

# Board Meeting

## Petaluma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Regular Meeting Minutes  
 October 25, 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**

- a. **Director David Rabbitt**, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm, and noted that a quorum of the board was present, consisting of the following Directors: Bruce Abelli-Amen, Mike Healy, David Rabbitt and Carolyn Wasem (arrived 4:16 pm).

**2. Consent Calendar**

- a. **Approve Minutes of August 23, 2018**
- b. **Approve Year-To-Date Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2017-2018**
- c. **Approve In-Kind Member Agency contributions for Fiscal year 2018-2019**

No public comment.

**Director Healy** moved to approve the consent calendar as presented, **Director Abelli-Amen** seconded. Motion passed 3-0-2 (Director Gorin and Director Wasem absent).

**3. Director/Subcommittee Reports**

- a. No report at this time.

**4. Advisory Committee Report**

**Ann DuBay**, Administrator mentioned there will be an Advisory Committee meeting in November and the meeting participants will get an update on the county permitting process - as it relates to water use - and will review GSP sections, Introductions, and Basin Setting.

**5. Information Items**

**a. Agricultural Community Proposal**

**Mike Martini**, representing Sonoma Alliance of Vineyards and Economy (SAVE), gave a presentation. Main points included:

- Quality and dependable source of water is critical for agriculture.
- Farmers do amazing things with limited resources.

- Need to understand the problem before developing a solution.
- A solution to groundwater problems will involve agriculture, since they provide recharge.

Steps being undertaken by the group:

Voluntary well monitoring system: Most are in Santa Rosa Plain, there are a few in Alexander Valley and Sonoma Valley. Tracking data scientifically. Working to create a network of deep and shallow wells to help track aquifer flows. They submitted an application to LAFCO to create a water district; 10,000 acres, more than 300 properties, in Santa Rosa Plain. LAFCO deemed the application incomplete. Once set-up, they can expand into other areas. Studies that are already done can feed the GSP. A recharge project has been done by Jackson Family Farms, and they are looking at results. They understand that grant money is available for doing the plan and believe that the plan should be done before charging people fees. Interested in partnering with GSAs and Sonoma Water to understand data points.

- Question - Where are the proposed district properties?
  - Answer - Northern Santa Rosa Plain. The properties can be up to two miles apart.

Public Comments:

**Sebastian Bertsch**, on SRP Advisory Committee (AC) panel, not speaking for AC. Rural well owner. Exciting to hear a proposal from larger agricultural landowners and larger well users. As a rural well owner, it resonates with people who drink the water and who use it for basic needs. Rural residential water users are vulnerable and underrepresented. Agriculture is represented through North Bay Water District and the Resource Conservation District. No specific group is representing and supporting rural residential well owners. Some people can't drink well water because of nitrates – have to filter it. Rural residential well owners also recharge aquifer through septic and irrigation. Concerned that LAFCO process is geared toward a seat on the board; rural residential should also get another seat on the board.

**Chairman Rabbitt** noted that many agriculture properties also have residents. Fee process has ended here.

**Director Wasem**: As a rural residential well owner, agrees with Sebastian's points. Agriculture needs to be a good neighbor. Biggest concern is that a plan was underway without explicitly reaching out to agriculture. Also, feels that groundwater recharge discussion hasn't gained traction. Frustrated that agriculture landowners haven't had an opportunity to discuss what their contribution could be.

**Director Healy**: In Petaluma Valley, big adobe soil issue, so recharge can be challenging.

**Chairman Rabbitt**: Recharge is at least half the equation, along with extraction.

#### b. Basin Boundary Modifications Update

**Marcus Trotta**, Sonoma Water, updated the Board on Basin boundaries defined by Bulletin 118; changes can only be made by requests of local agencies.

- Question - What is the status of formation of a groundwater sustainability agency for Wilson Grove Formation Highlands Basin?
  - Response - Waiting for results from DWR on Basin Boundary Modification and on basin reprioritizations before starting discussions on new GSA formation. Thinking about what it could mean, but haven't taken any steps.

#### c. Groundwater Sustainability Update

Marcus Trotta, updated the members. The USGS study should be done soon. In 2019, getting into groundwater system in the basin and water budget. Hope to wrap up this section in mid-2019. Will hold a public workshop to get input.

Will be relying on subconsultants, including modeling, water budget, development of sustainable management criteria and management actions.

- Question - When will we have a recharge map developed for the basin?
  - Response - There has been preliminary work; scoping studies done by Sonoma Water, including Petaluma Valley. Mapping work on soil, geologic and slope work. The USGS will help identify recharge areas. This basin has a lot of clay, so any recharge project that will provide benefit needs to have field investigations. We've learned that paper models don't work well.
- Comment **Director Wasem**: Can assist in three areas –
  - ❖ Including monitoring, and can pick up the bill. Lots of agriculture folks are doing this.
  - ❖ When have AC meetings, they feel like they provide questions and comments and they are brushed aside. As you develop the plan, provide a response for everyone and share.
  - ❖ Want to sit down with staff and her technical experts to help identify where recharge will occur.
  - Response - Staff will be tracking comments and how addressing
- Comment **Director Healy**: DWR/state board seem to have limited openness to what they will accept in regard to studies. MT: We expect they will accept USGS study results. Have been talking to agriculture about the protocols and requirements. The state has laid out protocols and BMPs and this will be helpful.
- Comment/Question – **Director Rabbitt**: Don't want to reinvent the wheel. Need to hit the sweet spot. Can we keep the volume low?
  - Response - The challenge will be balancing the content and the DWR requirements. We are tracking the 22 critically over drafted basins, and the plans they will be submitting by January 2020. Also tracking the alternative plans, and have reviewed the majority. We are waiting for DWR to complete the review of alternate basins and then we will have a better idea of what they will/won't accept – although the alternative plans aren't GSPs.
- Question **Director Rabbitt** - Are we going to be doing monitoring soon in PV? Especially around quality?
  - Response - This will be an area that we will be looking at closely in the data gap section. The Technical Support Services application provides an opportunity for Surface Water-Groundwater interaction.
- Comment **Director Wasem** – Would like someone to talk to her regarding monitoring.

Public comment:

**Suzanne Grady**, runs a local farm in Petaluma. 1-acre, mixed vegetables. Not clear what they mean when they discuss agriculture. Would be good to have small scale farms included in discussions. Well usage: The amount of manganese and bacteria has increased significantly. Can't use it for drinking. There are some water quality concerns that may not be on radar. As a small scale farm, will have to possibly take food safety measures.

- Response - When referring to agriculture, it's primarily vineyards. SGMA requires that GSAs look at potential water quality degradation as a result of GW management.
- Question **Director Rabbitt** - What is the SGMA baseline?
  - Response – January 1, 2015 is the baseline; the GSAs don't have to address issues pre-2015.

**6a. Contract with Sonoma County Water Agency: Consider authorization to enter into a contract with Sonoma Water through June 30, 2022 to provide technical, monitoring, outreach and grant administration services to the GSA.**

No questions, no comments.

**Director Healy** moved to contract with Sonoma County Water Agency through June 30, 2022 to provide technical, monitoring, outreach and grant administration services to the GSA, and **Director Wasem** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

**6b. Contract with California State University Sacramento – Consider authorization to enter into a contract with California State University Sacramento through June 30, 2020, to provide facilitation services.**

No questions, no comments.

**Director Healy** moved to contract with California State University Sacramento through June 30, 2020, to provide facilitation services, and **Director Abelli-Amen** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

**6c. Contract with Kronick, Moskowitz, Tiedemann and Girard, LLC: Consider authorization to enter into a contract for legal services through June 30, 2019.**

No questions, no comments.

**Director Healy** moved to contract with Kronick, Moskowitz, Tiedemann and Girard LLC for legal services through June 30, 2019, and **Director Abelli-Amen** seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Director Gorin absent).

**7. Legal, Plan Manager & Administrator Updates**

**Scott Morris**, Legal Counsel provided an overview of the Scott Rive case.

- Question -Does public trust apply to groundwater that affects surface water?
  - Response - Yes.
- Does SGMA pre-empt public trust doctrine responsibilities?
  - Response - No. It's a balancing test between public trust resource and water rights/human needs/SGMA. We need to look at it like a California Environmental Quality Act requirement: Will need to consider impact of plan on public trust. Throw in the public trust consideration in GSP.
- Public trust – isn't it broader?
  - Response - Yes, can include hunting, and other issues.

Plan Manager Update: Already covered most of the updates. TSS and USGS study should be complete by year end.

Administrator Update: A written update is in the packet. A fee study is ongoing for the Santa Rosa Plain GSA. Also looking at a well registration program. Andy Rodgers, Petaluma AC Chair, is the new SRP Administrator; there are no legal conflicts with him serving in both roles.

**Closing remarks:**

Chairman Rabbitt: Water reliability is becoming critical. Need to develop a new generation plan for water resources. Need to keep in mind the one water concept – we are trying to provide sustainability and reliability into the future.

Next meeting: Thursday, December 20, 4 p.m.