

MINUTES

MONO COUNTY TRI-VALLEY GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT Regular Meeting of April 27, 2022 6:30 P.M. Chalfant Community Center – in-person only

Chairperson Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:33 P.M. on April 27, 2022. Meeting was held in-person.

Roll Call:

Directors Present: Mitchell, West, Dunn (via zoom), and Bassett.

Directors Absent: Allen, Moss (excused due to health issues) and Duggan (family health).

Advisory board present: M. Cook, D. Murphy, and A. Puhvel

Mono County (M.C.) Personnel in attendance: Michael Draper, Planning Dept.

Note – during the meeting, some of the agenda items were addressed out of order to accommodate one of the speakers.

1. Tri-Valley Groundwater Management District (TVGMD) Advisory Board (A.B.)

A. Advisory Board Report and Comment.

M. Cook reported that the A.B. had met on Monday, April 18. At that meeting:

1. The A.B. adopted AB361 for the period of 4/18/22 to 5/18/22.
2. A.B. By-Laws were reviewed and some changes decided on. The revised By-Laws were sent to Director Mitchell for some additional information and to be added to the April 27, 2022 TVGMD Board (Board) agenda.
3. There was a discussion about grant writing and grant writing assistance for the Prop 1 funds available through IRWMP.
4. The final proposed groundwater well monitoring plan was presented by A. Puhvel. It was sent to Director Mitchell to add to the April 27, 2022 agenda.
5. There was discussion about appointing an A.B. chairperson. Further discussion will take place during the next A.B. meeting.
6. Public attendee Peter Stickles gave some historical perspective regarding the development of water conservation methods undertaken by Zack Ranch.
7. B. McDonald mentioned that the TVGMD newsletter was ready for distribution, pending Board approval.
8. Director Mitchell mentioned that the A.B. can now review and appoint new A.B. members, rather than the review and appointment being done during a Board meeting.
9. Due to the Board May meeting being held a week early, the next A.B. meeting date is TBD.

M. Cook received a letter of interest from Ed Parkinson (Benton) to join the A.B. This was received too late to put on this April 27, 2022 agenda. If the May A.B. meeting is

held, the potential appointment will be on that agenda. If not, it will be on the May 18 Board agenda.

B. Advisory Board question.

B. McDonald, from the A.B., is wondering if the TVGMD will be writing the grant for the groundwater model project. See information from Holly Alpert in agenda item #5.

C. Advisory Board By-Laws.

The most recent version of the A.B. By-Laws was reviewed, with the following comments made:

- a. Director Dunn feels that Article III. A., the first sentence is all that is needed for that item; #1 and #2 can be omitted. Director Bassett feels that #1 and #2 should remain, with #3 being something to the effect of “other methods of communication, data gathering, etc. that become available with time.
- b. Director West feels that Article III. B. (A.B. shall not have the authority to) should be:
 - 1) disseminate information or communication not authorized by the Board.
 - 2) engage in agreements/contracts or potential agreements/contracts without prior directive from the Board.
- c. Director Dunn mentioned that in Article IV, “permanent residents of the Tri-Valley....” should be changed to “permanent residents who are the owners of record of property in the Tri-Valley and are registered voters”. This would make the requirement match the language in the TVGMD statute.

The edits will be made and presented at the next A.B. meeting.

2. Public Comments (on any matter).

None.

3. Approval of minutes of the March 23, 2022 meeting (Attachment B).

Motion to approve both the March 23, 2022 and the April 20, 2022 minutes was made by Director West and seconded by Director Dunn.

Vote – all directors in attendance – “yes”.

4. Discussion and possible approval of the May 2022 Newsletter (Attachment C).

Note – while the newsletter email address group is being developed, M.C. has agreed to distribute the Newsletter via their other Tri-Valley-related email groups. The newsletter will also be printed and posted at potential locations such as Flo’s Diner, the Benton Store, etc., pending owner approval. Director West mentioned that he can post the newsletter on the TVGMD website if it is received in the appropriate format.

Edits requested by the Board:

Director West stated that, for safety concerns, the personal emails and home addresses listed on page 2 “Contacts and Links” should be removed.

Director Dunn pointed out the typo in the “2002 Strategic Plan” on page 1. That should say “2022 Strategic Plan”.

Director Bassett requested the header and footer to be changed to the TVGMD correct name and abbreviation. Page 4 also has the incorrect abbreviation.

M. Cook to make the corrections and resend to Director Mitchell for distribution to the Board for approval. Director Mitchell will send the approved newsletter to M. Draper for email distribution.

5. Review and provide input to the Mono County Board of Supervisors regarding a project description funding request to Inyo-Mono Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program for funding to develop a hydrologic groundwater model of the Tri-Valley (Attachment D).

- A. Holly Alpert, of the IRWMP, gave an update on the Prop 1 funding and the proposed groundwater model project.
- 1). IRWMP is still waiting for the final Request for Proposal (RFP) from DWR. It was supposed to be available in April 2022. This RFP would spell out the requirements for the proposal.
 - 2). As far as writing the proposal, if Inyo County (I.C.) has already started the work, M.C. should coordinate with them for assistance or take over where they have left off. M.C. is the project sponsor, so, M.C. should do and/or assist with the writing. H. Alpers can help some and the TVGMD Board will need to assist with some of the historical details.
 - 3). A 1% match will be required by the project sponsor. So, with the estimated \$199,000 cost of the project, M.C. must commit to \$2,000.
 - 4). This project is one of 8 to 10 projects that IRWMP is submitting for the Prop 1 funding package. The total package is approximately \$2.7 million. If the whole \$2.7 million is not approved, IRWMP will prioritize the dispersal of the funds that are received.
 - 5). M.C./TVGMD would need to follow the M.C. bidding rules as far as how many bids are required for the project consultant.
- B. The Mono County Board of Supervisors (MCBOS) has this project on their May 3, 2022 agenda. TVGMD Board support of the project is on file with the MCBOS.
- C. Director West mentioned that we need to make sure that the percentages of the different water sources for Fish Slough need to be identified as one of the main goals of the project. Where does the water actually come from and how much comes from each source? This could potentially be added to Task 3 of the proposal.
- D. P. Stickles asked how many pages are usually in these types of reports. H. Alpers responded that the RFP will determine that to an extent. But, that 20 or more pages, plus maps, is probably typical.
- E. The timeframe of when the groundwater model would be ready was asked. H. Alpers replied that with the grant process and then the project itself, it will probably be 2 ½ to 3 years before the model is completed.

6. Brief Report of Director Activities.

Director Bassett reported that:

- A. in April, water level measurements were taken at the Benton and Chalfant CASGEM wells. The Benton well was 0.15 feet lower than the March measurement. The Chalfant well was 0.1 feet higher than the February measurement. This was mistakenly reported as 1 foot higher during the meeting.
- B. the balance of our account is \$ 11,587.42. This does not yet take into account the Warrant Request for reimbursement to Director West for website expenses; that paperwork is still in progress.
- C. she has received the correspondence from Ed Parkinson mentioned in #1A.

Director Mitchell reported that she attended the April 18, 2022 A.B. meeting. She commented that the Board needs to communicate with each other about attending the A.B. meetings so that we remain in compliance with the Brown Act.

7. Owens Valley Groundwater Authority.

A. Report on recent OVGA meeting.

Director Bassett reported that at the 4/14/2022 OVGA meeting:

- 1). Dr. Steinwand presented the final 22/23 budget, which does not include any additional contributions from the agencies represented on the OVGA Board. The budget was approved by the OVGA Board.
- 2). Dan Totheroh, representing Inyo County, reported that Inyo County has committed to contributing the same amount of money in 22/23 as it during the start of the JPA. Dr. Steinwand commented that, per the JPA, this will give I.C. an additional vote.
- 3). I.C. Counsel John Vallejo presented a resolution to change the OVGA GSA boundary from its current location to making the north boundary end at the Inyo-Mono County line. After minimal discussion, the resolution was adopted.
- 4). Dr. Steinwand reported that, assuming no need for additional meetings to implement the boundary change, staff can work on the proposed action items and the next meeting won't need to be until July 14, 2022. Following that meeting, there will be one on approximately August 4, 2022 and then sometime in March 2023.

Additional meetings to renew the AB361 resolution will be decided at a later date.

B. Draft letter to DWR regarding TVGMD interest in Groundwater Sustainability Agency Status.

Director Mitchell reported that we have received notice from DWR that the previously submitted GSA request is fine; TVGMD does not have to reapply for the GSA status. All that is needed, once it is ready, is a new map of the basin showing the different GSA boundaries.

M. Draper reported that he is working with M.C. Counsel Simon on preparing a notice the DWR for M.C. to become the GSA for the remaining Mono County area in the Owens Valley Basin that is not covered by TVGMD.

8. Discussion and possible action on Tri-Valley Well Monitoring plan as proposed by Advisory Board member Andy Puhvel with a contract proposal by Team Engineering of Bishop (Attachment F).

A. Puhvel explained that the existing well data is from the TVGMD CASGEM wells, the M.C. monitoring wells, and from Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP, DWP). There are data gaps in Hammil and Benton. The proposal to increase well monitoring by a third party would help lessen the data gaps and have more information available for the groundwater model project if it is accepted.

Director West asked if this task can be added to the proposed groundwater model project.

Discussion involved asking the MCBOS to fund the third party monitoring, asking Supervisor Duggan to present this fund request to the BOS, how many bids would be needed, and the need for an updated access agreement to enable the TVGMD Board, A.B. members, and/or a third party to monitor wells on private property. The main issue is specifying liability for damage to the measuring device and/or well equipment during the monitoring.

Director Mitchell commented that the USGS will put in monitoring wells. Financing options need to be investigated once the TVGMD has their GSA status.

A. Puhvel commented that, once the access agreement is updated, TVGMD Board and/or

A.B. members could monitor the 4 proposed wells themselves.

A potential item for the next newsletter – ask Tri-Valley residents doing any well/pump improvements that involve removing equipment from their well to get a water level reading at that time and report it to the Board.

Director Dunn and Director West asked for more discussion before any action was decided.

Director Mitchell will send the current Key Well agreement to M.C. Counsel Simon to start the update process, determine if I.C. has an access agreement started, and determine how many bids are needed in M.C. for a project of this sort.

9. Review of process on financing in accordance with State requirements.

Presenter not able to attend meeting. Deferred to May 18, 2022 meeting.

10. Public Comment (on any matter).

Director West reported that he has received the latest DWP snow runoff projections from the National Weather Service in Reno. They are better than he thought they would be. He will forward to the Board.

Denver (Chalfant) works in a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) position. He is willing to assist TVGMD Board with anything he can.

11. Adjournment to Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 6:30 p.m., in Benton (pending COVID-19 status).

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Director Dunn and seconded by Director West. Vote – all directors in attendance – “yes”. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Next regular meeting will be held on the third Wednesday (a week early) of May 2022:

**May 18, 2022
At 6:30 P.M. at the Benton Community Center**

**Geri Bassett
Secretary, TVGMD**