

**VENTURA RIVER WATER DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING FEBRUARY 19, 2020**

Directors present were: Ed Lee, Peggy Wiles, Bruce Kuebler, Jack Curtis and Marvin Hanson. Also present were: Attorney Lindsey Nielson, General Manager/Board Secretary Bert Rapp and Office Manager Amy Joy Bakken. Public present were: Carl Enson, Ron Calkins and Bill Weirick.

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER-** President Ed Lee called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Marvin Hanson.
3. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
  - A. MINUTES JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2020
  - B. FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR DECEMBER 2019 & JANUARY 2020Jack Curtis moved for approval of the consent agenda items, seconded Peggy Wiles and carried 5-0.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT (FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)** – Bill Weirick, Carl Enson and Ron Calkins all gave brief statements regarding their personal views on the Ventura River Watershed Adjudication issue. Ron Calkins encouraged the Board to put together legal documentation regarding the issue for homeowners and realtors concerned about the effect of the case on property values.
5. **LETTER TO MATT LAVERE-6 MONTH EXTENSION: ADJUDICATION** – The City of Ventura has served about 11,000 property owners with a summons or notification regarding the adjudication of the Ventura River Watershed. Mediation discussions are underway and will hopefully lead to the resolution of the adjudication without proceeding to full water rights adjudication of the watershed. Bert Rapp recommended authorizing the Board President to send a letter asking the City of Ventura to grant a 6-month extension for the property owners served with adjudication summons or notices. Bruce Kuebler moved for approval of the recommended actions and directing the General Manager to create a legal document regarding adjudication for homeowners and realtors, seconded Jack Curtis and carried 5-0.
6. **MID YEAR BUDGET REVIEW & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE** – Amy Joy Bakken discussed the status of mid-year revenues and expenses. Some categories are coming in high such as Contract Labor and Field Equipment Maintenance. A budget transfer is being requested to cover the full cost of the billing software upgrade to UMS. Bert Rapp discussed the capital improvement projects that have been added to the ten-year capital improvement plan including the in-fill pipe from Highway 33 to Well #6, Baldwin Tank North and changing the Hydrant and Valve project to every other year. Bruce Kuebler asked some clarifying questions regarding year to date revenue calculation and formula totals as presented which staff answered. General Manager Bert Rapp recommended the following actions: 1) Approve the 2-19-2020 update to the Capital Improvement Plan 2) Approve budget transfer #5 in the amount of \$6,000 for the water billing software upgrade to UMS. Bruce Kuebler moved for approval of the recommended items, seconded Marvin Hanson and carried 5-0.
7. **COMPLIANCE WITH SB 998-WATER SHUTOFF PROTECTION ACT & UPDATE TO RULES AND REGULATIONS** – Senate Bill (SB) 998 imposes certain procedural and noticing requirements before residential water service can be discontinued with the intent to minimize the number of Californians who lose access to water service due to their inability to pay. Ventura River Water District (VRWD) is required to comply with this new law by April 1, 2020. Compliance with the new law will add about 10 additional days to when VRWD typically turns off a customer for non-payment. When a renter is delinquent, the landlord and the renter will be notified, and payment plans could be extended from 3 to 6 months. The District will also be required to provide the updated policy to customers in several different languages. Bert Rapp reviewed his suggested changes to the rules and regulations. This included a request to eliminate the required capacity charge for additional dwelling units as Casitas does not issue allocations

for Additional Dwelling Units. There was some general discussion regarding specifics of the law and edits to the rules and regulations. There was board consensus to review the changes again at the March Board meeting.

- 8. AWARD OF CONTRACT PREPARE PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR SANTA ANA/BURNHAM PIPE REPLACEMENT & PRESSURE REDUCING VAULT RECONSTRUCTION** –The water main that services the homes on Santa Ana Blvd and Burnham Rd is failing, is undersized for fire flows and needs to be replaced. The District has looked at several alternatives for replacing the pipe and settled on replacing it in place rather than relocating the pipe out into the street. The plumbing for the pressure reducing vaults on Thomas and Encino also need to be replaced. Both projects are scheduled in the Capital Improvement Plan for design this fiscal year and construction next fiscal year. General Manager Bert Rapp recommended that the Board award the design contract to Phoenix Civil Engineering to prepare the plans and specifications, geotechnical, environmental, construction easement preparation and surveying work in the amount of \$111,020. There was some general discussion regarding the best way to notify customers of the upcoming construction. Marvin Hanson moved for approval of the recommended item, seconded Jack Curtis and carried 5-0.
- 9. ACCEPTANCE OF SOLAR FEASIBILITY STUDY** – On June 19, 2019 the Board awarded a contract to Terra Verde Renewable Partners to conduct a Solar Photo Voltaic & Energy Storage Feasibility assessment for District facilities at Baldwin and Parker at a cost of \$20,877. The study is now complete. The cost to install solar at Baldwin is about \$370,000 with a breakeven point of 13 years assuming a 5% increase of Edison rates. The cost to install solar at Parker is about \$300,000 and has a breakeven point of 12 years assuming a 5% increase of Edison rates. There is limited space at the Baldwin site, therefore it would make sense to wait until the booster station and tanks are moved to higher ground. Edison is facing increasing costs due to wildfires, renewable energy sources and decreased revenues as customers shift to onsite solar. The General Manager recommended the following actions: 1) Accept the study as complete 2) Direct Staff to continue looking into grant funding for solar 3) Update the capital improvement plan to include solar first at the Parker site then in a later year at the Baldwin site, including a small battery backup at each site to enhance emergency preparedness. Jack Curtis stated he felt project planning should be put on hold until 20/21 to make sure our Edison rates don't change. Peggy Wiles moved for approval of the first recommended action only (accepting the study as complete) and not moving forward with anything else at this time, seconded Bruce Kubler and carried 5-0.
- 10. UPDATE ON INSPECTION OF WELLS #2 & #3**-On January 15, 2020 the District awarded a contract to inspect Wells 2 & 3 to General Pump. The old pumps have been removed and the wells have been video inspected and a CITM survey completed to determine the structural integrity of the well casings. The wells have not been cleaned. Both wells are highly encrusted with mineral deposits and need cleaning. There are no major structural failures in the wells. Well #2 & #3 should have a new well screen liner if they are put back into service. There was some general Board discussion regarding redundancy, the effects of wells being out of service, and the challenges of drilling a new well compared to rehabbing the existing wells. **Public Comment:** Ron Calkins stated he felt it was important to keep all wells in service in relation to future decisions for pumping allocations. The latest information and possible recommendations for the wells will be presented at the next Board meeting. No action was taken on this item.
- 11. PENDING BOARD VACANCY-MARVIN HANSON SEAT**-Marvin Hanson has served Ventura River Water District for 34 years. Director Hanson notified the District he would like to resign his position effective June 17, 2020. The Board was asked to decide between calling a special election, leaving the seat vacant until December 2020 or making an appointment to fill the vacant seat. The consensus of the Board was to appoint a person to fill the vacant seat. Bert Rapp stated 15 individuals had expressed

interest in the position. Bert Rapp recommended the following actions: 1) Direct the General Manager to post a physical notice at a minimum of three locations and create a bill stuffer advertising the Board vacancy. 2) Establish a sub-committee for interviewing potential candidates. 3) Select and appoint a person to fill the vacant Board seat per the process described in the agenda packet. Board President Ed Lee appointed Directors Bruce Kuebler and Peggy Wiles to serve on the ad-hoc committee to interview potential Board members. Bruce Kuebler moved for approval of the recommended actions, seconded Marvin Hanson and carried 5-0.

**12. BOARD REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED & UPDATE ON THE UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY (UVRGA) – BRUCE KUEBLER**

-Bruce Kuebler said there was a meeting held on the second Thursday of the month. The executive director of the UVRGA met with the Department of Water Resources (DWR), State Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and talked about coordination with the DFW flow study, DWR surface water groundwater model and the Watershed Adjudication with the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Senior DWR staff commented that the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) should be viewed as a starting point and needs to clearly communicate where we are heading and how things will go forward. It could include goals which seek to increase flow, but things can be revised after the flow study becomes known and this approach would be acceptable as long as the process is clear. It doesn't have to be a quantitative model, that will be done by the state. SWRCB stated their preference is for the GSP to serve as a management program and they expressed a desire for holistic management of the groundwater. The meeting that UVRGA's executive director had with SWRCB and DWR was a significant meeting which reflects a good direction. Bruce Kuebler went on to say he attended the January 30<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding adjudication of the Ventura River Watershed and spoke up on behalf of the District. He also attended the Matilija Dam update meeting with Bert Rapp which was nearly a full day of discussion. The Environmental Impact Report is expected to be published in February or March next year with the actual construction removal possibly occurring in 2027. No action was taken on this item.


**13. GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT ON WATER & DISTRICT STATUS** - The aquifer is currently 4 feet above the 30-year average for February 1<sup>st</sup> at an elevation of 528.9 feet. Well #1 is pumping 963 GPM, up 19 GPM from last month. Well #7 is pumping 760 GPM up 13 GPM from last month. Wells #2, #3 & #4 were not online in January. No supplemental water was purchased from Casitas in January. Sales dollars billed on January 31, 2020 amounted to \$114,589 which was \$29,631 under budget for January. Water sold in January amounted to 19,916 HCF, a decrease of 22% below the 22,075 HCF sold in January 2013. On February 1, 2020, Lake Casitas level was 41.7% of full capacity at elevation 501.1, 65.8 feet below spill elevation of 567 with storage of 99,160 AF. The lake has decreased 0.1% or 0.1 foot and decreased 217 AF feet since last month. Bert Rapp briefly discussed District activities over the last month including pParker pipe manifold fittings being manufactured, completion of kitchen repair, District general server upgrade and reviewing backflow preventers with the County.

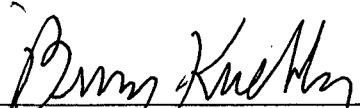
**14. OLD & NEW BUSINESS** –None.

**15. EXECUTIVE SESSION**-Ed Lee moved into executive session at 5:15 pm to discuss pending litigation. No action was taken on this item.

Ed Lee adjourned the meeting at 5:49 pm.

Attested:

  
Ed Lee, President

  
Bruce Kuebler, Vice President