

**VENTURA RIVER WATER DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MARCH 17, 2021**

Directors present via Zoom video and teleconference were: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. Also present were: Attorney Lindsey Nielson, General Manager/Board Secretary Bert Rapp, Office Manager Amy Joy Bakken and Attorney Jeanne Zolezzi. Public Present: Art Gonzales, Jaime and Carl Enson.

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER-** President Bruce Kuebler called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.
2. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
  - A. **MINUTES FEBRUARY 17, 2021**
  - B. **FINANCIALS JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2021**

Jack Curtis moved for approval of the consent agenda, seconded Ed Lee and carried 5-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT (FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA) – None.**

4. **COMMENT LETTER ON CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (CDFW) VENTURA RIVER DRAFT FLOW RECOMMENDATIONS**—On February 26<sup>th</sup>, the CDFW published their Instream Flow Recommendations for the Lower Ventura River and Coyote Creek and are accepting comments until March 29, 2021. The CDFW flow recommendations range by season (Spawning/Adult Migration and Rearing) with recommended flows of 15 CFS at Reach 4 in Foster Park during Rearing (Summer/Fall) months. By comparison, the draft Physical Solution for the Ventura Adjudication lawsuit is 2 to 4 CFS at Reach 4. Bert Rapp presented comparison data to show the magnitude of the variance between these two recommendations, mainly that river flow of 15 CFS or higher has only occurred 13% of the time between 1930-Present. There was extensive board discussion regarding the best approach and language to use in the District's comment letter to CDFW. The District is asking CDFW to define the phrase "natural flow" and commenting that the Wetted Perimeter Method of analysis that was used to calculate the recommendations may be causing over estimation of flow needed. In addition, the District is commenting that the recommended flow is higher than when fish were healthy with lower flows and that they are dramatically higher than actual flows. **Public Comment:** Carl Enson expressed concern regarding the strict flow recommendations and how that may affect the customers of the District. Bruce Kuebler responded that the hope is there will be a balancing of the needs of the people and the environment. **Recommended Actions:** 1) Review and comment on the attached comment letter. 2) Authorize the Board President to submit the letter once final. Ed Lee moved for approval of the recommended actions including additional edits to be submitted by Directors, seconded Nathan Rosser, and carried 5-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Ed Lee, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)


5. **REQUEST TO ANNEX INTO VRWD – 1000 BURNHAM RD**—Art Gonzales of 1000 Burnham Rd. is requesting to annex into VRWD. The Casitas mainline is too far from the property to connect. VRWD water would be used for indoor use and a well on the property would be used for irrigation water. Art Gonzales thanked the Board for considering his proposal to annex into the District and described his purchasing the property in hopes the well would produce. However, the well has not been as productive as hoped for, at about 5 GPM. Bert Rapp noted that at 5 GPM the well will produce about 300 units of water per month which is more than our largest customers use. Ed Lee expressed concern regarding usage of water in an industrial horse arena. Art Gonzales responded he would not be watering down the arenas. Peggy Wiles asked about water budget determination for the parcel. Bruce Kuebler stated that the well on this particular property is an observation well for UVRGA and requested that Mr. Gonzales work with Brian Bondy to continue gathering data from that well, which Mr. Gonzales acknowledged he is doing. **Recommended Actions:** The General Manager recommended that the Board accept the request of Mr. Art Gonzales to begin processing the

annexation of 1000 Burnham Rd into the District upon payment of the VRWD \$1,400 annexation fee. Ed Lee moved for approval of the recommended action, seconded Peggy Wiles and carried 5-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Ed Lee, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. Absent: Jack Curtis.)

6. **REVISION TO PERSONNEL POLICY SECTION 3420 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE**– The District’s current educational assistance policy was proposed to be updated with current educational costs. Bert Rapp discussed the benefits of assisting employees to further their education, including retention, promotion from within, and more efficient and productive employees. There was extensive board discussion and concern regarding a full reimbursement policy. Several board members made suggestions for policy revisions and Staff will edit and re-present this item based on Director comments for the April board meeting. No action was taken on this item.
7. **BOARD REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED & UPDATE ON THE UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY(UVRGA)-BRUCE KUEBLER**- Two things happened in the last month related to UVRGA. One was the public workshop on March 2 to discuss the water quality aspect of the groundwater management plan. There was a disappointing turnout at the workshop of only a few people (a few institutional people and one farmer). The comments from those in attendance were also limited. The UVRGA meeting held the following week resulted in approval of the management criteria for water quality and there are three items left: long term declining water level, storage and instream uses. These reflect the biggest parts of the study and meeting frequency will increase to semi-monthly for the next couple of months to get this important package put together. The UVRGA Board discussed commenting on the CSDFW flow recommendations and decided to submit some very general comments. No action was taken on this item.
8. **GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT ON WATER & DISTRICT STATUS**- The aquifer is currently 4.4 feet below the 30-year average for March 1. Well #1 is pumping 974 GPM, up 21 GPM from last month. Well #2, #3, #4 & #6 were not online in February. Well #7 is pumping 754 GPM, up 20 GPM from last month. No supplemental water was purchased from Casitas. Sales dollars billed on February 28, 2021 amounted to \$157,152, over budget by \$21,933 over budget for February. Water sold in February 2021 amounted to 23,387 HCF, a decrease of 21% below the 29,667 HCF sold in February 2013. On March 1, 2021, Lake Casitas level was at 39% of full capacity at elevation of 496.8 feet. The lake has decreased 0.2% or 0.36 feet and decreased 529 AF since last month. No action was taken on this item.
9. **OLD & NEW BUSINESS**- There was general board discussion regarding the postponement of purchasing tablets and laptops for directors until board meetings are back in person. Peggy Wiles stated that any Director in need of a device prior to in person meetings should be provided for per the budgeted item.
10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**- Bruce Kuebler moved the meeting into executive session at 4:21 to discuss pending litigation. Bruce Kuebler moved the meeting out of executive session at 4:31 pm. No action was taken on this item.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Attested:

  
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Bruce Kuebler, President

  
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Peggy Wiles, Vice President