

OJAI BASIN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY
Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 28, 2024

The Regular Meeting of March 28, 2024, of the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency was called to order at 3:07 PM in the Council Chambers, Ojai City Hall, 401 S. Ventura Street, Ojai, CA 93023.

Attendees were: Board Members: Richard Hajas, Jim Finch and Andrew Whitman. General Manager Julia Aranda and Secretary/Treasurer Cece VanDerMeer.

Also in attendance: Jordan Kear, Consultant (via Zoom) and Peter Candy, Attorney

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Chair Hajas called the meeting to order at 3:07pm. VanDerMeer called the roll.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by Hajas.

3. **Director Announcements/Reports/Comments:**

Mutuals: Absent

Ojai Water Conservation District: None

City of Ojai: None

Casitas Municipal Water District: Hajas reported that Lake Casitas was 6 feet from spilling over the dam.

Community Facilities District Report: Absent

4. **GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS:** Aranda stated the Access database update was complete, and the extraction statements for the first calendar quarter would be mailed out with a cover letter explaining the increase in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan fee. Aranda reported there were two well applications pending. She reminded Board members to complete their Form 700s and provide them to Cece. Aranda reported the Municipal Service Review was approved by Ventura County Local Agencies Formation Commission at their meeting of March 20, 2024.

5. **BASIN STATUS REPORT:**

Jordan Kear had a presentation "Double Peaks and a Decade of Data". Kear reported the Key Well was 45.54' and there was 77,600 acre feet in the basin and was at 97% capacity.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA:**
William Weirick talked about the status of the spreading grounds and implementing a conjunctive use plan.
7. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
 - a. Finch motioned to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Whitman seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
Roll Call vote:
Ayes: Whitman, Finch and Hajas.
Noes: None
8. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**
 - a. **Well Application Cost Recovery and Agreement:** Aranda stated that she had worked on the process and criteria for the well application with Candy, Dudek, and Jordan and would have present a final document and resolution at the next Board meeting.
 - b. **Legislative Ad-Hoc Committee Update:** Aranda and Whitman met with Assemblymember Bennett's assistant, Michelle Sevilla, and discussed possible funding for small Groundwater Sustainable Agencies that extract under 10,000 acre feet or less. Whitman discussed meeting with the Department of Water Resources or the State Water Control Board. Aranda mentioned that Kevin Delano had been on Zoom at the last meeting and offered assistance with SGMA compliance.
 - c. **Meter Compliance Ad-Hoc Committee Update:** Hajas stated that the Basin has 180 total reported wells and 141 are metered. Of the 39 unmetered wells, the reporting process is difficult because the Agency cannot force the well owner to comply. Hajas discussed that a compliance strategy be put in place for well owners that do not have a meter or do not report by possibly placing a penalty or fees on the property tax bill. Hajas stated that the Agency look into a legal position to set standard for penalties.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm. The next regular scheduled meeting will be April 25, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber in Ojai City Hall, 401 S. Ventura Street, Ojai.

ATTEST: _____