

Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

Meeting called to order: at 8:32 a.m.

The Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (GWA) Steering Committee meeting was conducted via teleconference using Microsoft Teams. Chairman Charles Winn called the meeting to order. Reminders were provided to the attendees regarding meeting procedures.

Roll Call taken:

Roll call taken of members only.

In attendance were Chairman Winn; Directors Mike Henry; Robert Holmes and Alternate Directors Walter Ward; Andrew Watkins. Director Tom Flinn arrived after roll call was taken.

Others in attendance were logged via their sign into Microsoft Teams.

Discussion / Action Items:

1. Approval of the December 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes

No amendments to the minutes.

Motion: Director Robert Holmes

2nd: Director Mike Henry

Chairman Winn asked for any Opposed or Abstains. With none provided, the minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Discussion and Possible Action to Adopt Resolution R-22-XX Determining to Conduct Meetings Using Teleconferencing Pursuant to Government Code 54953 as Amended by AB 361

Mr. Matt Zidar with San Joaquin County reminded the Committee of the need for approval of resolution every 30 days. The Committee members were in agreement.

Motion: Alternate Director Walt Ward

2nd: Director Robert Holmes

Chairman Winn asked for any Opposed or Abstains. With none provided, the minutes were approved unanimously.

3. State of California Department of Water Resources (DWR) GSP Comments and Next Steps

Mr. Matt Zidar of San Joaquin County (SJC) provided a review of the DWR Comments on the GSP and the next steps, noting that the Board directed the Steering Committee (SC) to coordinate the responses with input from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Mr. Zidar added that the TAC discussed technical

issues at their January 6th meeting and are awaiting legal review and comments, before bringing to the GWA Board in February. Mr. Zidar asked for GSA comments to be provided to him within the next two weeks, for consideration in the final response.

Chairman Winn questioned if there have been any discussions with surrounding basins, regarding their DWR comments received and potentially coordinating basin-wide standard responses to comments. Mr. Zidar advised that conversations are being had with other basins, noting that Woodard & Curran is also working with other basins, in addition to ours, and have seen other comments received. Ms. Leslie Dumas with Woodard & Curran added that in Northern California, only one other basin, Merced Basin, has received the detailed DWR letter, which included similar comments to ours. Mr. Zidar added that he would like to have a conversation with Merced Basin, in addition to conversations with TAC, Legal and volunteer members.

Chairman Winn questioned if there was any discussion of the 16 GSAs coming together to discuss, rather than duplicating efforts on individual work. Additionally, he suggested a work group or committee to save resources and come to a common response. Mr. Zidar noted that the DWR comments was distributed to all GSAs with a request for GSA response comments. Once received, those GSA comments will be consolidated for presentation to the Board in February. Mr. Zidar discussed not having a SC Meeting in February and extending the Board Meeting to include a workshop covering water budgets, accounting framework, and DWR comments prior to the full Board Meeting.

Director Walt Ward added that the overall tone of the response to DWR needs to be one of a positive face, letting DWR know that the basin is working together to meet substantial compliance. Director Ward noted that the basin needs to meet substantial compliance and move on to the implementation of the GSP. Chairman Winn added that the Tracy Subbasin GSP was approved with only 6 GSAs working, he is really appreciative of the efforts of our 16 GSAs and the ability to work together through challenges.

4. DWR Proposal for SGMA Implementation Grant Funds

Mr. Zidar provided a brief review of the DWR Proposal for SGMA Implementation Grant Funds, as previously discussed. Mr. Zidar noted that one single proposal is due by February 18th and will likely include projects submitted by NSJWCD, SJC, and City of Stockton. Mr. Zidar reviewed the grant funds available, noting the specific figures and categories allocated. The basin will submit minimum 10 million dollars in projects, to allow for additional funding in the event legislation changes and additional funding becomes available and if there is a need to negotiate with DWR regarding which projects can be funded. Mr. Zidar provided an overview of the Spending Plan and its goals and noted that an official Grant resolution will be brought before the Board in February for approval.

Mr. Zidar went into additional detail on the City of Stockton project proposal, noting that it fits within the 3.7-million-dollar direct action allocation category which included geophysical study and projects. NSJWCD asked to receive full details on the proposed project.

5. Model Updates and GSA Water Budgets: TAC Activities and Next Steps

Mr. Zidar provided a brief overview of the Model Update discussions within the TAC, noting that the TAC conversations were very productive and ended with the TAC ready to make some recommendations to the SC and Board in February. Mr. Zidar added that a Technical Memo would be forthcoming and discussed further at the TAC level. Additionally, there are many conversations to be had at the GSA/legal level regarding the Operational GSA Water Budgets. Mr. Zidar noted that details of the model and TM

would be provided in workshop and that GSAs should provide feedback on the TM to the TAC for consolidation and presentation to SC and Board.

Mr. Zidar provided the next steps of the Modeling, including completing the update of baseline conditions, presenting projected water budgets and net contribution for each GSA to TAC, a workshop to be held in February, and preparing information for Water Accounting Framework.

6. Water Accounting Framework Discussion, Status, and Next Steps

Mr. Zidar gave a brief overview of the Water Accounting Framework status and next steps, noting that the schedule is behind slightly, due to the Model Update being behind schedule. Mr. Zidar added that staff is working with several consultant groups, Woodard & Curran, Stantec, Davids Engineering, and that an integrated workplan and schedule is being developed. Mr. Zidar noted that the GSA surveys have been completed by Stantec and the next steps include GSA interviews, case studies, and workshop in February. Case studies are being reviewed by DWR currently, before presenting to the group.

Mr. Zidar reminded the group, as previously discussed, that there will be no SC Meeting in February, as it will be replaced with a longer Board Meeting to include a workshop and business meeting. Mr. Zidar asked the members to keep the full morning of February 9th open.

Staff Reports:

1. DWR

Ms. Chelsea Spier with DWR provided her monthly report, included in the agenda package. Ms. Spier noted there was nothing new to report but did remind the group that January 14th was the due date to request areas for AEM Surveys.

2. Other Items

Mr. Zidar provided a brief update on the Demonstration Recharge, Extraction and Aquifer Management (DREAM) Project, noting that both the coordination and monitoring committees were active, and the project is coming along.

Public Comment:

None Provided.

Director Comment:

None Provided.

Future Agenda Items:

Mr. Zidar noted that the future agenda items would include a discussion on snow melt runoff and what's in the future for operations of reservoirs.

Chairman Winn added the need for discussion on in-person and/or hybrid meetings, noting productivity and the need to catch up. Chairman Winn asked to have further discussion on funding and potential tax initiative, noting that he will have some additional information next month on the initiative, funding, and match fund challenges.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:31 a.m.