

**SIERRA VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SIERRA CHRISTIAN CHURCH
81059 HIGHWAY 70 BECKWOURTH, CA 96129
Monday, July 17, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**

This meeting will also be available via Zoom Teleconferencing:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87847235864?pwd=YWFYaTErR1BUTjA3cHFiOHUvRTcydz09>

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

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

MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Grandi called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM
Directors present: Goicoechea, Roberti, Wallace, Roen
Directors absent: Ceresola, Ramelli
Also present: Jim Swann, Dwight Smith, Ben Volk, Thomas Archer, and Jay Huebert
Via Zoom: Gus Tolley, Judie Talbot, Tracey Ferguson, Betsy Elzufon and Carl Butz

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.

3) REPORTS

A. Meter Technician Report – Jay Huebert

Huebert took well readings on July 1. He reported that something unusual happened with some of the monitoring wells this year: five of the wells actually made a recovery from the first of June to the first of July. He thinks this can be attributed to the big winter and the runoff. Many of the ag wells are not running yet, but everything seems to be working well other than one meter at Goodwin's that needs to be replaced. The total ag pumping for May and June is 960 acre/feet.

Let the minutes note Director Ramelli joined the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

B. GSP Planning Committee Update – Judie Talbot

Judie Talbot, SVGMD Outreach Facilitator, reported that the Planning Committee met on July 6. The agenda primarily focused on administrative tasks and funding opportunities. The Board clerk is working with Gus Tolley to adjust past monitoring well readings dates to align with the monthly Board reports. The SOQ evaluation panel is preparing to present recommendations for the list of qualified firms to the Directors. Technical tasks that are underway include LWA presenting a proposal at tonight's meeting about identifying a new location for the approved DWR monitoring well and preparing documentation with the State Water Board for recharge permits. A full proposal will be submitted to the Plumas Watershed Funding Forum by the end of July. The CDFW awarded the District \$809,076 for planning and CEQA documentation for the Badenaugh-Smithneck recharge project and the agreement is on tonight's agenda.

4) **DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS**

A. Well Permit Application Review: Sierraville Public Utility District

Thomas Archer was in attendance as the representative for the Sierraville Public Utility District. SPUD has been awarded a grant by DWR and is in the process of planning and design to drill a well closer to their existing booster station that houses large water tanks for drinking water and fire protection. They hope the new well will pump over 100 gpm. It will be added to the SVGMD’s active large-capacity well list and will be billed the annual \$200 fee. SPUD will meter the well and provide the SVGMD meter technician with annual readings.

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve the SPUD well application, Director Roen 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

Let the minutes note Director Ceresola joined the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

B. Request for Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) for Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Implementation Activities – Evaluation Panel Recommendation for List of Qualified Firms from SOQ Respondents

Tracey Ferguson, Plumas County Planning Director, presented the SOQ evaluation master score sheet to the Board. A request for SOQ for professional services for GSP implementation activities was released on April 18, 2023. The evaluation panel included Ferguson, Director Ramelli, Director Goicoechea, and the Board clerk. Four SOQs were received and the panel scored them individually in eight categories. Based on the results of the scoring criteria, the panel is recommending the three firms that scored 50 points or higher for qualification. These include: Geosyntec Consultants, Inc., Larry Walker and Associates (with DBS&A, Stillwater, Judie Talbot, McGinley, and J-U-B Engineering), and Stetson Engineers, Inc. (with Desert Research Institute). The firm not being recommended for qualification is HydroFocus, Inc.

Director Roen made a motion to accept the three firms recommended by the evaluation panel (Geosyntec, LWA team, and Stetson/DRI), Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

C. Grant Funding Opportunities

Betsy Eluzfon, LWA Associate, shared an implementation funding and grant application summary table:

FUNDER AND GRANT TITLE	SCOPE	AMOUNT REQUESTED	STATUS AS OF JULY 12, 2023
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW): Drought, Climate and Nature-based Solutions	The focus is on the Badenaugh-Smithneck recharge proposal. There is a discussion on the benefits to shallow groundwater and streamflow and wetlands. There may also be benefits for shallow and domestic wells. It covers a 2.5-year period for implementation. Anticipated award: September (underway)	\$1,342,577 Received \$809,000 for planning; Can apply for the rest later	A grant application was submitted to fund planning and permitting activities required for the pilot projects. This includes planning, CEQA compliance, feasibility studies and other actions required prior to implementing the on-the-ground projects. Documentation is currently before the Board to execute the grant agreement.
Plumas Watershed Forum: Watershed Forum Concept Proposal	The focus is on agricultural irrigation efficiency and a pilot recharge project in the Little Last Chance area. Anticipated award: end of year	\$1,547,000	The full application will be submitted to the Forum by July 28 th . The working draft document will be presented to the Board meeting on July 17 th .
California Dept. of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEET)	Funding available for on-farm irrigation water and energy use efficiency standards, evaluation, and implementation of efficient practices. Submitted on June 19, 2023. Anticipated award announcement: August	TBD	Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District will submit an application with UCCE (statewide and local offices) as the technical advisors. The maximum award for on-farm SWEET projects is \$200,00 to each agricultural operation.
California Department of Water Resources (DWR): Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation Round 2	Funding request to assist with all aspects of GSP implementation including data collection and data management, annual reports, five-year updates to the GSP, projects and management actions, and grant administration. Anticipated final award: July-August Anticipated contract: Nov 23 – Jan 24	\$5,450,000	Draft awards have been announced. The public comment period closes on June 9 th . Final award announcements are expected in October 2023, with agreements signed by January 2024.
CDFA: Multi-benefit Land Repurposing Program	<i>Awaiting determinations on 2023 grant applications to assess fit with creating multiple benefits while keeping land in production.</i>		

1. Plumas County Watershed Forum Proposal – Synergistic Sierra Valley Groundwater Recharge and Irrigation Efficiency Project

Eluzfon reported that a concept proposal for a recharge project at Little Last Chance was submitted to the Plumas County Watershed Forum. The Forum has requested a full proposal be submitted at the end of this month.

Director Roen made a motion to approve the draft in concept and authorized Chairman Grandi to approve the final proposal before submission, Director Goicoechea 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

D. CDFW: Wetlands and Mountain Meadows Sierra Valley Groundwater Recharge Multi-Benefit Project Grant Agreement

Chairman Grandi shared that the CDFW has awarded \$809,076 to the SVGMD for a recharge project at Smithneck Creek. The Board expressed concerns they have with the agreement, such as environmental constraints, and field study and monitoring requirements.

Elzufon stated that the recharge project will require lots of sampling to pick the right sight and then the project will require monitoring. The District will be the lead agency to issue a CEQA NOE for permitting requirements and environmental compliance. She shared that the idea was to execute this agreement so that permits can be applied for and this implementation project could begin while waiting for other potential grant funding announcements.

The Board expressed they are in full support of a recharge project, but this is not the project they want. Chairman Grandi appointed himself, Director Goicoechea, and Director Ramelli to a subcommittee to revise the grant agreement language with Dwight Smith of McGinley and Associates.

Director Roen made a motion authorizing the District to contract with Smith and McGinley staff to assist the committee in editing the CDFW agreement, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

1. Resolution 23-05 – Authorizing the SVGMD to Enter into a Grant Agreement with CDFW

Resolution 23-05 was tabled.

2. SVGMD Drug Free Policy

Director Roen made a motion to approve the SVGMD Drug Free Policy, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

E. LWA Proposal for GSP Implementation of DWR Monitoring Well Location Identification and Recharge Permitting

LWA presented a proposal for beginning GSP implementation projects. The first is to select a new location for the DWR TSS well (potentially in the Smithneck Creek area where a District recharge project might be implemented), and the second is to begin the permit documentation process for the proposed recharge project near Smithneck Creek.

The Board directed this item to be reviewed by the CDFW grant application subcommittee.

F. Blomberg and Griffin Independent Audit Proposal

Director Roen made a motion to approve the independent audit proposal from Blomberg and Griffin, Director Ramelli 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

G. Resolution 23-02– Adoption of 2023-2024 Budget

Director Goicoechea made a motion to approve Resolution 23-02, Director Roen 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

H. Ordinance 23-02 – Enacting a Management Charge for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Director Roen made a motion to approve Ordinance 23-02, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

I. Resolution 23-03 – Setting a Date for a Public Hearing to Consider the Imposition of a Large Capacity Well Management Charge for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Director Roen made a motion to approve Resolution 23-03, Director Goicoechea 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

J. Resolution 23-04 – Requesting Collection of Charges on Tax Roll

Director Ramelli made a motion to approve Resolution 23-04, Director Roen 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

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 6/19/23

B. Approve payment of bills

Director Roen made a motion to approve the consent calendar, Director Ceresola 2nd, motion passed, all in favor.

6) ADJOURNMENT

Director Grandi adjourned the meeting at 7:29 PM

Jenny Gant, Board Clerk