

**SIERRA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
GOLDEN WEST RESTAURANT, LOYALTON, CA
Monday, October 10, 2016 at 6 p.m.**

Board of Directors

Einen Grandi, Chairman
Don Wallace, Director
Terry Swofford, Director
Paul Roen, Director
Greg Ramelli, Director
Jim Roberti, Director
Tom Rowson, Director

MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Grandi called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Directors present: Ramelli, Roberti, Wallace, Rowson.

Absent Directors: Swofford, Roen

Also present: Kristi Jamason, Jay Huebert, Rick Maddalena, and Katie Tanner.

2) PUBLIC COMMENT – limited to 5 minutes per speaker

Kristi Jamason shared that the Art and Ag Trail event went very well. About 400 people attended. All 200 of the Trail passports sold out, and the Cattlemen's dinner at the Sierra Valley Grange sold over 150 dinners. Many are hoping this will become an annual event.

Jamason also reported DWR has passed the Prop 84 and Prop 1 compliance review of the Feather River IRWMP, making this the first compliant IRWM Plan in the state. The plan is posted on the DWR website for public comment until November 1st.

3) READING & APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR 09/12/16

Director Roberti made a motion to approve the minutes, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

4) REPORTS

A. Fee Schedule – Paul Roen and Einen Grandi

Director Roen was planning to meet with Tim Beals but was not present at the meeting to report.

B. Nexus Study funding

Director Grandi talked to Bill Ehorn (DWR) and David Prentice (Sierra County Counsel) about the Nexus Study and 218 Election. Ehorn and Prentice both recommended that we forgo the Nexus study and 218 Election and make parcel fee changes according to previous SVGMD policies and procedures. However, we are past the date to include alternative fees on tax bills for Plumas and Sierra Counties

for this year, so the District would have to send out bills directly to collect the extra fees.

Director Rowson suggests that SVGMD send out a letter to parcel owners explaining the new fees, the new state requirements, and the benefits the District provides for monitoring local groundwater. He also advises making the new fee amounts adequate enough to cover future District expenses, since raising rates is so difficult.

C. Basin ranking data (total well data and public supply well data)

Director Grandi spoke to Bill Ehorn at DWR. The new basin rankings were scheduled to come out before the end of the year, but it may not be until March now.

Grandi went to the Sierra County Environmental Health Department and received help from Elizabeth Morgan. She called DWR to discuss where the Public Supply Well basin ranking numbers come from. The man she spoke with is going to look into it, work with Bill Ehorn to make sure the numbers are accurate, and get back to Grandi with his findings.

After new basin rankings come out, the numbers will need to be checked for accuracy, and SVGMD will need to report any numbers that seem incorrect by providing alternative/more accurate data. Director Roberti noted that it's easier to provide DWR with the correct information now, however, so that changes won't need to be made later on.

Pumping records from public supply wells in the basin should be tracked by SVGMD. Some definitely have meters – Sierra Brooks, City of Loyalton. The well pumping records from Loyalton need to be secured, and a list of public supply wells should be developed and operators contacted.

D. State Water Board Draft Fee Concepts for SGMA Implementation

Director Grandi went to a meeting in Sacramento on Friday, October 7th to learn more about the proposed SGMA fee schedule for probationary basins. There are many basins that don't have any groundwater management groups in place or any previous data other than the annual state measurements. In that regard, SVGMD is ahead of many basins in becoming compliant with new state regulations. The state has established a draft fee schedule to cover water management costs if basins are not covered by a Sustainable Groundwater Agency in time, do not have an approved sustainability plan in place by the deadline, or do not execute the plan/achieve sustainability. Fees will be charged per well (\$100/yr) and by acre-foot pumped (e.g. \$40/AF), and there will be late fees in the proposed fee schedule. The State Water Board can also charge fees on domestic wells. This fee schedule is anticipated to be adopted by late spring 2017.

E. Prop 50 work grant – Kristi Jamason

Jamason watched the SGMA fee schedule meeting online and took notes to help SVMGD meet the requirements. She has also been meeting with Burkhard Bohm about the radio isotope water recharge study and helping him contact landowners to obtain additional water samples. Burkhard is also looking at boron concentrations in wells and trying to determine if boron is moving in the aquifers

due to pumping. Jamason has requested information on damaging boron levels in irrigation water for forage crops from UCCE. Jamason will also be researching other groundwater management ordinances around the state.

One goal of the final grant report will be to lay out next steps, data gaps, etc. for improved groundwater management decision-making. Jamason requested the directors provide input about the type of information that is most need to manage groundwater in the basin. Director Grandi wants confirmation of where the water recharge is taking place in Sierra Valley, how that recharge takes place, where the water moves to, and whether that area can be improved to maximize water recharge efficiency. Another question the SVGMD would like help with is whether there are some parts of the District where more production wells could be supported and other areas where there should not be additional drilling. Also, whether there are good areas for groundwater banking to recharge aquifers, including whether backing up water in the NW corner of the Valley contributes to groundwater recharge.

F. Technician report - Jay Huebert

1. Inventory of active wells

Huebert passed out the monitoring wells report (on file) which compares October 2015, April 2016, and October 2016 surface-to-groundwater measurements. Water levels are up a little in many of the wells from last year, but this last spring was better than the previous spring. These October measurements are finally showing an upward trend, which is the first time in six years the trend hasn't been downward.

Well 5 on D&S has been watched very closely the past few years, and its levels this month are up from last year. The deep wells have all recovered to a higher level compared to last year's levels. The second page of the monitoring wells report shows October 2011—2014 well levels. All were trending downward until this year; having a (relatively) average winter helped.

All of the meter reading currently done by SVGMD is agricultural, but we also need to start collecting public supply well reports. Directory Rowson will inquire about Loyalton and Calpine well meter information and work with Director Ramelli to collect information about the wells at the Beckwourth and Vinton trailer parks.

Huebert also compiled information for the secretary to create an updated inventory of active wells with current contact information.

5) DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

A. New well construction and management policies

1. Building Department letter

Director Grandi shared that no policy is presently in effect that will stop people drilling wells. Currently, if someone would like to drill a well in Sierra County they contact the County and submit a well application, the County notifies SVGMD of the application, and then the County issues the well permit. If SVGMD would like to become more active in approving new well construction projects Sierra County will need an updated letter for well applicants and then the County will send SVGMD the well applications for approval. Director

Roberti talked to Plumas County about well permits; they have the same system in place as Sierra County right now. Plumas County is also willing to send SVGMD the well applications for approval. Both counties need to be contacted that applications need to be sent to SGVMG to receive approval.

However, Grandi stated the board isn't ready to approve applications without any established well approval policies. Before taking over this responsibility SVGMD needs to create an ordinance that sets up expectations and qualifications for new wells. Part of managing the District is coming up with a plan to become sustainable and maintain those water levels, which includes monitoring well drilling. The Groundwater Model (computer program) will project groundwater levels that will result from current practices and climate change.

Director Wallace noted that previous well applications were sent to the hydrologist for consultation and a report of the proposed area, which is paid for by the applicant. However, that ordinance does not include ag wells so a new ordinance will need to be passed to require a hydrologist report for ag well applications.

The letter the Counties send out to potential well applicants needs to be edited as follows:

"The Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District (SVGMD) has new well construction permit requirements as well as well metering requirements for large capacity (larger than 6" well casing and 100 gpm+) wells located in the SVGMD. These requirements are as follows:

- (1) All wells that are capable of pumping 100 gpm or more shall be equipped with a SVGMD approved meter that measures the flow of water.**
- (2) The SVGMD shall charge a reasonable fee to cover the costs and installation of the meter within 30 days of the well becoming functional. In addition, there will be an annual \$200 well fee.**
- (3) It is unlawful to extract groundwater from any extraction facility capable of 100 gpm or more if said meter is not installed. Section 6 of Ordinance No. 82-03 states "Any person, who injures, alters, removes, resets, adjusts, manipulates, obstructs, or in any manner interferes or tampers with, or procures, or causes, or directs any person to injure, alter, remove, reset, adjust, manipulate, obstruct, or in any manner interfere or tamper with any meter affixed or any extraction facility as required by this ordinance so as to cause the meter to improperly or inaccurately measure and record water extraction shall be liable for a sum not to exceed one thousand dollars."**

This updated well metering requirements letter will be sent to Plumas and Sierra Counties once policies have been decided upon and a well fee ordinance has been passed.

B. GSA Formation

The founding legislation for SVGMD already establishes the District as a GSA, unless the District chooses to opt out. Bill Ehorn needs to be notified that SVGMD will be the GSA agency for this area. Director Grandi and the secretary will compose and send this letter.

Ehorn stressed that the Sierra Valley Groundwater basin needs to fall entirely within the District's legal boundaries. The District map needs to be compared to DWR's map of the basin to check for inconsistencies.

Director Roberti made a motion to write a letter to Bill Ehorn to make SVGMD the GSA, Director Rowson 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

C. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

David Prentice of Sierra County Counsel is going to send the Position Statement for SVGMD to EEOC refuting Ms. Walsh's claim of age discrimination.

6) CORRESPONDENCE LOG

A. Workers' Compensation insurance

The policy is being updated to reflect the wages of only Jay Huebert as a SVGMD employee.

B. DWR Fall Groundwater Measurements

DWR will be coming to collect fall groundwater level measurements sometime between October 17 – 28th.

C. CSDA Gold Country Regional Chapter

This is a local branch of the California Special District Association that meets quarterly. The annual membership fee is \$25.

7) CASH BALANCE/FINANCIAL SUMMARY

A. Finance report

B. Bills received for payment

- 1. Downey Brand - \$220**
- 2. State Fund – waiting for an updated quote**
- 3. Meter technician**
 - a. Wages \$350**
 - b. Mileage \$121**

Ratification to pay all bills as presented, as well as the amount State Insurance Compensation Fund quotes. Director Ramelli made a motion to approve, Director Wallace 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

8) ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Grandi adjourned the meeting at 8:49 PM.

Jenny Gant, Secretary