



**Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Water District (EPCWD)**

**Special Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 22, 2023**

Illy Lodge at Illy Sunnyslope Farms, 3385 Truesdale Rd., Shandon, CA

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 8:060AM by Dana Merrill

**ITEM 2: ROLL CALL**

Directors Roll Call:

Dana Merrill - present  
Lee Nesbitt - present  
Jerry Reaugh - present  
Hilary Graves - present  
Herb Rowland – absent (joins at 8:05AM)

Others present:

Brett Stroud  
Blaine Reely, SLO County Director of Groundwater Sustainability  
Nate Page, GSI Water Solutions Inc.  
Directors of Shandon-San Juan Water District board and membership  
Guests (by phone and videoconference)

**ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENT**

Willy Cunha thanked the EPCWD Board for the opportunity to work together on Item #5.

At this point, the Shandon-San Juan Water District opened their meeting and discussed the first items of business, followed by EPCWD considering Item #4.

**ITEM 4: CONSIDER LETTER TO SUPPORT THE PASO ROBLES GROUNDWATER BASIN – COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO GSA’S GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION MULTIBENEFIT LAND REPURPOSING PROGRAM**

The proposed letter was presented. Hilary Graves asked Blaine Reely about the MILR program and disadvantaged communities. Blaine responded that Paso Robles, San Miguel and Shandon all have designated disadvantaged communities, and that the rural residential community within the Basin should be considered as such due to the struggle with maintaining access to adequate water supplies. While that community is not officially recognized by the State, it has been described in the grant application. Hilary Graves asked what the source of the grant funding is, but Blaine was uncertain. MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE GRANT APPLICATION made by Hilary Graves, seconded by Jerry Reaugh, roll call vote:

Dana Merrill – yes  
Hilary Graves – yes  
Jerry Reaugh – yes  
Herb Rowland – yes  
Lee Nesbitt – yes

Motion passed 5-0.

**ITEM 5: MOVE TO SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH SHANDON-SAN JUAN WATER DISTRICT FOR DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF A PASO BASIN COOPERATIVE COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF EQUITY**

Willy Cunha opened the session with a general discussion of the need for an equity statement, Bruce Gibson's proposed equity statement in comparison to the statements proposed by each District which are similar. Hilary Graves expressed concern as to whether Bruce Gibson's statement would create an unfunded mandate to replace wells, for example. The GSP does not provide any funding mechanism and the GSAs should not be placed in a position they cannot financially sustain. Jerry Lohr described how Monterey County is including DACs (officially recognized disadvantaged communities) in its implementation process and would it be possible to develop something through the MILR program. He further described the Blended Water project and the proposed pipeline to take treated water from Paso Robles City to points east. Lee Nesbitt pointed out that Bruce Gibson's statement has actions attached to it. Willy Cunha expressed the need to acknowledge dry wells and consider those. Hilary Graves expressed the need for the ag districts to lead by example. Jerry Reaugh suggested an ad hoc committee from both Districts to work on the statement. Patricia Wilmore, speaking for the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, described how some of their members have expressed an interest in participating in developing an equity statement. Willy Cunha said that the GSAs aren't in a position to directly address economic disparity, but that the MILR program might address some of that need. Dana Merrill stressed that there needs to be a focused effort to move the equity statement forward quickly. Consensus was to form an ad hoc committee consisting of Jerry Reaugh and Hilary Graves (EPCWD), Willy Cunha and Steve Sinton (SSJWD), and representatives from PRWCA and Farm Bureau. Once the committee has a proposed statement prepared, it will be presented to both district boards and then it will be sent to Blaine Reely's office to forward it to Bruce Gibson.

**ITEM 6: NEW BUSINESS**

Dana Merrill described that the District's move towards becoming a GSA has sparked some interest from people and entities wanting to become part of the District.

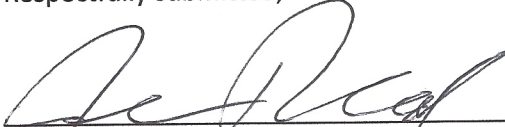
**ITEM 7: SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – APRIL 12, 2023**

**ITEM 19: ADJOURNMENT**


MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Dana Merrill, seconded by Jerry Reaugh, motion passed 5-0 on voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 AM

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Reaugh, Secretary/Treasurer

Accepted:

 5/5/2023  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dana Merrill, President Date