



Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Water District (EPCWD)
Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EPCGSA)
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday February 14, 2024
Windfall Farms Conference Room, 4710 Flying Paster Lane, Paso Robles

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 3:09PM by Jerry Reaugh.

Directors Roll Call:

Dana Merrill – absent
Lee Nesbitt - present
Jerry Reaugh – present
Hilary Graves – absent (joined by teleconference, non-voting)
Herb Rowland – present

Others present: Guests (in person and by teleconference)

ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2023 MEETING

Approval of the minutes deferred until the next meeting.

ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was presented.

ITEM 4: CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL THE PROCESS OF APPLICATION, CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL FOR WELL REPLACEMENT REQUESTS WITHIN DISTRICT BOUNDARIES. CREATE AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO REVIEW REQUESTS

Jerry Reaugh reviewed the background of the requirement for consistency determinations under Executive Order N-7-22, and the approach of different GSAs to the process. SLO County, for example, requires that the replacement well have the exact specifications of the original well in terms of depth, casing, etc. and to be in close proximity to the well being replaced. The proposed EPCGSA process will require among other things, complete information on the new well. Jerry Reaugh then reviewed the proposed process steps.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROCESS OF APPLICATION, CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL FOR WELL REPLACEMENT REQUESTS WITHIN DISTRICT BOUNDARIES made by Herb Rowland, seconded by Lee Nesbitt, roll call vote:

Dana Merrill – absent
Hilary Graves – non-voting
Lee Nesbitt – yes
Jerry Reaugh – yes
Herb Rowland - yes

Motion passed 3-0 Note: the item included considering creating an ad hoc committee to review requests. This was not included in the motion. Instead, the Board considered appointing a Board member to re a

“Reviewing Officer” in accordance with the approved process. Hilary Graves asked if the reviewing officer could be a non-Board member; the response was “no”. Herb Rowland volunteered to be the EPCWDGSA Reviewing Officer for well replacement requests.

MOTION TO APPROVE HERB ROWLAND AS REVIEWING OFFICER FOR WELL REPLACEMENT REQUESTS made by Jerry Reaugh, seconded by Lee Nesbitt, roll call vote:

Lee Nesbitt – yes
Herb Rowland – yes
Jerry Reaugh – yes
Hilary Graves – non-voting
Dana Merrill – absent

Motion passed 3-0.

ITEM 5: CONSIDER CONFIRMATION OF GRANT OF CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION FOR REPLACEMENT WELL

The Board considered a recently-approved consistency determination made prior to the process described in Item #4 being established.

MOTION TO CONFIRM THE GRANT OF CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION FOR REPLACEMENT WELL made by Jerry Reaugh, seconded by Herb Rowland, roll call vote:

Lee Nesbitt – yes
Jerry Reaugh – yes
Herb Rowland – yes
Hilary Graves – non-voting
Dana Merrill – absent

Motion passed 3-0.

ITEM 6: UPDATE ITEMS

Note: The Update Items were discussed generally out of order and will be shown here in the order taken, with the correct numbering:

a. Groundwater Levels Monitoring

2) EPCWD Groundwater Monitoring Network

Jerry Reaugh reported that this date is the beginning of the new year of measurements, with three full years of measurements in place.

1) Real-Time Groundwater Monitoring

Jerry Reaugh reported that two Bubbler sensors and two pressure sensors are in place, one in each of four wells. The PBCC is moving towards installing more wells in the network from existing participants in the County’s monitoring system which would allow for access to longer history, once data privacy is protected.

d. 2) PBCC staff report

Jerry Reaugh reported that there are 20-50 real-time well monitoring systems included in the budget of the grant, as well as outreach funds which can be reconfigured to connect with well

owners regarding being part of the monitoring system. Funds from the grant have an April 2025 deadline in order to be spent.

b. SLO County Board of Supervisors meetings

No update provided.

c. WRAC meeting

Lee Nesbitt reported that the most recent WRAC meeting scheduled for February 7, 2024 was cancelled.

d. State Water Subcontractors Committee project

Jerry Reaugh reported that Dana Merrill and a representative from Provost & Pritchard made a presentation to the PBCC to hand off the work that EPCWD has done on the recharge project to the PBCC. The PBCC agreed to produce an RFP to review. There are funds in the grant for the Salinas Dam project that could be realigned for this project.

d. 1) Paso Basin Cooperative Committee meeting February 7, 2024

Jerry Reaugh reported that Blaine Reely covered the grant funds and how they are being allocated to matters in the Basin. There is an RFP out to study the cost of eight alluvial wells (required by GSP), an RFP for a “keep the lights on” rate study, and an RFP for studies regarding how to finance PBCC/GSP activities.

d. 2) Paso Basin Cooperative Committee staff reports

a) Outreach RFP (see above)

b) Expanded Monitoring Network RFP (see above)

c) PBCC Budget

Staff has presented the budget which is required by the State, and it is approximately \$1.2M annually. EPCGSA’s portion would be \$300K to \$400K of this amount which could be untenable. The discussion centered around getting an equitable across-the-board for all landowners system in place. Hilary Graves pointed out that since the County GSA’s portion of funding comes from all County taxpayers via the General Fund, EPCWD landowners are effectively paying twice, while County GSA landowners are paying a tiny amount because their portion is spread across all County taxpayers.

d) Evapotranspiration (ET) extractions methodology

Jerry Reaugh and Land IQ presented to the PBCC board on ET as an extraction measurement tool. The question of how to factor in irrigation ponds was brought up. Meters present data collection, verification and mechanical issues, but could be used as an “offramp” option for landowners.

NOTE: Hilary Graves joined the in-person meeting at 3:55PM

d. 3) Blended Water Project

Jerry Reaugh reported that there is a PBCC contract in place with a contractor chosen.

e. CSDA Annual Meeting January 25, 2025

Herb Rowland, the CSDA representative for EPCWD, was unable to attend due to illness.

ITEM 7: Treasurer's Report

a. Monthly Financial Status Report

Jerry Reaugh reported no modifications to the Report as presented. He noted that there are funds in the existing budget to cover the upcoming expense for the Annual Report. Next year's Report will be a five-year update, a bigger more comprehensive report that will cost approximately \$300K to produce.

ITEM 8: NEW BUSINESS

Hilary Graves would like to report on Regenerative Farming projects, to have a discussion about outreach assistance from Solterra Strategies, and a presentation from the Well Bubbler with an emphasis on engaging well owners. Perhaps a quarterly educational meeting could be planned in the future.

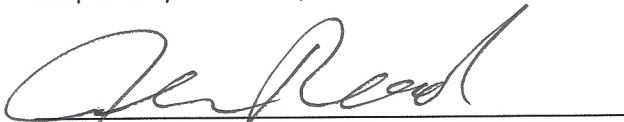
ITEM 9: SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – MARCH 13, 2024

ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Lee Nesbitt, seconded by Hilary Graves, motion passed 4-0.

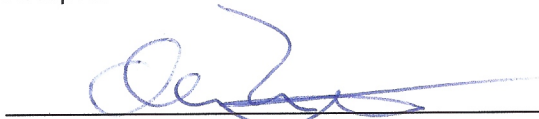
Meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Jerry Reaugh, Secretary/Treasurer

Accepted:



Dana Merrill, President

3-20-24
Date