

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BEDFORD COLDWATER
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AUTHORITY**

May 18, 2023

Board Present

Jacque Casillas, City of Corona
Jack T. Ferguson, EVMWD
C.W. Colladay (Alternate), TVWD

Staff Present

Jeff Pape, TVWD
Tom Moody, City of Corona
Alex Lemieux, Aleshire & Wynder, LLP
Ganesh Krishnamurthy, EVMWD
Parag Kalaria, EVMWD
Scott Thompson, EVMWD
Christy Gonzalez, EVMWD
Terese Quintanar, EVMWD
Michael Cruikshank, Water Systems Consulting
Robin Murray, Rincon
Emily McCord, Rincon

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Bedford-Coldwater Groundwater Sustainability Authority was called to order by Chairperson Casillas at 4:04 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT– There were none.

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 16, 2023**
- B. Financial Statement**
- C. Ratification of Demands**
- D. Outside Contract Summary Report**

ACTION: Director Ferguson made a motion, Director Colladay seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar.

2. BUSINESS CALENDAR

- A. Consider Adoption of Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget (MO #46)**

Mr. Thompson reported that annually, BCGSA analyze current financial activities and project future expenditure requirements in order to develop a proposed budget for the following year. The total proposed budget for FY 2023-24 is \$392,114 with \$85,875 in administration costs for the Authority and \$297,000 in Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation costs. He explained that the three largest expenses for the administration of the JPA are Administrator costs, JPA Oversight/Management, and Legal expenses. Answering Chairperson Casillas, he confirmed that the budget increase is related to the increase in Administrator costs.

Mr. Cruikshank reported that the implementation costs are broken down into three categories: Management Actions (Annual Report and all other Management actions), Projects (Investigate Groundwater/Surface Water Interaction), and Other (Annual Vegetation Monitoring, Well Drilling Application Evaluations, and 5-year GSP Updates). The work in these categories feeds into the annual report, and the 2nd Annual Report has been submitted to the Department of Water Resources (DWR). In the next five years, the collection of water level information for Todd Groundwater is projected to be \$95,000 per year. Project 1, the Integrated Groundwater Surface Water Interaction Project is being completed in phases. The second phase involves monitoring work. In the "Other" category, the plan is being developed relating to the investigation of groundwater surface water interaction, and the plan will include additional monitoring in the amount of \$25,000 per year. Through the State of California's executive order, the GSA has the authority to review Well Drilling Applications to make sure the planned wells do not cause damage or interfere with pumping of GSA wells. Review of these applications is important, and Todd Groundwater performs that work. Mr. Cruikshank, Mr. Pape, and Mr. Moody explained the process, purpose, and fees relating to the review of Well Permit Applications. One big expenditure in the next five years will be the 5-year GSP Update, estimated to cost \$350,000. Total GSP Implementation Costs are \$297,000 for Fiscal Year 23/24 and \$1,341,000 is the projected 5-year total.

Mr. Thompson added that a \$50,000 grant reimbursement is anticipated and there is no proposed member contribution for FY 2023-24 as there are sufficient funds to cover the FY 2023-24 budgeted expenses. All expenditures in the proposed FY 2023-24 Budget, net of grant reimbursements, are recoverable by member-agency contributions.

As per the reserve policy adopted by the Board on May 16, 2019, the Operating and Non-Operating Reserves have both been set at 25% of the proposed budgets. The reserve requirements for FY 2023-24 have been incorporated in the proposed budget. Brief discussion followed regarding the possibility of increasing the reserve percentage above 25%, and also consideration for each member agency to contribute funds in anticipation of unforeseen economic challenges. However, no direction was made to staff's recommendation and the established reserve policy.

ACTION: Director Ferguson made a motion, Director Colladay seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to:

1. Approve BCGSA FY 2023-24 Budget.

B. Appointment of Treasurer (Resolution No. 23-02)

The Joint Powers Agreement ("JPA") creating the Bedford-Coldwater Groundwater Sustainability Authority ("Authority") requires that the Board provide for a Treasurer for the Authority to be the fiscal agent and depository for the Authority. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining all accounting transactions and records of the Authority in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and other applicable laws of the State of California.

The Treasurer also is responsible for working with the auditor for the Authority towards the completion of the audit and reporting of the audit findings. Additionally, the Treasurer will periodically provide a status of the Authority's Fiscal Year budget.

Ms. Quintanar explained that, previously, the Treasurer appointed a Deputy Treasurer, in writing, to carry out many of the day-to-day responsibilities of the fiscal agent.

C. Appointment of Secretary (MO#47)

The Joint Powers Agreement ("JPA") creating the Bedford-Coldwater Groundwater Sustainability Authority ("Authority") requires that the Board provide for staffing of the Authority to ensure the Authority is able to accomplish all requirements imposed by the JPA, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 and any other legal requirements.

Staff recommended the appointment of a Secretary to fill the vacancy for this position.

D. Appointment of ACWA JPIA Representatives (MO#48)

The JPIA Board of Directors is composed of one representative from each Member of the JPIA, who is a member of the governing board thereof and selected by that governing board to be the JPIA Director Representative.

Each Member shall also appoint at least one alternate who shall be an officer, member of the governing board, or employee of that member. The Alternate appointed by a Member shall have the authority to attend and participate in any meeting of the Board when the regular member for whom he or she is an alternate is absent from said meeting.

Being a member of ACWA and joining the JPIA program, BCGSA is required to appoint a Director Representative and Alternate Representative who will have the authority to attend and participate in any meeting of the JPIA Board of Directors.

Each JPIA Director or Alternate shall serve until a successor is appointed. They shall serve at the pleasure of the Member by which they have been appointed.

In May 2019, the BCGSA Board acted by minute order to appoint Phil Williams as its JPIA Director and Paul Rodriguez as the Alternate. In Director Harich's absence of today's meeting, an alternate was not discussed.

Chairperson Casillas nominated Jack T. Ferguson for the appointments of Treasurer, Secretary and JPIA Director Representative, and Director Ferguson indicated acceptance of the nomination.

ACTION: Director Ferguson made a motion, Director Colladay seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to:

1. Adopt a Resolution Appointing Jack T. Ferguson as Treasurer for the Authority (**Resolution 23-02**)
2. Appoint Jack T. Ferguson as the Secretary for the Authority (**MO#47**)
3. Appoint Jack T. Ferguson as the Authority's JPIA Representative (**MO#48**)

3. Administrator's Update

Mr. Cruikshank provided highlights on information provided in the meeting packet in the form of the Grant Progress Report. The Annual Report for 2022 was submitted to the DWR to fulfill our SGMA requirements. The annual report documents water conditions including groundwater elevations and storage, water supplies and use, an updated water balance and groundwater sustainability progress for water year 2022. He displayed several slides showing the Authority's jurisdictional boundaries, precipitation in Elsinore, sustainability indicators, water level and interconnected surface water monitoring wells, groundwater elevation contours, hydrographs of Corona Well 3, Corona Non-potable Well 2, and EVMWD's Flagler 2A Well water levels, and storage changes in the Bedford and Coldwater management areas. He explained that we will see the result of this year's rainy season in next year's reports. Chronic lowering of groundwater levels, storage, and groundwater depletions are the main sustainability indicators. We have no issues with subsidence or degradation, currently. A Salt and Nutrient Plan is being prepared that will include those items also. The monitoring well network includes 17 monitoring wells to collect water levels used to assess the sustainability of the basin. Two wells were added this year and are beginning to collect data that will be incorporated into the next Annual Report. He also pointed out that of the two management zones, the Coldwater Basin is deeper than the Bedford Basin. Trends in water levels have risen and fallen over the years based on precipitation and production in that area. He explained that a minimum threshold has been determined for sustainability. Production in the Bedford Basin has varied, based on wet and dry periods. An agreement between Corona and the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District for pumping sustainable yield has helped sustainability of the Coldwater Management Area.

Project Management Actions include three projects: Project 1 is to investigate groundwater and surface water interaction at Temescal Wash and the installation of monitoring wells. Phase 1 of this project is being performed by Rincon. Project 2 is to initiate a survey of active private wells. A private well survey is in progress and there are

very few active wells in the area. Some private wells have been located in the basin, and Mr. Cruikshank estimated there are about 40 domestic wells in the basin, collectively pumping very little. Project 2 is the evaluation of the effects of aggregate pits on groundwater flow and quality. Work is underway to prepare a memorandum describing general mining water use to fill the data gap in GSP in progress. Regarding questions posed about mining operations, Mr. Cruikshank and Mr. Moody responded that no contamination has been found and the water used for washing goes back into the basin. The Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) is looking at an increase in TDS in the Bedford Basin in the area near the fault line, and TDS in that area has been found to be between 350 and 480.

Emily McCord of Rincon presented information and reported that she is working to investigate surface water interactions in the Temescal Wash, with the hope of improving the GSP sustainability criteria and creating ecosystems in the Wash. Their goal is to identify up to five locations for monitoring wells and development of a monitoring plan. She explained the project's key elements, including airplane flyovers utilizing lasers to obtain groundwater elevation for comparison to the ground level. This method will provide specific details to help better determine where groundwater interactions take place. The flight is scheduled in June and will provide information in higher resolution than information that is publicly available. The flight work will cost \$14,000, and drones can also be used to observe portions of the wash and take detailed photos for the vegetation survey and digital terrain model for a lower cost. A vegetation survey has been conducted and areas of open water have been identified. Detailed vegetation information is used to refine data related to the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI). Robin Murray of Rincon referenced historical imagery from the 1960s and reported that vegetation has increased significantly since. Historical information is available through NASA and is collected via satellite, and information is also available through the Nature Conservancy. The Normalized Difference Moisture Index (NDMI) indicates water stress, and both the NDVI and NDMI are used as an indicator of vegetation health.

Mr. Moody added that we need to understand ground elevation for good hydrological information and relate that to plant health to help determine if strategies need to be implemented for the basin. Mining operations have deepened the channel and changes in the ground structure are concerning.

Ms. McCord concluded by reporting that the well location determinations and monitoring plan will be completed in June. One consideration for well location determination is protection from vandalism.

4. Legal Counsel Report

Mr. Lemieux reported on AB560, authored by Bennett. The Bill Requires a court, before finalizing a groundwater adjudication, to refer the proposed adjudication to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for an advisory determination as to whether it will impair the ability of a groundwater sustainability agency (GSA), the State Water Board, or the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to achieve sustainable groundwater management. The State Water Board must consult with DWR before making

its determination. Discussion followed regarding determination of the Authority's position, the need to monitor the Bill's progress and whether the Authority should submit written comments while the Bill is moving through the state committees. Mr. Lemieux was asked to expeditiously provide an opinion and recommendation.

Mr. Lemieux reported on AB2449, which allows for meetings to occur via teleconferencing subject to certain requirements, particularly that the legislative body notice each teleconference location of each member that will be participating in the public meeting, that each teleconference location be accessible to the public, that members of the public have the opportunity to provide public comment.

5. Comments of the Board

Chairman Casillas thanked staff for the work and information.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the May 18, 2023, Regular meeting of the Bedford-Coldwater Groundwater Sustainability Authority was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

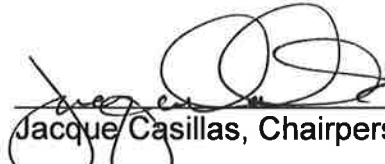
ATTEST:



Jack T. Ferguson, Secretary

Date: 11/16/2022

APPROVED:



Jacquie Casillas, Chairperson

Date: 11/16/2023