

OJAI BASIN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCY
Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 30, 2025

The Regular Meeting of January 30, 2025, of the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency was called to order at 3:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Ojai City Hall, 401 S. Ventura Street, Ojai, CA 93023.

Attendees were: Board Members: Richard Hajas, Bob Daddi (arrived at 3:25), Andrew Whitman and Peter Thielke. General Manager Julia Aranda and Secretary/Treasurer Cece VanDerMeer.

Also in attendance: Peter Candy, Attorney and Jordan Kear, Consultant.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Chair Hajas called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. VanDerMeer called the roll.

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

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

Mutuals: None

Ojai Water Conservation District: None

City of Ojai: Whitman stated the City of Ojai received a Water Well Permit application. Whitman indicated the City Attorney was going to review the Ordinance regarding Water Well Permits subject to City of Ojai approval.

Casitas Municipal Water District: None

Community Facilities District Report: Daddi was not present at this time.

4. **GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS:**

Aranda reported the Department of Water Resources (DWR) reached out to Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA) to host listening sessions for GSAs that had previously applied for grants. The DWR wanted to find out what kind of obstacles they had in applying for grants and assist GSAs in pursuing grants. Aranda attended a meeting with the small GSA Coalition. Aranda had a meeting with the DWR on January 29, 2025, and they were interested in the obstacles that the GSAs are dealing with, for example the 50% grant matching funds which the OBGMA was unable to apply for due to funding constraints. Aranda stated that Nancy Ojeda, with the DWR is attending the OBGMA meeting via zoom and that they

had discussed the unique situation that small agencies are dealing with, since SGMA is a one size fits all they are working on streamline reporting.

Aranda reported the State Controllers Report is being prepared. Aranda stated VanDerMeer will be submitting the Board's emails to the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) for the Form 700 reporting which is due April 1, 2025.

Aranda stated the employment agreements with staff do not mention which holidays were paid, and she would meet with Candy to discuss the requirements.

5. BASIN STATUS REPORT:

Jordan Kear had a presentation "Like It's 1999". Kear reported the Key Well was 107.33' below ground level and there was 63,200 acre-feet in the Basin. The Basin capacity is at 79% capacity.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA:

Water Well owner David Cohn gave a report on the status of his well.

7. CONSENT AGENDA:

a. Thielke motioned to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Daddi seconded. The financial reports for November and December 2024 and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Roll Call vote:

Ayes: Hajas, Thielke, and Daddi

Noes: None

Abstain: Whitman

8. ACTION ITEMS:

a. Groundwater Sustainability Plan 2024 Annual Report:

Approve the proposal from Dudek to prepare the Groundwater Sustainability Plan 2024 Annual Report for a cost not to exceed \$23,410.00.

Daddi motioned to approve the Dudek proposal. Thielke seconded.

Roll call vote:

Ayes: Hajas, Thielke, Daddi and Whitman

Noes: None

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

a. Legislative Ad-Hoc Committee Update:

Daddi reported that it would be beneficial to meet with Monique Limon, Representative Bennett, and the State Water Board to discuss

the idea of a bill in support of assisting the GSAs. Whitman reported he attended a meeting with Atticus Reyes, Bennett's aide.

b. Meter Compliance Ad-Hoc Committee Update:

Aranda reported on Meter Compliance status. Aranda stated there were two groups of Well owners that were not in compliance, Group A and Group B. Aranda reported the Well Owners in Group A who were not in compliance were mailed certified letters as follows:

43 letters were mailed on November 1, 2024

36 letters were mailed on December 6, 2024

35 letters were mailed on January 10, 2025

Aranda stated the next step would be to send a 30-day notice for a Board Hearing to noncompliant well owners on February 10, 2025. Aranda reported the Ad Hoc committee met on January 13 to discuss a meter exemption process.

Aranda and staff conducted a second audit of noncompliance Well Owners and discovered there were fourteen additional noncompliance Well Owners (Group B) who were sent certified letters on January 10, 2025.

Aranda stated the next step would be to have a Board Hearing for the Well Owners that have not responded to the Meter Compliance letters and place penalties on property tax rolls.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm for a Closed Session. The next regular scheduled meeting will be February 27, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber in Ojai City Hall, 401 S. Ventura Street, Ojai.

ATTEST: _____