

**SIERRA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SIERRA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
81059 HIGHWAY 70 BECKWOURTH, CA 96129
Monday, January 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**

This meeting will also be available via Zoom Teleconferencing:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87847235864?pwd=YWFYdTlBTUJhA3cHFiOHUvRTcydz09>

Meeting ID:
878 4723 5864
Passcode:
647657
By Phone:
+1 (669) 900-9128

Board of Directors
Einen Grandi, Chairman
Paul Roen, Vice-Chairman
Dwight Ceresola, Director
Dave Goicoechea, Director
Matt Kilmurray, Director
Greg Ramelli, Director
Jim Roberti, Director

MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Grandi called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM
Directors present: Grandi, Roberti, Goicoechea, Ceresola, Ramelli, Roen
Directors absent: Kilmurray
Also present: Judie Talbot, Joel Barnard, Doug Lawler
Via Zoom: Arnold Potter, Jay Huebert, Dennis Marsh, Ben Volk, Gus Tolley, Steve Reich, Jim Thomas, Rebecca Smith, Laura Foglia, Carl Butz, Betsy Elzufon, Chris Hutton, Drew Myers

2) PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY – limited to 5 minutes per speaker

At this time, members of the public may comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon by the Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District Board of Directors at this time.

There were no public comments.

Director Roen made a motion to amend the agenda to take item 4A at the beginning of the meeting and then resume the original agenda order, Director Goicoechea 2nd, motion passed, roll call vote: Directors Roberti, Ramelli, Grandi, Goicoechea, Roen, and Ceresola voted yes.

3) REPORTS

A. Meter Technician Report – Jay Huebert

Huebert took readings on January 1. There were technical difficulties, so Huebert was unable to give his report, but the Board was able to review the monitoring well levels.

B. LWA Team Project Update – Laura Foglia

Betsy Elzufon, LWA Associate, reported that the recharge projects were installed and ready in December, but the diversion requirements for recharge were not met until January. She said the storms in the first week of January provided a great recharge week. The permit conditions include: Smithneck must be at a 90th percentile flow or above and then 20% of that flow can be used for recharge; outflow from Oroville must be >10,000 cfs; and the permit is only valid between the dates of December 1 and March 14.

Chairman Grandi commented that he went to see the Easley and Potter structures and that the storm washed a hole under the diversion structure at Potter's. Drew Myers, Project Designer with J-U-B Engineers, replied that Hauff Excavation did some minor repairs so it's operational, but they're considering further maintenance to make the structure last longer. They might also build something to divert around the structure to protect it from high abnormal flows.

Laura Foglia, GSP Project Manager, said that these recharge projects must comply with the permit terms and will be used to show DWR and CDFW that the concepts work. If the projects show potential, they can be used to renegotiate more flexibility for future permits. But first the projects need to demonstrate compliance and show they are not dangerous. Director Goicoechea asked for clarification about the alleged flooding risk of four houses in Loyalton and the recharge projects' impact there. Elzufon responded that that flooding had nothing to do with the recharge projects and that the team did try and help by diverting water away from that area, but it risked flooding Marsh's field so they stopped. Foglia said the way these projects are designed will help prevent some of the flooding in Loyalton.

Elzufon also shared that two portable sounders have been purchased and will be available for use by well owners. Information will be posted on the District's website and a flyer will be sent out to notify the public.

C. Stetson & DRI Team Project Update – Steve Reich/Jim Thomas

Joel Barnard, Stetson Environmental Associate, provided an irrigation efficiency update: pivot sprinkler conversions and wheel line projects are complete; two sand separator projects are complete and the final one is in progress; the Grandi pipeline is complete and the two Bar One pipeline projects are in progress; the two in-lieu recharge projects at D&S Ranch are in progress; the Goicoechea diversion/pipeline is awaiting scheduling; additional soil moisture sensors for two ranches are awaiting installation; three weather stations have been purchased and are awaiting installation; and the Williams in-lieu recharge project is waiting for the electrical hookup. Barnard shared there's ~\$34,000 left in the irrigation efficiency budget. He recommended using the remaining funds to install water meters on some of the diversion projects in order to monitor and collect data on the conjunctive use projects to measure groundwater savings.

4) DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

A. Plumas/Sierra County Well Permit Application Review (if any)

1. Loyalton Well Application Process

Doug Lawler attended the meeting to discuss a second water source for the City of Loyalton. He said the California State Water Board is requesting that the City get a second emergency well to stabilize their water condition. The City does have a second well, but it's very sandy and they assume it has a cracked casing. Lawler has land in Loyalton and has offered to drill a new well there and then gift it to the City, but since Loyalton is in the no-drill zone for new large-capacity wells under Ordinance 18-01, he asked the Board for clarification on the possibility of an exemption and what the application requirements would entail.

Chairman Grandi said that within the no-drill zone there would be no consideration for a new ag well, but there might be for a municipality. The application would take nearby wells into consideration and would probably require a well evaluation from a hydrogeologist. Grandi asked why the City was able to service more houses and businesses in the past but now needs more water? Lawler responded that they've had leaks to repair, and as a result there have been severe water restrictions for the past several years. Now that they've repaired the active leak they can investigate the second well issue with grant reimbursement funds.

Director Roberti suggested redrilling a replacement well if the second City well cannot be repaired. Lawler said they are considering that option, but since his property is on the other side of town it might better stabilize the water situation. Grandi replied that a new well won't fix the leaky pipes situation, and that it's the responsibility of this Board to protect the groundwater. Lawler said they think all the active leaks have been fixed, but they won't know until later this summer if the reserve tank is filling up and holding water.

The Board encouraged the City to submit a well application so that they can review the specifications, but Lawler doesn't want to spend time or money on the application before knowing if the project is a feasible pursuit. The Board directed staff to ask District Counsel if municipalities are exempt from SGMA regulations and to do an inventory of wells located near Lawler's parcel.

B. Purchasing Additional Water Meters for Monitoring DWR Grant Projects

Barnard shared nine possible locations where water meters could be installed to measure conjunctive use: five at Roberti Ranch, one at Goicoechea Ranch, two at D&S Ranch, and one at Williams'. Chairman Grandi said the in-lieu recharge projects are offsetting groundwater pumping by using surface water instead, and that he thinks it would be a good idea to show how much groundwater is being saved. Grandi said this monitoring isn't a requirement, but it could be powerful additional data that can be presented to DWR in the District's annual reports. The Board directed Barnard to move forward with collecting estimates and working with the irrigation efficiency ad hoc committee for approval.

C. GSP Consultant Amendment No. 1 to Professional Services: Larry Walker Associates Team

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the LWA Amendment #1, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, roll call vote: Directors Roberti, Ramelli, Grandi, Goicoechea, Roen, and Ceresola voted yes.

D. GSP Consultant Amendment No. 1 to Professional Services: Stetson Engineers Inc. and the Desert Research Institute

Director Roen made a motion to approve the Stetson/DRI Amendment #1, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, roll call vote: Directors Roberti, Ramelli, Grandi, Goicoechea, Roen, and Ceresola voted yes.

E. Land Access Agreement with Dave Goicoechea

Director Roen made a motion to approve the Land Access Agreement with Dave Goicoechea, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, roll call vote: Directors Roberti, Ramelli, Grandi, Roen, and Ceresola voted yes. Director Goicoechea abstained.

F. Land Access Agreement with Dennis Marsh

Director Roen made a motion to approve the Land Access Agreement with Dennis Marsh, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, roll call vote: Directors Roberti, Ramelli, Grandi, Goicoechea, Roen, and Ceresola voted yes.

G. Easley Land Lease Compensation Agreement

H. Griffin Land Lease Compensation Agreement

I. Potter Land Lease Compensation Agreement

Agenda items G, H, and I were discussed all together. Elzufon said that District Counsel is reviewing the agreement language, so the documents weren't ready for the Board to review. She shared that land leases under DWR require a minimum of 15 years. With the remaining grant budget that would mean ~\$60,000 (\$3,000 annually) for each land lease. Grandi said there had been previous land lease discussions with the ad hoc committee and thought these should have been completed before starting the projects. He also said that the committee had discussed not compensating the Easleys because they're benefitting from the project in other ways. Foglia replied that the reason they waited was to give the Board time to evaluate the projects and see if they wanted them long term, and that the reason the amounts are smaller than discussed in the beginning is because more of the budget was invested into the in-lieu recharge projects. The Board directed LWA to discuss the \$60,000 for 15 years land lease offers to Potter and Griffin. Chairman Grandi is going to talk to the Water Master for clarification about the Easley's and Marsh's water rights.

J. February 2026 SVGMD Board Meeting Date

Judie Talbot, GSP Facilitator, discussed dates for the February TAC/community meeting and provided meeting material handouts for the Board to review. The TAC/community meeting will provide an update to stakeholders about implementation work that has been done the past two years.

Because the regularly scheduled February Board meeting falls on Presidents' Day, the Board decided to change the date to the same day as the stakeholder meeting. The TAC/community meeting will be from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and the Board meeting will start at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 9.

5) CONSENT CALENDAR

All items on the Consent Calendar shall be considered routine and will be enacted by one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Board member requests that specific items be removed from the Consent Calendar for separate action. Any item removed from the consent calendar will be considered after the regular business items.

A. Approval of The Minutes as Read/Distributed for 12/15/25

B. Approve payment of bills and finance reports

- 1. Isaacs #56977 for \$27,360.29 for D&S Recharge**
- 2. Isaacs #56978 for \$52,932.14 for D&S Recharge**
- 3. Isaacs #56991 for \$11,738.53 for Roberti Pivot Sprinkler Pkgs**
- 4. neatMon #1363 for \$7,572.73 for Grissom Weather Station**
- 5. neatMon #1365 for \$8,000.85 for Grissom Soil Moisture Sensors**
- 6. neatMon #1367 for \$7,572.73 for Goodwin Weather Station**
- 7. neatMon #1369 for \$8,000.85 for Goodwin Soil Moisture Sensors**
- 8. Ward Laboratories #1514584 for \$20 for Soil Sampling**
- 9. Ward Laboratories #1514624 for \$549.75 for Soil Sampling**
- 10. Your H2O Pro #6883 for \$3,230 for Marsh Wheel Line Sprinklers**
- 11. Your H2O Pro #6906 for \$19,748 for Bar One Water Line Install**

Director Roen made a motion to approve the consent calendar, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, roll call vote: Directors Ramelli, Grandi, Goicoechea, Roen, and Ceresola in favor. Director Roberti abstained.

6) ADJOURNMENT

Director Grandi adjourned the meeting at 8:43 PM

Jenny Gant, Board Clerk