

SACRAMENTO CENTRAL GROUNDWATER AUTHORITY (SCGA)
Governing Board Meeting
Draft Minutes
September 12, 2007

LOCATION: 10545 Armstrong Avenue, Suite 101
Mather, CA 95655
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

MINUTES:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Scott Fort called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Roll call was taken and the following meeting participants were in attendance:

Board Members (Primary Rep.)

Stuart Helfand, Agricultural-Residential
Rick Bettis, Conservation Landowners
Edwin Smith, Public Agencies Self-Supplied
Ed Crouse, Rancho Murieta Community Services District
Scott Fort, Golden State Water Company

Board Members (Alternate Rep.)

Clarence Korhonen, City of Elk Grove
Walter Sadler, City of Folsom
Albert Stricker, City of Rancho Cordova
Mel Johnson, City of Sacramento
Herb Niederberger, County of Sacramento/Sacramento County Water Agency
Leo D. Havener, Jr., Elk Grove Water Service
Andy Soulé, California-American Water Company

Staff Members

Darrell Eck, Executive Director, Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority
Daniel Jones, Assistant Engineer, Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority
Ramon Roybal, Assistant Engineer, Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority
Michelle Fiorino, Clerk, Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority

Others in Attendance

Jafar Faghieh, MWH
Jonathan Goetz, Water Forum
Vanessa Nishikawa, MWH
Rob Swartz, SGA/RWA
Ali Taghavi, WRIME
Keith Wallace, MWH

2. Public Comment

Chair Fort called for any public comment. No public comment was made.

3. Consent Calendar

The draft meeting minutes for the meeting held on July 11, 2007, were reviewed for final approval.

Motion/Second/Carried - Herb Niederberger moved, by a second from Walter Sadler to approve the minutes.

4. Central Basin Data Management System

On May 16, 2007 staff presented information on well monitoring programs currently operating within the Central Basin and how they may ultimately relate to the Groundwater Authority's monitoring program. As part of the presentation, maps with "monitoring polygons" were used to illustrate the extent of current monitoring program activities and to demonstrate the need for additional monitoring wells. At this time staff was in the process of obtaining database information from State DWR on wells located throughout the Central Basin. The objective being that the DWR data would be a source for populating some of the monitoring polygons in the Basin. This data is currently being evaluated.

The Data Management System, or DMS, is the repository for information collected as part of the Groundwater Authority's monitoring program and also serves as an analytical tool in determining compliance with the Groundwater Management Plan's Basin Management Objectives (BMO).

An introduction to the DMS and its relationship to the BMOs was presented by Ramon Roybal. Board Members were invited to ask questions and make comments. For the DMS to reflect groundwater conditions in the Basin it is necessary to secure a significant amount of information on existing wells including water quality and pumping data. Purveyor data already in the DMS is three or more years out of date and staff would like to work with the Basin purveyors to update their data. It was also indicated that it was necessary to contract with a hydrogeologist to help interpret the data provided by DWR prior to its inclusion in the DMS.

Motion/Second/Carried - Herb Niederberger moved, by a second from Leo Havener to direct staff to coordinate with water purveyors to obtain water quality and pumping data.

Motion/Second/Carried - Herb Niederberger moved, by a second from Leo Havener to direct staff to pursue a contract with a hydrogeologist to assist in the interpretation of well log data for inclusion in the DMS. Herb Niederberger suggested that staff should make the consultant selection (through the RFP process), but bring the formal contract back to the Board for review.

5. Water Accounting Framework

The Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) contains five program components to assist in meeting the Basin Management Objectives. These components include: stakeholder involvement, monitoring program, groundwater resource protection, groundwater sustainability and planning integration. Recently there has been some discussion by parties within the Basin of developing various types of conjunctive management programs. These proposals fall under the groundwater sustainability program component of the GMP. During the development of the GMP the stakeholders recognized the potential opportunities of conjunctive management programs and outlined their interest in Section

3.2.4 of the GMP. A Water Accounting Framework is a first step in developing these types of programs.

An information presentation was presented by Vanessa Nishikawa from MWH that described the purpose of a Water Accounting Framework, the development of this type of program north of the American River and the first steps in developing a Framework in the Central Basin (**see corresponding attachment**). According to Ms. Nishikawa, the Water Accounting Framework for the Sacramento Groundwater Authority is being developed in three phases and has a budget of approximately \$300,000 that is funded by grants and member agency contributions. SCGA is currently in Phase I with funding provided by SCWA through a contract with MWH for work on the American River Basin IRWMP.

6. Central Basin Well Protection Program

Dan Jones provided a report back on database refinement. According to the report, the number of identified parcels (one acre and larger) that would be included in the registration process has now been reduced to 7,439. It was suggested that parcel owners could be notified of the program through an inset in their SMUD bill, staff to investigate as part of program development. Staff believes that some additional refinement can be made with information from the water purveyors and the recreation and park districts.

Motion/Second/Carried – Edd Smith moved, by a second from Leo Havener to direct staff to coordinate with water purveyors to obtain customer data and well information from recreation and park districts.

Darrell Eck provided a synopsis of meetings between staff and the Cities of Elk Grove, Folsom and Rancho Cordova to discuss further development and implementation of the Well Protection Program. Through these discussions a number of issues were identified by the Cities of Elk Grove and Rancho Cordova that need to be resolved in order for program development to move forward. Some of the issues raised will require action on the part of the Board. In order to initiate a dialog between Board members on these issues, Albert Stricker from the City of Rancho Cordova and Clarence Korhonen from the City of Elk Grove were invited to share their respective City's concerns. The following concerns were expressed by the City of Rancho Cordova.

- Given the current housing market, is now the time to attempt to implement a new fee? It may be strongly resisted by the BIA. The Authority should provide outreach to BIA to see what their position is on a new fee.
- What is the nexus for the fee?
- Should a shortfall occur in the Well Protection Program Trust Fund, the draft ordinance provides for the payment of claims through money in the Authority's budget. If a significant claim were made against the Authority's budget it could jeopardize the funding for other Authority programs in that fiscal year. There is no language that limits the amount of funds that could be borrowed from the Authority's budget.
- Acceptance of the program by the City will be based on several factors including; viability of the program, timing, etc.

The following concerns have been expressed by the City of Elk Grove.

- The City does not want to be the collection entity for a well protection fee.
- The City does not want the Authority to be the collection entity for a well protection fee.
- The City does not want to be accountable for any shortfall in the Trust Fund, should one occur.

Elk Grove also supported the concerns raised by the City of Rancho Cordova.

Staff indicated that meeting with the BIA was an important component in developing the Well Protection Program and planned on doing so once they knew what the Well Protection Fee was going to be. The Well Protection Fee has two components, the Authority's program cost and the Cities and County's administrative costs. Staff had originally scheduled meetings with the Cities and County to discuss the calculation of these administrative costs in order to determine the amount of the Well Protection Fee prior to meeting with the BIA. Staff plans on meeting with the BIA but would like to have the administrative cost information from the Cities and County before doing so. Preliminary discussions with the BIA has indicated that they do not object to the fee but would like to postpone it until sometime in 2008 or, preferably, would like to have it paid at occupancy. It was agreed that prior to any further discussions with BIA the administrative cost information would be provided to staff by the Cities and County.

Staff reported that an Impact Analysis for the Well Protection Program was conducted as part of the Groundwater Management Plan (*Central Sacramento County Groundwater Management Plan – Impact Analysis for Well Protection Program - see Appendix E of the Central Sacramento County Groundwater Management Plan*). This Analysis looked at the number of wells that could potentially be impacted within the Central Basin based on groundwater use projections in the year 2030. Staff used this Analysis as the basis for determining the amount of the program costs of the Well Protection Fee. Rob Swartz from the Sacramento Groundwater Authority raised the question, "Who are you trying to protect and who are you protecting them from?" A significant amount of discussion revolved around regional impacts to private wells as opposed to local impacts. Some Board members felt that a scope of work should be developed that would examine this issue. Ali Taghavi from WRIME was present in the meeting and described the process used in developing the original Impact Analysis. Mr. Taghavi said that the type of analysis requested was possible but that he would have to think about what might specifically be involved and make a determination on what the cost might be. Staff were directed to coordinate with Mr. Taghavi and report back to the Board.

As part of the agenda package staff provided the Board and other interested parties with an updated draft of the Well Protection Ordinance for review and comment. A number of changes were made to the draft Ordinance since it was last released. These include modifications to Section 6 to address responsibility for potential shortfalls in the Trust Fund. Staff also mentioned that \$35,000 has been included in the Authority's current fiscal year budget to cover well replacement costs in the event a claim is made before sufficient fees could be collected under an approved Well Protection Program. It was also pointed out that if additional money was required to meet well replacement requirements an additional \$50,000 remains in the Authority's account as a Fund Balance.

In light of the City of Rancho Cordova's statements regarding potential shortfalls various Board members expressed concerns over whether the revised language went far enough, particularly if claims exceeded the Authority's ability to pay. It was suggested that language in the Ordinance be modified to state that if money was unavailable a claimant would have to wait until sufficient money was collected by the Authority through fees to be able to reimburse them. It was agreed that this suggestion be run by counsel to see if this was possible.

To address Elk Grove's concerns regarding the collection of the Well Protection Fee staff were requested at the July 11, 2007 Board meeting to explore whether a zone of the Sacramento County Water Agency could be created to collect the fee. After some discussion with Counsel it was concluded that the Well Protection Fee could be collected, however, creating a zone of the Water Agency and establishing the necessary authorities within the Sacramento County Water Agency Code to collect the fee would remove control of the Well Protection Program from the Authority. One of the expressed interests of the stakeholders developing the groundwater management plan for the Central Basin was to be responsible for the development and implementation of the programs necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the management plan.

Ed Crouse proposed that a sub-committee be formed to address the above concerns, particularly that members of the sub-committee should directly coordinate with electeds of the signatory organizations to educate them on program requirements and to solicit their support in the adoption and implementation of the program. This item was continued for further discussion at the next Board meeting.

7. Executive Director's Report

Darrell Eck announced that Dana Booth from EMD will have a presentation at next month's meeting.

8. Directors' Comments

Stuart Helfand stated that he will not be present at the SCGA meeting for the next two months.

In relation to the Well Protection Program, Scott Fort stated that there was a commitment to follow through on the development of this program and that this would be a credibility issue for the Groundwater Authority.

No other comments.

9. Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair Scott Fort adjourns meeting at 11:30 a.m.

By:

Scott Fort
Chairperson

10/10/07
Date

Attest:

Michelle Fiorino

10/10/07
Date

