOSHONE TRIBE</b>	Mel Joseph
<b>COUNTY OF INYO</b>	Scott Marcellin	<b>OWENS VALLEY COMMITTEE</b>	Mary Roper

March 14, 2024

The Owens Valley Groundwater Authority meeting was called to order at approximately 2:06 pm at the Inyo County Water Department, Independence, CA.

**1. Pledge of allegiance**

Luis Elias led the pledge of allegiance.

**2. Introductions**

The Board introduced themselves with one member absent, BryAnna Vaughan (attended as part of the public via zoom).

**3. Public Comment**

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

**4. Approval of minutes from the March 9, 2023, and January 30, 2024, OVGA Board meetings**

Motion to approve the March 9, 2023, and January 30, 2024, minutes by Mel Joseph, seconded by Scott Marcellin. Motion passed.

**5. Election of OVGA Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2024-25**

The Board opted to move this item to the end of the agenda.

**6. Board Member Reports**

Luis Elias discussed the plight and heavy burden of small water districts to comply with the State’s new water regulation mandates. The Board stated they would put this item on a future agenda for discussion.

Mel Joseph provided information on Earth Day presented by the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribe on April 27, 2024, at the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Reservation.

Scott Marcellin stated legislation is coming forth from the state that will require metering and regulations of all wells.

Mary Roper stated the Eastern California Museum is holding its annual meeting with Dave Woodruff as a guest speaker as Wilfred Watterson and the presentation is on the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the occupation of the Alabama Gates.

Sally Manning stated there are resources for smaller water districts and grants through the Bureau of Reclamation.

BryAnna Vaughan stated there are price increases for permits over the last decade and more requirements for operating a water/sewer system, more reporting, yet we are only getting the same data. She stated this is an efficiency at the state level.

## **7. OVGA Staff Reports**

### **a. Financial Report**

Laura Piper provided the financial report and stated the OVGA cash balance is \$319,765.41 with revenue in the past year of \$83,578.12, which includes the grant retention, total expenses of \$34,287.14, which includes public liability insurance, website services, consultant costs, staff services, and staff legal services.

### **b. Update on the Proposition 1 grant final payment**

Dr. Alpert stated the Proposition 1 grant is closed and all payments have been received.

### **c. Audit**

Dr. Alpert stated since there are no grant funds, the Auditor stated an audit was not necessary.

### **d. Update on GSP approval.**

Dr. Alpert stated we are still waiting for GSP approval and recently received an update that DWR (Dept of Water Resources) will now be reviewing low and very low priority GSPs but there was no timeline indicated. Edie Trimmer asked how the very low priority for the Fish Slough subbasin got added. Dr. Alpert confirmed that the letter indicates the Fish Slough subbasin is very low priority. John Vallejo provided background about how DWR arrived at the “low” and “very low” priority status. Gus Tolley from DBS&A also provided clarification that there are 8 different criteria DWR uses to prioritize and gave a brief overview.

### **e. SGMA guidance from State**

Dr. Alpert stated DWR is having a virtual GSA forum in May. She also provided information about various guidance documents that DWR has made available, including guidance for interconnected streams and a GSP implementation guide. She provided an update on periodic evaluations that should occur every 5 years, and the OVGA’s first evaluation will be due in January 2027.

### **f. Groundwater Awareness Week: March 10-16**

Dr. Alpert provided an update and stated there is a series of online webinars that she and Tim Moore have attended. She stated it’s very informative about what is happening in the state. She stated they will be hosted on a YouTube channel if the Board is interested.

### **g. Form 700 reminder**

Dr. Alpert reminded the Board to file the 700 form which is due on April 1 in the Inyo County Recorder’s office.

## **8. Presentation of draft 2024-2025 OVGA budget and consideration of a final budget**

Dr. Alpert provided a brief background on this item and reviewed in detail the requested budget. The Board approved the recommendation by staff to approve the 2024-2025 budget, moved by Mel Joseph, seconded by Mary Roper, motion passed.

## **9. Staff services contract updates**

Dr. Alpert provided a staff report and provided a brief overview of the change to the staff services contract. The Board and staff discussed this in detail. Motion by Luis Elias to approve the new staff services contract, seconded by Scott Marcellin. Motion passed.

## **10. Ordinance 2002-01 Well Registration Program update**

Tim Moore provided a presentation on the Well Registration Program and background. He requested direction from the Board on how they would like to move forward with those entities that have not complied. He stated other GSAs are establishing a fee schedule for non-compliance. The Board and staff discussed this item in detail. The Board offered to reach out to non-compliant entities in their area and bring this back for discussion at a future meeting, have staff to reach out with further education and outreach, have staff contact other GSAs about how they are handling non-compliant entities, and not impose enforcement at this time.

## **11. Water Year 2022 OVGA annual report**

Tim Moore stated the annual reports are due for the “water year” which is from October 1 to September 30 of the following year. He stated our 2022 annual report has been completed with the assistance of Daniel B Stephens and Associates. Tim provided a PowerPoint and reviewed the highlights of the annual report. He stated an email will be sent out next week to start the 30-day public comment period on the draft Annual Report. The Board requested staff respond to all public comments and include them in the report. Another meeting will be scheduled to review public comment and approve the report before submittal to DWR. Tim stated data are being gathered for the WY2023 Annual Report.

## **12. Election of OVGA Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson**

Mel Joseph recommended the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson remain as is. The Chairperson opened nominations for the Chairperson; motion by the Board to nominate Karen Kong as Chairperson, motion passed.

The Chairperson opened nominations for the Vice-Chairperson; motion by the Board to nominate BryAnna as Vice-Chairperson, motion passed.

## **13. Schedule 2023 or 2024 meetings**

Dr. Alpert stated a meeting in late May would be required to adopt the WY2022 Annual Report.

## **14. Adjourn**

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:02 pm.