

# Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Standing Advisory Committee Meeting

April 25, 2019

## Meetings Minutes

Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center, 4689 CA-166, New Cuyama, CA 93254

### PRESENT:

Jaffe, Roberta – Chair  
Kelly, Brenton – Vice Chair  
DeBranch, Brad  
Draucker, Louise  
Furstenfeld, Jake  
Haslett, Joe  
Post, Mike (*telephonic*)  
Valenzuela, Hilda Leticia  
Beck, Jim – Executive Director  
Hughes, Joe – Legal Counsel

### ABSENT:

None

#### 1. Call to Order

Chair Roberta Jaffe called the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) to order at 4:02 p.m.

#### 2. Roll Call

Hallmark Group Project Coordinator Taylor Blakslee called roll of the Committee (shown above).

Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (CBGSA) Board of Directors Chair Derek Yurosek was present telephonically and Board Director Jane Wooster was present in person.

#### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge of allegiance was led by Chair Jaffe.

#### 4. Approval of Minutes

CBGSA Executive Director Jim Beck presented the March 28, 2019 SAC minutes for consideration of approval.

Committee Member Louise Draucker commented that the minutes incorrectly captured the Committee Member that made the motion on page 4 and corrected it to say, "Committee Member Louise Draucker made a motion."

### MOTION

Vice Chair Brenton Kelly made a motion to adopt the March 28, 2019 CBGSA SAC meeting

minutes. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Joe Haslett, a roll call vote was made, and the motion passed.

AYES: Committee Members DeBranch, Draucker, Furstenfeld, Haslett, Jaffe, Kelly, Valenzuela  
 NOES: None  
 ABSTAIN: Committee Member Post  
 ABSENT: None

Chair Jaffe asked that the dynamic version of the glide path tool be made available on the website. Woodard & Curran's (W&C) Senior Water Resource Engineer Brian Van Lienden said we will add this to the website.

CBGSA Executive Director Jim Beck complemented the SAC and said the planning roadmap really shows all the work and time the SAC put into this process and thanked them for their involvement in achieving our current position.

## 5. Groundwater Sustainability Plan

### a. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Update

Mr. Van Lienden provided an update on Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) activities, which is included in the SAC packet.

Committee Member Haslett asked how to comment on the executive summary. Mr. Van Lienden replied comments on the executive summary will be processed through the GSP comment process.

Chair Jaffe asked that the note on climate change be added to the GSP Discussion Approach and Terminology slide. Mr. Beck said this will be corrected.

Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center's (FRC) Executive Director Lynn Carlisle asked when the monitoring plan will be discussed. Mr. Van Lienden said the monitoring plan will likely be discussed in the January 2020 time period.

GSP Outreach the Catalyst Group's Mary Currie provided an update on the GSP public review and adoption process.

Chair Jaffe asked for more information regarding the period between the intent to adopt and the public hearing. Mr. Beck stated that legal counsel Joe Hughes was present telephonically and may be the appropriate person to answer her question. Mr. Hughes said the 30-day comment period we are in now is not required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), but rather a best practice, which serves as a first pass to incorporate comments that can affect the plan before the final draft is made available for review. He said wherever the public hearing is, the County's will have 30 days prior to that to schedule a meeting and express any concerns they have. Mr. Hughes said the 90-day comment period is the official comment period where the public can make their comments that will be received by the Board at the public hearing which will be conducted by the CBGSA Board. Comments at the public hearing can be written or oral.

Chair Jaffe asked how the County review period works. Mr. Hughes said they do not receive comments but make comments. He said the first 30 days is to make comments and confer with the

CBGSA on any issues they may have. Mr. Beck commented that the County also serves on the Board, so they would be effectively commenting either way.

Vice Chair Kelly asked if the County's do not have to put the GSP approval on their county agendas but can vote for the county on the CBGSA Board. Mr. Hughes confirmed this and said this is how the CBGSA was structured in the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement.

Landowner Sue Blackshear said there is not an indication of a follow-up meeting succeeding the public hearing in October 2019. Mr. Hughes said there is nothing in the SGMA statues that specify the process concluding the public hearing, but it will likely be similar to any other document review and you would consider and incorporate comments where necessary.

Mr. Beck said you usually get feedback in the context of the public hearing regarding how comments are treated going forward.

Vice Chair Kelly asked if the additional meetings from the planning roadmap are still budgeted going forward. Mr. Beck said we plan on recommending moving to a bimonthly meeting cadence for both the Board and SAC meetings.

Mr. Blakslee said we plan to have the June 27, 2019 SAC and July 10, 2019 Board meetings in which we would discuss the draft GSP and address public comments from the 30-day comment period, and then in July 2019, issue the notice of intent to adopt kick-starting the official 90-day public comment period.

Committee Member Jake Furstenfeld asked what the worst-case scenario would be from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) if they do not agree with our plan. Mr. Beck said the statues provide for a 2-year review period by the State, but he does not expect radio silence and expects multiple iterations of revisions to occur during that time.

Committee Member Brad DeBranch asked if DWR will be running the model. Mr. Beck said he does not expect that.

Committee Member Louise Draucker asked what they will be checking the model for then. Mr. Beck said DWR typically will check the boxes to make sure you have all the right sections, but this GSP will have a technical review component where they will be evaluating the appropriateness of the GSP components that drive sustainability.

DWR regional representative Anita Regmi said there will also be legal review of the GSP.

Ms. Blackshear asked how many plans DWR is reviewing in that 2-year period. Mr. Beck said there will be many. He said even though Kern County is in 1 out of 21 overdraft basins, they will have 17 plans just from one basin that are of similar complexity to Cuyama.

Chair Jaffe noted that we effectively have 3 comments periods: 1) an informal 30-day comment period, 2) and official 90-day comment period leading up to the public hearing, and 3) a 60-day DWR public review period. She asked if these comment periods hold equal weight. Mr. Hughes said these comment periods are aimed at different things. He said the current 30-day comment period is something the CBGSA is offering up to receive public comments where the goal is to fix any issues with the GSP. He said the 90-day period is on the clock and hardwired into SGMA. During this review

period you do not want to just hear of problems that could have been fixed in the informal 30-day comment period. Lastly, he said you have the opportunity to comment on the GSP when it goes to DWR if you feel a concern you addressed was not met.

Ms. Carlisle said she was under the impression that there would be a printed copy of the GSP at the FRC and the library. She said it is not very conducive to a disadvantaged community to not have one and asked if this can be considered. Mr. Beck said we are being consistent with the decisions to reduce printing to be green, but also to be cost sensitive. He said we will add the cost of a printed copy to the out-of-scope memo and check with the Board on this. Mr. Beck said we were hoping folks could read it on computers at the FRC. Ms. Carlisle said the library is not open all the time and they close at 4:00 p.m., therefore having a printed copy will allow residents to take it home to review.

Committee Member Leticia Valenzuela said for most of the people living in town, it is very hard to download such a large document. She also commented that the library hours are not conducive to folks' working hours. She said if we really want comments from the community, they need a hard copy.

Committee Member Haslett suggested contacting your local county representative to see what they can provide. Also, he suggested putting the document on flash drives, but Committee Member Valenzuela commented that not many people have computers.

Mr. Beck said Hallmark Group will provide 10 flash drives containing the GSP to the FRC.

Grapevine Capitol Partner's Ray Shady said he will provide a color copy of the GSP to Ms. Carlisle at the FRC.

**i. Discussion on GSP Public Draft**

Mr. Van Lienden provided an overview of the chapters in the draft GSP.

Vice Chair Kelly commented that there are additional appendices, and Mr. Van Lienden confirmed this and said W&C just highlighted a couple key ones in the slides.

Chair Jaffe suggested folks not get too into the weeds on chapter-related questions since the document was just recently released in its draft form.

Chair Jaffe asked if there can be comments made on chapters that have been approved by the Board. Mr. Beck confirmed that they can comment on any part of the GSP.

**Chapter 1 – Agency**

There were no comments from the SAC on this chapter.

**Chapter 2 – Basin Setting (HCM, Groundwater Conditions, Water Budget)**

Ms. Carlisle asked what level of comment would cause a change. Mr. Beck said we are interested in all comments. However, some comments may not allow for current changes due to budget and schedule, but they can be valuable as we update the plan in the next five years.

Vice Chair Kelly said there may be a number of situations impractical to change, but

something to address in the future. He asked if there is anything to prompt the Board to take some of these items back up in the future. He asked if there is a way to trigger these discussions for the future. Mr. Beck said his expectation is that we will receive comments on the implementation plan, which is the appropriate section to comment on future activities. He expects the Board to provide further direction on comments received on this section for the potential future actions they would like to take.

Mr. Van Lienden reported that he circled back with the Santa Barbara County Water Agency regarding their comments on the Groundwater Conditions section, which are reflected in the GSP draft.

Committee Member Haslett said the overdraft conversation only applies to the Central basin. He said the executive summary reads as if the entire basin is in overdraft when in fact only a specific area is. Mr. Beck said he agrees, but SGMA requires a description of the entire basin. Committee Member Haslett commented that someone who has not gone through all of the information would be very misled as to the status of the basin. Chair Jaffe said we have dealt with this by breaking the basin out into regions. Committee Member Haslett said he agrees with that, but the executive summary does not read this way. Mr. Van Lienden said reporting subbasin results is problematic because it is not clear on where to draw the lines.

Mr. Beck said Committee Member Haslett's point is well taken, but DWR will come up with one number for the basin, which is not quite fair, but that is the way DWR requires it. Committee Member Haslett said there is only one statement at the end of the executive summary that explains that.

Ms. Blackshear suggested including an additional piece of information that shows the Central basin and the entire basin, so folks can see that the problem lies predominantly in the Central basin.

### **Chapter 3 – Undesirable Results**

Vice Chair Kelly said he had a problem with this chapter. He noted that the 30% trigger for failure of wells is surprising because they have not had a chance to review that number. He said 20 wells could fail in the Central basin and not trigger undesirable results. Mr. Van Lienden said Vice Chair Kelly is right, and W&C developed a number they thought was reasonable but are open to changes.

Mr. Beck said if any well goes below its threshold you will be required to explain how you will mitigate this in the annual report.

Ms. Carlisle said the CBGSA has had so much hands-on various topics and issues and finds this omission odd.

Mr. Beck said 30% is one of the lowest caps he has seen for non-containment in other basins. He has seen as high as 50%. Mr. Beck said he believes 30% is a reasonable number, but the SAC is right in that this is something that we should revisit with the SAC and Board.

Committee Member Draucker asked how climate change was determined. Mr. Van Lienden said DWR provides recommended approaches and W&C used those, particularly one called

the central tendency.

Chair Jaffe encouraged anyone with comments to submit them.

#### **Chapter 4 – Monitoring Networks**

Vice Chair Kelly said he understands that the CBGSA will be responsible for monitoring going forward and asked if monitoring is done by CBGSA staff, the counties, etc. Mr. Beck said it is a Board decision, but we will determine these questions after the GSP is submitted.

#### **Chapter 5 – Minimum Thresholds, Measurable Objective, and Interim Milestones**

Vice Chair Kelly said he understands that the interim milestones are in five year increments, however these have not been set. Mr. Van Lienden said they assumed the basin wanted to keep levels above the minimum thresholds between now and 2040 and so they set all interim milestones equal to minimum thresholds.

Mr. Beck said he believes there are three key milestones in this area: 1) are we making progress on the glide path, 2) do the measurable objectives equal the target area we want to operate in, and 3) have we violated minimum thresholds.

Vice Chair Kelly said early on we were looking at DWR's milestone goals to improvement and now it seems that the milestones are set to do no worse than the worst we can do. Mr. Beck said this is getting in to a discussion on revisiting the thresholds, but the Board adopted thresholds that they felt were the appropriate for each region and understands there is likely still disagreement on this, which is part of the public comment process.

Mr. Van Lienden said with setting the glide path we know levels will go down, but by setting the interim milestones and the minimum thresholds we are saying levels will not go below these levels.

Chair Jaffe asked if there has been anything that looks at the connection between the glide path and minimum thresholds. Mr. Van Lienden said not directly since with the modeling we do not have enough idea of how the pumping reductions will be done.

Mr. Beck said the Board will be determining when they will be doing modeling updates during the implementation plan.

Chair Jaffe said if the glide path keeps us below minimum thresholds we will have a problem. Mr. Beck said the data on this is raw and it is hard to say. He said the glide path will give us a starting point and we will have to modify the model going forward. He said you will need to hold all this loosely.

Ms. Wooster said in preparing the Executive Summary, W&C took it upon themselves to arbitrarily fill in certain areas such as setting milestones and asked if it would be appropriate to get a list of what these items are. Mr. Van Lienden said this was not in the draft Sustainability section and needed to be included, but since this is the first time they appear in the document, right now is the time to comment on them.

Mr. Beck said we can document these items and provide the Board with a list of these items.

Vice Chair Kelly commented that the three milestones seem to equivalent to the minimum thresholds, and asked if without any difference in milestones, will this satisfy DWR. Mr. Van Lienden said he believes it will.

#### **Chapter 6 – Data Management System**

Vice Chair Kelly asked if filling in data gaps of wells will be added in the implementation plan. Mr. Van Lienden said we still need to work out what we are doing, but his desire is to fill some of these gaps.

#### **Chapter 7 – Project and Management Actions**

Mr. Van Lienden reported the SAC and Board have not seen this chapter before, however it was written to reflect the discussions and information decided by the SAC and Board.

Ms. Carlisle asked when actual measurements will be used to true up the management area boundary. Mr. Beck said we are not looking at the actual measurements to determine model results, the actual measurements may inform the model contents. We may modify the model based on actual results. Ms. Carlisle asked how an area could come into a management area. Mr. Beck said the model could be wrong and when we update it, we could come up different results. He said there could be changes in land use, climate data and precipitation.

Chair Jaffe asked if there is flexibility with the monitoring network and Mr. Beck said the calibration runs will utilize well levels. Chair Jaffe asked if additional wells could be added to the network and Mr. Beck said they could.

Vice Chair Kelly asked if we can tweak the model every month. Mr. Beck said you could but it would not be useful. He recommended waiting 2 years before updating the model. He said you would likely review the model annually to decide the appropriate time to update it.

Vice Chair Kelly said the executive summary mentioned exchanges and transfers. Mr. Van Lienden said it is more of exploring the storm and flood water storage project.

#### **Chapter 8 – Implementation Plan**

There were no comments from the SAC on this chapter.

#### **Executive Summary**

Chair Jaffe thanked W&C for drafting the executive summary.

Committee Member Haslett commented that within the executive summary it appears that W&C is saying total dissolved solids (TDS) is bad but does not state the purpose. Mr. Van Lienden said this is referring to drinking water. Committee Member Haslett recommended adding that information to the summary and suggested further review.

Vice Chair Kelly commented that page 8 of the summary is blank. Mr. Van Lienden said this may be a PDF issue.

#### **b. Technical Forum Update**

Mr. Van Lienden provided an overview of the April 22, 2019 technical forum call. A summary of the issues discussed is provided in the SAC packet.

**i. Discussion on Numerical Model**

Mr. Beck said EKI's memo sought to adequately document the variability of the deficiencies with the model. He said they are fair comments, but we need a lot more work on this before we rely on them for the long haul. Mr. Beck said all modelers were complimentary of W&C efforts, but these were practical technical issues they recognized. He said the goal was to document the concerns and W&C will add this information to the GSP.

Chair Jaffe commented that previously W&C have responded to questions at the tech forums with written statements, however these statements are not available this time. Mr. Van Lienden said the tech forum normally provides comments on materials being presented, however this past meeting was more of an open forum.

Chair Jaffe asked for clarification regarding Cleath-Harris Geologist's Neil Curries' comments on potential improvements in the model's geometry in the western portion of the basin regarding the geology. Mr. Van Lienden said they are doing more detailed analysis than W&C and there is not immediate plan to change information for that area.

Chair Jaffe asked if the tech forum will continue in the implementation phase. Mr. Van Lienden said we do not have any budget or authorization, but suggested having one more to discuss the public draft comments. Mr. Beck said it would be nice to continue these meetings, but we do not have the budget, so we will bring this request up to the Board.

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 Committee Member Post left the meeting at 6:12 p.m.  
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**c. Stakeholder Engagement Update**

Ms. Currie provided an update on stakeholder engagement activity.

**i. Review of Public Draft Comment Period**

Committee Member Haslett said the 90-day period should say public comment on the slide. Ms. Currie said they distributed notices via P.O. Box holders and were able to reach more residents in the community.

Ms. Currie reminded the SAC of the upcoming stakeholder workshop on May 1, 2019 and suggested that Anita Regmi be invited to speak during the workshop. Mr. Beck said Hallmark Group will send the draft agenda for the upcoming workshop to Ms. Regmi. He commented that it may make sense to have her address DWR's roles in SGMA during the formal presentation.

**6. Groundwater Sustainability Agency**

**a. Report of the Executive Director**

Nothing to report.

**b. Board of Directors Agenda Review**

Mr. Beck provided an overview of the May 1, 2019 CBGSA Joint Special Board of Directors and SAC agenda. He commented that we will have an in-depth discussion on the updated cash flow, Fiscal



Year 2019-20 budget, and the 20-year implementation budget estimates.

Chair Jaffe asked where we are with the SAC appointment. Mr. Beck said we are bringing it before the Board in the out-of-scope services memo.

**c. Report of the General Counsel**

Nothing to report.

**7. Items for Upcoming Sessions**

Nothing to report.

**8. Committee Forum**

Nothing to report.

**9. Public comment for items not on the Agenda**

Nothing to report.

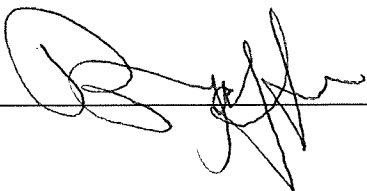
**10. Adjourn**

Chair Jaffe adjourned the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

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Minutes approved by the Standing Advisory Committee of the Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency the 30th day of May 2019.

STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE  
CUYAMA BASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

Chair: 

ATTEST:

Vice Chair: 