

MEETING MINUTES

SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

April 28, 2021

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District was held on Wednesday, April 28, 2021. As a result of the COVID-19 emergency and Governor Newsom's Executive Orders to protect public health by issuing shelter-in-home standards, limiting public gatherings, and requiring social distancing, this meeting occurred solely via teleconference as authorized by and in furtherance of Executive Order Nos. N-29-20 and N-33-20 and in accordance with the Santa Barbara County Health Office Order 2021-12.7.

Directors Present: Cynthia Allen Mark Altshuler Steve Jordan Brett Marymee

Director Absent: Art Hibbits

Others Present: General Manager Kevin Walsh, Groundwater Program Manager Bill Buelow, Board Secretary Amber Thompson, Legal Counsel Steve Torigiani, and Curtis Lawler (Stetson Engineers)

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Allen called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. Ms. Thompson called roll. All Directors except for Director Hibbits were present providing a quorum.

II. ADDITIONS, IF ANY, TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment. Ms. Thompson announced she did not receive any public comments prior to the meeting.

IV. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE MINUTES

President Allen submitted the minutes of the special meeting of March 10, 2021 for Board approval. Director Marymee made a MOTION to approve the minutes. Director Jordan seconded the motion and it passed by the following roll call vote:

AYES, Directors: Cynthia Allen, Mark Altshuler, Steve Jordan,
Brett Marymee

NOES, Directors: None

ABSENT, Directors: Art Hibbits

V. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 43RD ANNUAL ENGINEERING SURVEY AND REPORT ON WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS OF THE SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, 2020-2021

President Allen opened the public hearing. Ms. Thompson announced that she received the 43rd Annual Engineering Survey and Report on Water Supply Conditions of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District for 2020-2021 on April 21, 2021, the Public Hearing was properly noticed, and the full report is available to the public on the District's website (SYRWCD.com). Mr. Buelow, Groundwater Program Manager, provided a review of the report including changes derivative of Director comments and requests on the 42nd Annual Report.

Discussion followed. There was no public comment.

President Allen closed the public hearing and continued the hearing to the June 2, 2021 Special Board meeting to allow the public 30 days to review the report.

VI. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

A. Retirement Plan Changes

Mr. Walsh reviewed Memorandum dated March 10, 2021 regarding Retirement Plan Changes. He proposed the District change the policy for matching of the voluntary 457 Plan contribution from two-to-one basis to a one-to-one basis, effective July 1, 2021. Discussion followed.

Director Marymee made a MOTION to approve the District to match the voluntary 457 Plan contribution dollar for dollar up to a maximum of 7% of the employee's annual base salary. Director Altshuler seconded, and it passed by the following roll call vote:

AYES, Directors: Cynthia Allen, Mark Altshuler, Steve Jordan,
Brett Marymee
NOES, Directors: None
ABSENT, Directors: Art Hibbits

B. Three-Year Budget and Rate Options

Mr. Walsh presented the Budget Worksheet for FY 2021-22, FY 2022-23, and FY 2023-24. He reviewed the impacts of a proposed 3% increase in Groundwater Charge Rates over the next three fiscal years. Discussion followed, no action.

C. Draft Preliminary Budget FY 2021-22

Mr. Walsh presented the Preliminary Draft Budget for FY 2021-22 and reviewed his Memorandum dated April 28, 2021 regarding the same topic. There were no comments and no action.

D. Redistricting – Census Review of Division Boundaries

Mr. Walsh reviewed his Memorandum dated April 28, 2021 regarding Redistricting – Review of Division Boundaries. He advised that as the 2020 Census shows population changes then Divisions may need to be changed by March 2022. Discussion followed, no action. Director Marymee requested to see a map of the District divisions with 2010 census populations reflected.

E. 2021-22 Drought Outlook

Mr. Walsh reviewed the Rainfall and Reservoir Summary of April 19, 2021 and the 2021-22 drought outlook. Discussion followed, no action.

F. 2021 Water Rights Releases

Mr. Walsh announced he anticipates a downstream release of 8,000 to 12,000 acre-feet beginning as soon as July 2021 or more likely August as discussed in his email regarding Preliminary Schedule: SYRWCD 89-18 Water Rights Release for 2021 dated April 23, 2021. There were no comments and no action.

VII. GROUNDWATER PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

A. Groundwater Production, Reporting, and Charges

Mr. Buelow reviewed income received from Groundwater Pump Charges and Groundwater Production reported to date since January 1, 2021. There were no comments and no action.

B. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

1. Receive GSP Consultant Update

Mr. Buelow reported that GSAs have released Draft Water Budget Tech Memos for the EMA, WMA, and CMA. Public review periods for the documents extend through early May 2021. Citizen Advisory Groups for each Management Area continue to review and discuss each section of the GSP released for public comment. There were no comments and no action.

2. Receive GSP Stakeholder Engagement Update

Mr. Buelow reported that staff distributed the third SGMA Newsletter to District constituents. Distribution of the SGMA Newsletters has resulted in increased website visits to SantaYnezWater.org. There were no comments and no action.

3. Receive Telecon Memorandum of Conversation with DWR

Mr. Buelow presented his Staff Memorandum dated April 19, 2021 summarizing multiple emails and a telephone conversation on 4-15-2021 between District staff and

DWR staff, A. Regmi, regarding status of the Santa Ynez River Alluvium with SGMA GSPs. There were no comments and no action.

4. Receive Financial Update for GSP Projects

Mr. Buelow reviewed Estimates to Complete for EMA, CMA and WMA received from Stetson Engineers. Discussion followed, no action. Director Altshuler requested Stetson provide details regarding any overruns that may be projected.

VIII. ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Steve Torigiani reported on a couple of legislative items.

IX. REPORTS, ACTS BY BOARD MEMBERS, QUESTIONS OF STAFF, STATUS REPORTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, OBSERVATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS, AND/OR COMMUNICATIONS NOT REQUIRING ACTION

Director Marymee reported he recently attended a videoconference regarding climate change at which Mr. Buelow presented about Environmental Awareness in Lompoc. He commended Mr. Buelow on an excellent presentation and his outreach for SGMA efforts.

Mr. Buelow announced that he was invited to present about SGMA to Solvang City Council and will do so at their next meeting.

President Allen announced that she will be attending CSDA Legislative Days on May 18 and 19, 2021 with costs paid for by Santa Barbara CSDA.

X. REQUEST FOR ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AGENDA

There were no requests.

XI. NEXT REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING, JUNE 2, 2021

The next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 2, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. and will include another Public Hearing on the 43rd Annual Engineering Survey and Report on Water Supply Conditions of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District for 2020-2021, location to be determined. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it may be held via video/teleconference call.

XII. CLOSED SESSION

At 9:05 p.m., the Board recessed for ten minutes then convened into Closed Session from 9:15 p.m. to 9:34 p.m. to discuss the following items:

- A. Conference with Legal Counsel - Pending Litigation (Gov. Code, § 54956.9, subd. (d)(1)): Wolff vs SYRWCD, Superior Court of California, County of Santa Barbara, Case No. 20CV01552


- B. Conference with Legal Counsel – Pending Litigation (Gov. Code, § 54956.9, subd. (d)(1)) relating to proceedings pending before the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) regarding Permits 11308 and 11310 issued on Applications 11331 and 11332 of the United States Bureau of Reclamation for the Cachuma Project, and complaints filed by the California Sport Fishing Protection Alliance regarding the operation of the Cachuma Project and SWRCB Order WR 89-18; proposed changes to the place and purpose of use of waters obtained through aforementioned permits for the Cachuma Project; and Reclamation’s Petition for Reconsideration or Rehearing re Order WR 2019-0148; and proceedings related to SWRCB Permit No. 15878 (Application A022423) held by the City of Solvang including the City of Solvang’s Petitions for Change and Extension of Time.
- C. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation (Gov. Code, § 54956.9, subd. (d)(2)): Significant exposure to litigation (One Matter).
- D. Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation (Gov. Code, § 54956.9, subd. (d)(4)): Possible initiation of litigation (One Matter).


XIII. RECONVENE OPEN SESSION/REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

President Allen advised there is nothing to report from Closed Session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Allen adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.


Cynthia Allen, President


Amber M. Thompson, Secretary