

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
WESTSIDE DISTRICT WATER AUTHORITY GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Held April 19, 2024

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Westside District Water Authority Groundwater Sustainability Agency (WDWA GSA or Agency) was held on April 19, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. in person at the Belridge Water Storage District office located at 21908 7th Standard Road, McKittrick, CA 93251.

CALL TO ORDER)
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Chairman Goff called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

ROLL CALL)
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The following directors were present: Rob Goff, Jeremy Blackwell, Leon Elwell, Bernard Pugét, Rob Yraceburu, and Rod Stiefvater.

The following individuals were also present: Mark Gilkey, Justin Rowe, Alex Dominguez, Morgan Campbell, Joe Hughes, Josh Dowell, Brad Kroeker, and Joshua Nugent.

Elisabeth Cervantes, Abbigale Seal, Brianda Rodriguez, and Mary King were present via teleconference.

CHANGES TO AGENDA)
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There were no requests to revise the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA)
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The Chairman asked if there were any questions concerning the Consent Agenda, which items were detailed in the Board packet. On motion of Jeremy Blackwell, seconded by Leon Elwell, and unanimously carried, the Board approved each item listed on the Consent Agenda on the following roll call vote:

AYES: Rob Goff
Jeremy Blackwell
Leon Elwell
Bernard Pugét
Rod Stiefvater

Rob Yraceburu

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

WDWA GSA Operations)
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April 16, 2024 Tulare Lake Subbasin Probationary Hearing: Morgan Campbell reported that that, on April 16, 2024, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) unanimously voted to put the Tulare Lake Subbasin on probation. As a result, Tulare Lake Subbasin landowners must also register all their wells, report their annual pumping volumes by December 1, and pay the associated registration and pumping fees. SWRCB presented that any Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) as a “good actor” at any time, not just during the probationary hearing. GSAs seeking this status are asked to provide the board with quantitative evidence from their Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to support their claim. The State Board also stressed the importance of outreach and engagement with beneficial groundwater users within a GSA during the development and implementation of a GSP. No Board action was taken.

Tule Subbasin State Water Resource Control Board Draft Staff Report: Morgan Campbell reported that the SWRCB draft staff report for the Tule Subbasin was released in March 2024. In the report, SWRCB staff recommended that the Tule Subbasin require landowners extracting groundwater from wells (regardless of volume extracted) located in proximity to the Friant Kern Canal install and use meters to measure their groundwater extractions. No Board action was taken.

Approval of Subsidence Management Actions: As a result of the information presented in the Tule Subbasin draft staff report, Morgan Campbell presented a staff recommendation to amend WDWA GSA’s existing “Well Extraction Volume Reporting with Proximity to Critical Infrastructure” management action language to require flowmeters to measure extraction. It was noted that several wells in the area are already metered. Upon discussion, Jeremy Blackwell motioned to approve the revision to the “Well Extraction Volume Reporting with Proximity to Critical Infrastructure” management action to require flowmeters as the only allowable extraction volume measurement method with a deadline of December 31, 2024 for landowners to comply, the motion was then seconded by Rod Stiefvater, and unanimously carried on the following roll call vote:

AYES: Rob Goff
Jeremy Blackwell
Leon Elwell
Bernard Pugét
Rod Stiefvater
Rob Yraceburu

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Morgan Campbell also reported that WDWA GSA staff distributed the Agency's approved subsidence management actions to the California Aqueduct Subsidence Program (CASP) for feedback. CASP provided feedback that the management actions could be strengthened by expanding the CASP "Buffer Zone" to run the entire length of the California Aqueduct within the WDWA GSA boundary rather than just from Mileposts 195-215. The Board directed staff to research the potential impacts of expanding the Buffer Zone on WDWA GSA interested parties and provide an update at the next Board meeting.

Groundwater Sustainability Plan Development: Morgan Campbell reported that the Kern County Subbasin is on track to have a coordinated Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for WDWA GSA to approve for release to the SWRCB and public on May 21, 2024. The Kern County Subbasin is also developing a revised coordination agreement that must be completed prior to submittal of the GSP. No Board action was taken.

Approval of Kern Non-Districted Lands Joint Powers Agreement: Alex Dominguez presented a draft of the Kern Non-Districted Lands Joint Powers Agreement (KNDL JPA) to the Board for consideration. The KNDL JPA will amend the existing Kern Groundwater Authority JPA to only provide non-districted ("white lands") Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) coverage to avoid triggering Subbasin-wide probation. Upon discussion, Jeremy Blackwell motioned to give the Board Chair the authority to sign the KNDL JPA pending final legal review, seconded by Bernard Pugét, and unanimously carried on the following roll call vote:

AYES: Rob Goff
Jeremy Blackwell
Leon Elwell
Bernard Pugét
Rod Stiefvater
Rob Yraceburu

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Approval of Self-Help Enterprises Kern County Subbasin Domestic Well Mitigation Letter of Intent: Morgan Campbell presented the Self-Help Enterprises Kern County Subbasin Domestic Well Mitigation Letter of Intent (LOI) for Board consideration. Morgan Campbell reported that SWRCB staff have indicated during technical advisory meetings that the Kern County Subbasin must have a domestic well mitigation program that would mitigate any domestic wells potentially impacted by the proposed groundwater level minimum thresholds to avoid probation. Rather than

manage individual mitigation programs as individual GSAs, the Kern County GSAs propose contracting with Self Help Enterprises to develop and operate a domestic well mitigation plan for the entire Subbasin. Participation in the LOI does not financially bind WDWA GSA to Self-Help Enterprises or other Subbasin GSAs. Upon discussion, Bernard Pugét motioned to sign onto the LOI, seconded by Rob Yraceburu, and unanimously carried on the following roll call vote:

AYES: Rob Goff
Jeremy Blackwell
Leon Elwell
Bernard Pugét
Rod Stiefvater
Rob Yraceburu

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – NON AGENDIZED ITEMS)
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No public participation occurred.


EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION)
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The Chairman directed that the Board move into closed session at 12:03 p.m. Legal counsel advised the Board that it has authority to hold a closed session under Government Code sections 54956.9(d)(2), and 54956.9(d)(4). All persons other than the Directors, Mark Gilkey, Justin Rowe, Alex Dominguez, Morgan Campbell, Brad Kroeker, Joe Hughes, Elisabeth Cervantes, Abbigale Seal, Brianda Rodriguez, and Mary King retired from the meeting.

Following the closed session, the meeting was again open to the public. Legal counsel advised that no reportable action was taken in the closed session.

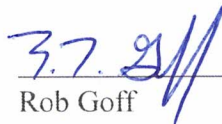
ADJOURNMENT)
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There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was adjourned at 1:04 p.m.



Rod Stiefvater
Secretary of the Board of Directors

APPROVED:



Rob Goff
Chairman

