

1. A meeting of the GFWD Board was opened in person and telephonically on December 11, 2023 at 1:30 PM.

PRESENT: In person: Michael Naito, Seth Kirk, Nick Davis, Diane Kirk, Paul Stewart, Don Roberts, and Garth Pecchenino - QK Consultants.

Call in:

ABSENT: None

PUBLIC: None

CLOSED SESSION: President S Kirk closed the Public Meeting and the Board went into Executive Session at 1:31 PM.

OPEN SESSION: At 2:20 PM the Board reconvened in Regular Session with the following in attendance:

PRESENT: In person: Michael Naito, Seth Kirk, Nick Davis, Diane Kirk, Paul Stewart, Don Roberts, and Garth Pecchenino - QK Consultants.

Call-in: Paul Stewart, Tom Campagne; Garth Pecchenino - QK Consulting

ABSENT: None

PUBLIC: Call-in: Stephen Dota

REPORT ON EXECUTIVE SESSION: S Kirk stated no reportable action took place in the Closed Session.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: On a motion by P Stewart and a second by N Davis, the minutes of the regular meeting of November 13, 2023 were unanimously approved as emailed.

4. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: No potential conflicts were identified.

5. GSA/GSP (SGMA): Don reported the Madera Subbasin has hired Dave Ceppos, Sacramento State - Consensus & Collaboration Program (Grant Funded) to act as a mediator for the Subbasin GSA's. Garth and Don have both met with the mediator separately. All statements are confidential. Mediator is to meet with reps from the 7 GSA's and then have a group meeting with suggestions/recommendations. Ceppos advised approximately 40% of these situations end in stalemate. He advised that when he feels there is no viable agreement forthcoming, he calls a halt to the process.

Garth reported he had forwarded latest information from GFWD to our POC for submittal to DWR. Subbasin has been advised that DWR will be sending a letter to the GSA's on plan status before the end of 2023.

Discussed Garth's attached Dec 5th Memo regarding the District becoming a recharge only District as it relates to SGMS and the District's GSP (Q1-Q3)

6. WATER SUPPLY: Don advised the District had a measurable water supply from the Cottonwood Creek Water Right of 1598 AF.

7. SYSTEM MAINTENANCE: Still working on the leak issue.

8. MADERA REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP: Highlights of December meeting:
 - Update on status of projects
 - Agenda set for 2024
 - Dues set for 2024 - no change \$2,850/year
 - Still no change in Bylaws - no response from the State Attorney General on Brown Act issue
9. ANNEXATION REQUEST: Still working on criteria. Discussion on Annexation Questions and Responses in Garth's Dec 5th Memo to Board. No action taken.
10. PROP "218": Garth reported they are working on the items discussed at prior meetings for presentation to the Board for further modifications before finalizing the Engineer's Report. Once the Engineer's Report is completed, it will be available for public review for 45 days prior to a public hearing when possible action would be considered by the Board.
11. FINANCIAL REPORT: The Board was presented with a summary of the December 11, 2023 bills, the December 11, 2023 summary of the District's Temporary Investments and the December 2023 Income & Expenses for the year, along with the monthly totals of Temporary Investments for 2021, 2022 and 2023. On a motion by P Stewart and a second by M Naito, the Board voted unanimously to approve payment of the December bills in the amount of \$30,672.48.
12. CORRESPONDENCE & MANAGER'S REPORT: District received a Certificate from ACWA/JPIA for achieving a low ratio of Paid Claims and Case Reviews to Deposit Premiums in the Liability Program for the period 10/01/2019 - 09/30/2022.
13. BOARD COMMENTS & FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: None
14. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting declared adjourned at 3:30 PM.
Next scheduled meeting is changed to January 15, 2024 at 1:30 PM at O'Neill Farm Management Office. It is anticipated the meeting will be in person attendance with telephone call-in option.

Diane Kirk, Secretary/Treasurer



MEMO

Date: December 5, 2023
To: Gravelly Ford WD - Board
From: Garth A. Pecchenino, PE
Subject: Water Allocation/Annexation
cc: Name or delete

Project No.: 180035 /

The Board has requested insight into the following questions related to water distribution within the District and the impacts related to annexation of additional lands into the District. Both questions related to the impacts to the ability to continue a balanced basin under the criteria of SGMA.

Water Distribution:

Q1) What if the District just recharges all the water we take and have no restrictions on pumping?

R1) The SMGA guidelines directed that we show a water balance for water in (recharge and rainfall) and water out (pumping) related to the crop pattern demand within the boundary of the GSA. An allocation per acre is to be defined as part of the GSP, so stating that there would be no restriction would not be in compliance with the guidelines for SGMA and would not be in line with past responses to DWR through the GSP, revised GSP and annual reports. We have shown that the current crop demand can be met by the basin through the minimal reduction of ground water levels and measured subsidence numbers. DWR looks at agricultural pumping as the cause for reduction in ground water levels as impacts to domestic wells, water quality and ground subsidence. Therefore, having a reference to the balance of ground water pumping to crop demand would be a defined statement that could be supported through the data being collected by the District.

The well measurements would need to reflect that the recharged water has been placed across the service area to maintain groundwater levels within the established levels from the GSP to not have an unbalanced basin and not result in undesirable results or pass minimum thresholds set in the GSP. We should look at the placement of additional recharge basins to ensure the distribution of recharged water to not develop an area within the district that has values below the levels set in the GSP.

Q2) Under this option no deliveries to landowners but then no need for modifications to system maybe another pond?

R2) The ability to recharge and show that the recharge is beneficial to the district lands as a whole would be the goal under this question. Continued measurement of wells to monitor the groundwater levels and show that the approach is maintaining the groundwater levels within the levels that do not cross the minimum threshold level or cause undesirable results. Meaning that the



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GSA basin levels are maintained through the approach and the import and recharge of water meets the ability to balance the basin.

Q3) Do we have to change the type of District that GFWD is?

R3) I don't see that you would need to change the type of District, this would be conjunctive use within the structure of a Water District by the California Water Code, there would still be the ability to have service by surface water flows, but the historic use or delivery of crop demand water has been through the use of wells. It could change the approach by the district for funds in that of an annual assessment to purchase surface water to recharge to balance the basin.

This should also be responded to by the District legal counsel, Thomas Campagne.

Q4) Does this cause conflict or problems with our GSP?

R4) I would say no, the GSP has the District show the water balance within the GSA boundary and provide again the water in and the water out.

Annexation:

AQ1) What does proceeding with annexation of only the current Sphere of Influence do To or For the District, could we annex these properties as "second class " citizens and they only get water when the original District landowners aren't impacted, could we make the "buy-in" be equal to 3 years of the County's white area 218 fee of \$246/acre,? but to lessen the impact pay it over 5 or 6 years?

AR1) An annexation typically provides the opportunity for the agency to expand the service area due to the availability of the service (water) to be provided or that the source of the service has the capacity to service the additional area with the installation of distribution or collection infrastructure being installed to handle the additional demand from those lands. The current data and report have shown the ability for the existing basin and facilities currently in place to provide the opportunity to import surface waters that can maintain the basin levels within the guidelines of the SGMA. The addition of acreage that does not have a surface water supply associated with the lands would require that there be the ability within the existing infrastructure of the District to handle the additional demand or new facilities constructed and new or additional surface waters purchased to balance the demand from the new lands.

Research of other irrigation/water district have classified annexed lands as Class 2 water users and limited the availability of water to those lands only during years when it is determined that there is adequate supply, or the lands can purchase outside waters to wheel through the distribution system to their parcel. Therefore, in normal, dry or critical dry years Class 2 lands typically would not receive irrigation deliveries. Since the primary source of water from the GFWD is pumped, this would lead to a determination by the Board or a criteria setup to set the allowable pumping volume during years when it was determined that waters would be available to those Class 2 lands.

The Groundwater Conditions and Model report developed by Ken Schmidt and Associates would need to be updated to support the annexation area and from the report they should be determinations as to the



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necessary implementation of operational needs for these lands to not have an impact on the existing lands within the district.

The annexation process typically has a cost associated with the benefit that the new lands receive from the existing infrastructure and that cost is the buy-in amount determined to protect the interest of the existing properties within the district. Additional infrastructure to provide delivery of irrigation flows, increase recharge capacity or to locate recharge facilities to provide the required impact to the basin area servicing the new lands would be at the cost of the lands annexed to the district. The remaining area within the Sphere of Influence boundary could be setup as an assessment area, a determination on the new facilities required to provide service to the lands, then the total cost spread across the acres to be serviced would determine the additional cost to the lands to be annexed to the district.

If the Board set a time period for the payment of the funds for annexation, then it would be reasonable to condition the ability to receive irrigation water when those funds had been paid in full.

AQ2) Currently we have a \$5/acre general assessment that has been unchanged since it was implemented in 1970? Should we raise it to \$10 as a part of the current proposed 218 process.

AR2) The General Assessment could be revisited to determine if it still fits the operational needs of the district and a revised or amended assessment criteria could be determined that better represents the current use of the funds collected for the benefit of the district for the overall operation of the district.

GAP