

SACRAMENTO CENTRAL GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (SCGA)
Agricultural-Residential Water Conservation Sub-Committee Meeting
Final Minutes
February 28, 2012

LOCATION: 827 7th Street, Room 301
Sacramento, CA 95814
1:30 p.m.

MINUTES:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Meeting commenced at 1:30 p.m.

The following meeting participants were in attendance:

Board Members (Primary Rep.)

Rick Bettis, Conservation Landowners
Ron Lowry, Omochumne-Hartnell Water District

Others in Attendance

Amanda Platt, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
Mark Roberson, Water Forum
Ellen Carlson, Florin Resource Conservation District

Staff Members

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

2. Public Comment

Ellen Carlson from the Florin Resource Conservation District introduced herself and stated that she was sitting in as an interested party.

3. Outreach Plan and Budget

Mr. Roberson explained that grant funding for ag-res water conservation outreach was made available through a 2011 Prop. 84 Regional Water Efficiency grant awarded to the Regional Water Authority (RWA). Mr. Roberson further explained that the Water Forum would act as the administrator of the grant which was divided into an urban and an agricultural component and that Ms. Platt would be in charge of the agricultural component.

Ms. Platt distributed a draft outreach plan explaining that it followed the requirements set forth in the grant program. Ms. Platt pointed out that the outreach plan was designed to

outreach to established community organizations that had previously demonstrated interest or which had attended previous water efficiency workshops. Generally the plan consisted of conducting 10-12 workshops, with each lasting 2-3 hours, while covering about three Best Management Practices (BMP's). Ms. Platt identified the BMP's to consist of 1) high efficiency landscaping; 2) grey water systems; 3) rain water harvesting. Additionally, follow up home audits based on BMP implementation were also included in the plan. Ms. Platt identified Placer, El Dorado, and Sacramento Counties as the target area for outreach.

Ms. Platt then addressed the draft budget saying that the grant rules called for a majority of the cost to be allotted for staff time and thus no travel expensive were included. The budget called for conducting ten to twelve public workshops. Mr. Roberson pointed out that one-half to two-thirds of total staff time was allotted for development of the workshop presentations. Mr. Eck asked how many presentations would be conducted in each county. Ms. Platt responded that she would have to look at population targets in each county to make a determination. She stated that she would aim to distribute the presentations evenly but that ultimately, population figures would be the determining factor. Ms. Platt speculated that since Sacramento County had the largest population and target area, it likely could end up with highest number of presentations.

Ms. Platt pointed out that publicity and marketing costs had not been included in the draft budget and thus would be an additional cost. Mr. Bettis recalled that SCGA might be able to contribute additional funding for such activities through un-allotted funds from the SCGA budget. Mr. Eck confirmed Mr. Bettis' statement, adding that the SCGA Board would have to approve such an action and determine whether the contribution would apply only to marketing in the SCGA area or generally for the entire program area. Mr. Roberson asked Ms. Platt if she had an idea of the potential marketing costs. Ms. Platt estimated that it might cost an additional three thousand dollars and would effectively be conducted through 'grass roots' efforts, newspaper ads, SMUD mailers, and word of mouth. Ms. Platt also suggested that marketing efforts could be modeled after the "Blue Thumb" campaign, a water efficiency program that advertised via radio and television.

Mr. Bettis asked if the agricultural-residential wells referred to in the Central Basin GMP had any associated pumping data. Mr. Chen responded in the negative.

Mr. Eck sought clarification that the budget as proposed, was based on what was available through the grant award, and that additional efforts such as marketing would have to be funded through additional funding from another source such as SCGA. Ms. Platt replied in the affirmative, adding that if SCGA wanted more focused marketing, it could be done with additional funding.

Mr. Lowry inquired about a specific budget item identified as "incentives". Mr. Roberson explained that it referred to an incentive to pay an individual ag-res owner up to \$500 for efficient landscaping/irrigation supplies which would be provided in conjunction with a water efficiency survey and associated recommendations. Mr. Lowry stated that he thought the figure was on the high side and that if the incentive were lowered, it could be spread out to more ag-res users. Mr. Roberson reiterated that the incentive was tied to a survey and recommendations based on the survey and that the cost associated with the incentive were based on urban irrigation equipment costs such as sprinkler controls and high-efficiency sprinkler heads. Mr. Roberson added that SCGA could choose to fund additional water efficiency surveys to augment to cost identified in the draft budget.

Mr. Lowry suggested coming up with a standard list of drought tolerant plants to distribute at

the proposed workshops. Ms. Platt responded that it was a great idea and that she had already begun contacting various local nurseries to get an idea of their inventories and costs for those items.

Mr. Bettis inquired as to how the recommendations from the meeting would be presented at the next regular SCGA Board meeting. Mr. Eck replied that it was on the agenda and asked Ms. Platt if she could present the program to the Board. Ms. Platt agreed. Mr. Eck then asked Ms. Platt if she could provide a more specific budget detailing marketing costs within the SCGA area for presentation to the Board. Mr. Eck suggested that the recommendation to the Board could be to fund the targeted marketing campaign.

Mr. Bettis inquired as to the specific amount of funding that could be made available via the SCGA budget. Mr. Eck responded that up to ten thousand dollars could be made available but that he would hesitate to recommend spending the entire amount and thus leave the budget with zero un-allotted dollars.

Mr. Roberson pointed out that the program was planned to run through the year 2013. He suggested that if possible, it would be beneficial for funding via SCGA be made prior to the end of the current fiscal year in order to get a start on marketing efforts. Mr. Roberson stated that fiscal contributions from SCGA may serve as a good starting point for making similar requests to Sacramento Groundwater Authority (SGA) and the Water Forum. Mr. Roberson asked Mr. Eck about the possibility of having SCGA initially fund the entire program during the period in which grant funding is dispersed from the State and disseminated via Regional Water Authority (RWA) and the Water Forum. Mr. Roberson clarified that his concern was that fund disbursement through the grant program may take a significant amount of time and that he would like to see the program commence during the current fiscal year. Interim funding via SCGA would allow Ms. Platt to begin working on implementation of the program without a protracted delay. Mr. Eck replied that it could be a possibility but that he would require more details about the specific funding mechanisms, timing, and amounts and that he would have to discuss these items with the appropriate people.

4. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss meeting adjourns at 2:30 p.m.

By:



Chairperson

3/14/12
Date

Attest:



3/14/12
Date