

# Board Meeting

## Petaluma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency

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Regular Meeting Minutes  
February 28, 2018  
4:00 p.m.  
Petaluma Community Center  
320 N McDowell Blvd, Petaluma

<b>Member Agency</b>	<b>Directors</b>	<b>Alternates</b>
<i>City of Petaluma</i>	Mike Healy	Dan St. John
<i>County of Sonoma</i>	David Rabbitt	James Gore
<i>North Bay Water District</i>	Carolyn Wasem	Mike Sangiacomo
<i>Sonoma County Water Agency</i>	Susan Gorin	James Gore
<i>Sonoma Resource Conservation District</i>	Bruce Abelli-Amen	Jennifer Kuszmar

### 1. Call to Order, Roll Call

**Vice-Chairman Bruce Abelli-Amen** called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. Directors Wasem and Healy were present. Vice-Chairman Bruce Abelli-Amen announced that Chairman Rabbitt was coming from a flood-related event and would be about 20 minutes late, so he shuffled the agenda to hear the Advisory Committee Report and Item 5A prior to the Consent Calendar. Chairman Rabbitt arrived at 4:20 p.m.

### 3. Directors/Subcommittee Report

None.

### 4. Advisory Committee Report

**Andy Rodgers, Petaluma GSA Advisory Committee Chairman** gave an overview of the recent topics discussed at Advisory Committee meetings. Rodgers commented that Advisory Committee members are interested to get out of the meeting room and into the field. He also had one question on the Permit Sonoma presentation: What is the difference between ministerial and other permits in the current program?

### 5A. Information: Storm Water Capture & Groundwater Recharge and Southern Sonoma Storm Water Resources Plan

**Kent Gylfe, Sonoma Water**, presented the mentioned Plan. Noteworthy items:

- Groundwater recharge for watershed is primarily in areas where the Wilson Grove Formation is at or near the surface and some areas in the north part of the basin. Much of the recharge opportunities appear to be outside the basin.
- Reviewed past storm water capture/groundwater recharge studies.
- The top tier project concepts supported both flood control and groundwater recharge; these were the areas of focus most beneficial to the basin: Flood plain management & detention basins were the top two concepts.

In 2013, Sonoma Water received a Proposition 1E grant for a flood control/groundwater recharge project in the Fryer Creek watershed in Sonoma Valley. Ultimately, limited recharge capacity and strong neighborhood opposition made the project infeasible at the first site, and the second site didn't move forward because of neighborhood opposition and concerns expressed by current users of the property. The funding for the project has been shifted to a project in the Petaluma Valley.

Lessons learned that are applicable to all basins:

- Need to be careful to not move flood problems downstream.
- Complex geology in Sonoma County. Challenging to identify good recharge locations. Had good guidance from regional data, but the site-level testing wasn't as promising and not good information regarding how far the aquifer extended. Groundwater mounding were additional concerns regarding leach fields, structural concerns.
- Land use issues were raised even though the projects were proposed on publicly owned land (for example open space and parks).
- May be easier to work with private landowners than public lands.
- Need to look at land use policies and plans to make sure we aren't intentionally limiting ourselves to recharge and detention projects.

In Petaluma Valley, Sonoma Water is working to enhance the XP SWM model the city created in unincorporated areas (upstream of city limits). It is a 2D model, much more granular, includes detailed surveys of bridges and crossings, and uses the same parameters as the FEMA model. Sonoma Water is also working with ReNUWit (Nation Science Foundation, UC Berkeley, and Stanford) on non-technical issues (social, legal and other constraints). The study has provided some good tools.

**Melissa Carter (ESA)**, covered the Southern Sonoma Storm Water Resources Plan (SWRP). She discussed development of the plan and said projects need to meet multiple criteria. Project proponents need to provide quantitative information. Twenty-five projects in the SWRP are located in the Petaluma River watershed and include planning and studies. The Report is publicly available online.

Regarding the projects (not the plans or studies), there are a total of seven projects in Petaluma River watershed; four in the basin and three outside the basin. In Petaluma Valley Basin, field investigations found the best potential is Upper Lichau and Carriger creeks. The results: Penngrove Ranch – there are concerns regarding perched Groundwater conditions. Coyote Family Farm was more promising for recharge.

#### Board Member Comments and Questions

- Does project criterion look at overdraft areas?
  - This was looked at during the desktop study. But it didn't look at encouraging or discouraging projects. Address this in the appendices, as to whether to rank groundwater recharge potential. Knowing where groundwater depression zones are is high on the priority list in Sonoma Valley.
- How can one be included in the future?
  - There is an online form that can be used. New projects will be added periodically.

- Can we look at USGS process and then say, “We need to target XX amount of groundwater to be recharged?”
  - The USGS study will provide information and overall metrics on what needs to be achieved. The process of developing the GSP will drive how much water needs to be recharged in a basin or particular area.

## 2. Consent Calendar

Resolution:

The Board thanked Tito Sasaki for being a great proponent of agriculture as Farm Bureau president during his role with the GSA formation. He is always front and center on water issues, persistent, knowledgeable, and does his homework. Sasaki always tries to find simple solutions for complex problems.

Sasaki thanked the Board. He was honored to be a staff member of the GSA and impressed by Petaluma staff. “You have excellent staff and they will continue to support you, so the Board can show how a GSA can function”.

**Director Healy** moved to approve the Consent Calendar as presented, **Director Abelli-Amen** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

### 6A. Election of Officers:

**Vice-Chair Abelli-Amen** moved that Chairman Rabbitt continue as chairman, **Director Healy** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

**Director Healy** moved that **Vice-Chair Abelli-Amen** continue as vice-chairman, **Chairman Rabbit** seconded, Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

### 6B. Rate/Fee Study:

Staff provided an overview of the rate and fee study, including the background, options considered, summary of the fee based on groundwater use, and the Board decision to pursue member agency contributions. Raftelis completed the report with recommendations, including documenting existing wells, the well registration program, determining how to address overlapping parcels, how to address cannabis, and groundwater recharge accounting. Staff also provided an update on the Santa Rosa Plain fee study.

#### Board Member Comments and Questions

- Has anyone else done a well registration program?
  - Monterey has a program. Marcus Trotta, Sonoma Water, clarified the proposed well registration program is currently only moving forward in Santa Rosa Plain.

#### Public comments

- There was a question regarding the Santa Rosa Plain program and proposed fee.

**Director Healy** moved to accept the final report from Raftelis Financial Consultants, **Director Wasem** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

### 6C. Technical Support Services

Staff provided an overview of California Department of Water Resources (DWR)’s Technical Support Services (TSS) program. The Petaluma Valley GSA applied for Technical Support Services and received word from DWR that it has been approved for the installation of six shallow wells near

existing stream and stream gages. All the locations are on public right of ways or publicly owned properties. DWR pays for well driller and well logger. GSA would cover permitting, siting, and environmental. Generally, these kinds of wells are \$8,000-\$10,000 each.

#### Board Member Comments and Questions

- How many seasons does it take to get a valuable data set for the GSP?
  - The longer record, the better. Just drilling the wells will provide valuable information and initial monitoring will help us determine the Surface water groundwater connection.
- Is there brackish water where Adobe Creek enters Petaluma River?
  - Yes, this is a data gap (connection of saline water and whether it's influencing groundwater).
- Will there be data recorders to get continuous measurements?
  - Yes, pressure transducers and for wells near Petaluma River, water quality.

**Director Healy** moved to authorize the Administrator to sign an agreement with DWR for Technical Support Services, **Director Abelli-Amen** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

#### **6D. 2017-2018 Audit**

Brett Bradford, Pisenti & Brinker, LLP, made a presentation on the 2017-2018 Audit, informing the Board that the audit was complete and that the auditors issued an unqualified statement. Systems-wise, no flaws. He noted that there is not a tremendous amount of activity and controls need to be proportionate to risk.

**Vice-Chairman Abelli-Amen** moved to accept the audit as presented; **Director Healy** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

#### **6E. FY 2017-18 Budget Adjustment**

Staff provided a brief report on the budget adjustment that shows in-kind services as both a revenue and expense. There are no fiscal impacts to the 2017-2018 budget.

**Director Wasem** moved the budget adjustment be made and a resolution be approved, **Director Healy** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

#### **6F. Agency Reserve Policy**

Staff provided an overview of why a reserve policy is desired and asked for Board feedback on the following questions:

- Should reserves be equivalent to two months or three months of operating expenses?
- Should reserves be part of the annual budget?
- Should reserves be funded with surplus operating cash?
- Should reserves carry forward to the following fiscal year?

The Board discussed the need to consider a future reserve in case of legal challenges. It was noted that RCPA didn't have a reserve to fight a court decision and it created a problem. The Board provided feedback that a reserve policy should include three months' operating expenses; annual approval; surplus operating cash; carry forward.

#### **6G. 2019-2020 Budget**

Staff reviewed the draft 2019-2020 budget. It was noted that the budget would include a three-month operating reserve and funding for a well registration program (although the program itself

wouldn't move forward without separate Board direction). A final budget will be brought to the Board at its April meeting.

**7. Plan Manager & Administrator Update:**

The Administrator mentioned that updates were provided in the written staff report.

Marcus Trotta provided the Plan Manager update. He said staff is focused on the groundwater sustainability plan, and the negotiations with DWR on Technical Support Services. The USGS final report was delayed by the government shutdown but it is hoped it will be final in spring or summer.

**8. Public comment on matters not listed on the agenda but within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board**

None.

**9. Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.**