

SACRAMENTO CENTRAL GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (SCGA)
Governing Board Meeting
Final Minutes
January 14, 2015

LOCATION: 10060 Goethe Road, Room 1212
Sacramento, CA 95827
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

MINUTES:

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Dave Ocenosak called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

The following meeting participants were in attendance:

Board Members (Primary Rep):

Tom Mahon, Agricultural Interests
Rick Bettis, Conservation Landowners
Ron Lowry, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
Dave Ocenosak, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
Paul Schubert, Golden State Water Company

Board Members (Alternate Rep):

Charlotte Mitchell, Agricultural Interests
Todd Eising, City of Folsom
Britton Snipes, City of Rancho Cordova
Brett Ewart, City of Sacramento
Bruce Kamilos, Elk Grove Water District
José Ramirez, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
Ward Winchell, Public Agencies Self-Supplied
Forrest Williams, Sacramento County/SCWA

Staff Members:

Darrell Eck, Executive Director
Ping Chen, SCGA
Ramon Roybal, SCGA

Others in Attendance:

Mike Wackman, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District
Paul Siebensohn, Rancho Murieta CSD
Rob Swartz, SGA
Mark Roberson, Water Forum
Jim Blanke, RMC Water and Environment

Jim Blanke, RMC Water and Environment
Rodney Fricke, Aerojet Rocketdyne
Jesse Roseman, TNC
Jafar Faghii, HDR
Chris Peterson, West Yost Associates
Jonathan Goetz, GEI
Mark Salmon, Parsons Brinkerhoff
Joe Turner, Brown and Caldwell

Member Agencies Absent

City of Elk Grove
Agricultural-Residential
Commercial/Industrial Self-Supplied
California-American Water Company

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Rob Swartz from the Sacramento Groundwater Authority announced that his organization had recently updated its Groundwater Management Plan and that it was available to the public at <http://www.sgah2o.org/sga/>.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

The draft meeting minutes for the November 12, 2014 Board meeting were reviewed for final approval.

Motion/Second/Carried – Mr. Schubert moved, seconded by Mr. Kamilos, the motion carried unanimously to approve the minutes.

4. APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CLERK

Mr. Eck announced that the current clerk of the SCGA Board, Heather Peek, was out on temporary medical leave and recommended that Ramon Roybal be appointed to fulfill the Clerk's responsibilities during her absence.

Motion/Second/Carried – Mr. Schubert moved, seconded by Mr. Ewart, the motion carried unanimously to appoint Ramon Roybal as Interim Clerk in accordance with Section 13(b) of the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA).

5. MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

Mr. Ocenosak announced that the regular Board meeting scheduled for November 11, 2015 conflicted with the Veteran's Day holiday and that staff had recommended rescheduling the meeting for November 4, 2015.

Motion/Second/Carried – Mr. Kamilos moved, seconded by Mr. Williams, the motion carried unanimously to approve a deviation from Section 3.09(b) of the Rules of Procedure and set the date of the November 2015 Board meeting as November 4, 2015.

6. SOUTH COUNTY AG PROGRAM UPDATE

José Ramirez with the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) was introduced to provide an update regarding Regional San's South County Ag Program which would utilize recycled water for crop irrigation and habitat restoration. *Note: A copy of Mr. Ramirez's presentation is posted on the SCGA website for the 1/14/2015 meeting date.*

Mr. Bettis asked what the projected total volume of recycled water demand for the South County Ag Program was. Mr. Ramirez answered that it was 90-100 MGD.

Mr. Williams inquired as to the maximum volume of recycled water that could be produced absent any facility constraints. Mr. Ramirez responded that it was Regional San's position that it owned all influent that entered its system and thus it could in theory recycle all of it though it would require a Petition for Change with the Regional Water Quality Control Board on the amount of effluent to be utilized for a beneficial use within the basin.

Mr. Roberson asked what would be done with the water during the non-irrigation season. Mr. Ramirez responded that it would be discharged into the Sacramento River.

Mr. Schubert inquired if there were any restrictions on the use of the recycled water for irrigation purposes. Mr. Ramirez replied that Title 22 tertiary treated water had no restrictions for agricultural use. He stated that the secondary effluent being discharged currently into the Sacramento River was restricted but that water would be treated to tertiary levels via Regional San's EchoWater Project.

Mr. Mahon asked what would be required for the recycled water to be treated further to potable use levels. Mr. Ramirez responded that the recycled water would have to undergo a couple additional treatment processes beyond the tertiary level including reverse osmosis and disinfection. Mr. Ramirez stated that these treatments were very costly but that Regional San was closely tracking legislation at the State level regarding that level of treatment as there had been interest by the State on that issue.

Mr. Bettis asked what it would take to utilize recycled water for groundwater recharge during the non-irrigation season as opposed to discharging it to the river. Mr. Ramirez answered that it would take a land owner willing to dedicate land for spreading purposes or the land could be acquired for that purpose. Mr. Ramirez stated that Regional San had estimated that the land cost would be approximately fifteen million dollars.

Mr. Winchell asked if there had been any modeling done to determine which direction any potential recharged water would travel if spread near the Cosumnes River.

Mr. Ramirez replied that Regional San had employed RMC Inc. to conduct groundwater modeling to analyze the impact of the groundwater recharge component of their project. Mr. Ramirez noted that the modeling work showed a groundwater elevation increase along the portion of the Cosumnes River where recharge would occur. Mr. Ramirez also indicated that the modeling work shows groundwater “leakage” in the direction of the South Basin in the general area of the recharge project. Mr. Ramirez then stated that they were also working with The Nature Conservancy with respect to modeling the effect of recharge on the Cosumnes River as a part of The Nature Conservancy’s interest in restoring surface water flows along the lower reaches of the Cosumnes River.

Mr. Roberson asked if Regional San had looked at water quality effects on groundwater due to the use of recycled water. Mr. Ramirez replied that they had begun to look into it and that preliminary findings had found no negative impacts but they planned on conducting a more detailed analysis that would look at existing crop types and the impact of using recycled water on both the root zone and groundwater quality.

Mr. Swartz asked if Regional San had looked at direct discharge of recycled water into the Cosumnes River. Mr. Ramirez responded that they had and that it would require a new discharge permit with much more stringent discharge requirements than the Sacramento River discharge because the proportion of discharged water to existing flow would be significantly greater.

Action: Information presentation.

7. SCGA GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Ping Chen, SCGA Staff, provided an update of groundwater level conditions and pumping in the Central Basin in response to the exceptional drought conditions of the past two years. Mr. Chen presented data from the north, central, and southern portions of the basin and reported that groundwater elevations and purveyor pumping in all three areas has remained steady with no significant decreases in groundwater elevations or increases in pumping over the period. Mr. Chen stated that the data indicated that Central Basin purveyors were doing a good job in responding to the historical drought conditions. Mr. Chen then referred to a State DWR report titled “Public Update for Drought Response” which contained state-wide and regional data that was consistent with what staff had found in the Central Basin.

Action: Information update.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

a) Mr. Eck announced that the Groundwater Sustainability Act (GSA) had gone into effect on January 1, 2015. Mr. Eck stated that SCGA staff had been working with staff from the Sacramento Groundwater Authority and other organizations to evaluate alternatives to

comply with the new law. Mr. Eck then referenced a timeline that contained the significant milestones related to Groundwater Sustainability Act implementation and compliance.

A map was distributed to the Board showing the management area described in the Groundwater Sustainability Act (South American Sub-basin as described in DWR Bulletin 118) overlying the current SCGA management area. Mr. Eck pointed out that the two management areas do not exactly coincide with each other and that this was going to be one of the first things to be addressed in the process of preparing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP).

Mr. Kamilos asked if the Central Basin was in over-draft. Mr. Eck responded that it was not based on current pumping levels and the long-term sustainable yield identified as part of the Water Forum process and contained within the basin's management plan. Mr. Eck then referred to a map showing statewide groundwater elevation drawdown contours contained in the aforementioned report, "Public Update for Drought Response." The map indicated that critical (severe drawdown) basins were primarily located in the southern San Joaquin valley, and that the Central Basin and the Sacramento region was not among them. Rob Swartz added that regional participation in the GSA process is not because the Sacramento region is over drafted, but to prevent over-drafting from occurring.

Mr. Kamilos then stated that the position of Elk Grove Water Service (EGWS) on the GSA was that the Authority should start to talk about issues related to the GSA: Who should be the GSA agency. Should it be a local effort or regional effort? What makes sense? Is SCGA the logical governing body for a GSA? If so, what would be the color of that? What would be the executive directorship of that? What would be the conflict interest issue of that? How to fund the GSA agency and its activities?

In response to Mr. Kamilos' statement Mr. Eck indicated that many of the previous efforts taken to develop the current management plan and authority are the same as required by the Sustainability Act. As an example, the various stakeholder groups are represented by the Board members who currently participate in managing the groundwater basin. The GSA provides an opportunity to reach out to other interest groups who may not have participated in the original effort. There is no reason to believe that the previous efforts undertaken by the groundwater stakeholders in this basin should have to repeat that effort, particularly if it was successful. Staff is currently working on identifying issues that need to be addressed as part of the broader Groundwater Sustainability Act requirements. Mr. Eck also mentioned that staff has been regularly briefing the Board on the Act and agreed that a more focused discussion should begin on next steps including transitioning into the role as the sustainability agency. Mr. Kamilos said that he would like to hear other Board members' position on what direction should be taken. Mr. Schubert suggested staff put together a draft progress report related to the Act indicating where we're at so the Board can have a discussion and possibly take an action. Mr. Schubert continued by stating that he believed the Groundwater Authority should transition into the sustainability agency because of all the time, effort, and money that has been invested in this program. Discussion continued regarding the necessary procedures/steps to form a sustainability agency. Mr. Kamilos asked if DWR had developed guidelines for developing a sustainability agency. Mr. Eck indicated that general provisions for establishing a sustainability agency are contained within the Act.

However, it is possible that additional clarification on some issues could be provided through clean-up legislation or some other venue.

Mr. Swartz from SGA clarified that DWR's role is establishing criteria that would be used to approve a sustainability agency for its completeness. He agreed that this should be a topic of discussion within the Sacramento Groundwater Authority. Mr. Swartz also emphasized that the underlying principle of this legislation was "to do no harm where there is successful groundwater management," and that the Groundwater Authority should be able to demonstrate that it has a successful management plan.

b) Mr. Eck announced that Form 700's were due by April 1, 2015 for all board members. Mr. Eck mentioned that during the Authority's annual audit, the lack of submission of Form 700's by all board members is mentioned.

c) Mr. Eck announced that he would like to reconvene the Groundwater Accounting Program committee on February 11, 2015.

9. DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

Directors had no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Meetings –

Next SCGA Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday, March 11, 2015, 9 am; 10060 Goethe Road, South Conference Room No. 1212 (Sunset Maple).

By:



Chairperson

3/11/15

Date



3/11/15

Date