

**VENTURA RIVER WATER DISTRICT  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MAY 19, 2021**

Directors were present via Zoom video or in person and were: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, Peggy Wiles and Ed Lee whose unreliable internet connection eliminated him from discussions and voting. Also present were: Attorney Lindsey Nielson, General Manager/Board Secretary Bert Rapp, Office Manager Amy Joy Bakken, Account Administrator Emily Arnbrister and Attorney Jeanne Zolezzi for the Executive Session. Public Present: Fran Fitting for the first portion of the meeting.

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER-** President Bruce Kuebler called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.
2. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
  - A. **MINUTES APRIL 21, 2021**
  - B. **FINANCIALS MARCH AND APRIL 2021**

Peggy Wiles moved for approval of the consent agenda, seconded Bruce Kuebler and carried 4-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None ABSENT: Ed Lee.)

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT (FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA) –** None.
4. **SECOND REVIEW OF DRAFT 2021/22 BUDGET**–The second draft of the fiscal year 2021/22 budget was presented to the Board for review. Amy Joy Bakken discussed items that were updated from last month's review. Budget line items were added for the Tico Annexation, Zero Interest Loan, Computer replacements and a cyber security scan. There was some general board discussion regarding specific items in the budget. **Recommended Actions:** 1) Review and comment on the draft budget. No action was taken on this item.
5. **AWARD OF CONTRACT CEQA FOR LAFCO APPLICATIONS – TICO & 1000 BURNHAM ROAD**– The District sent out a Request for Proposal to five environmental firms and received two cost proposals for the preparation of the Initial Study Assessment for the LAFCo application for Tico Mutual and 1000 Burnham Road annexations. Peggy Wiles asked for clarification on the cost comparison for the proposals to ensure it was in comparable terms. Bert Rapp confirmed that the costs presented were only for the Initial Study Assessment and not additional tasks (such as a mitigated negative declaration). **Recommended Action:** The General Manager recommended that the Board award the Initial Study Assessment for LAFCo Applications to Padre Associates Inc. in the amount of \$3,140. Jack Curtis moved for approval of the recommended actions, seconded Peggy Wiles and carried 4-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ed Lee).
6. **AWARD OF CONTRACT BALDWIN BOOSTER #3 SOFT START**– The District received 3 bids for the Baldwin Booster #3 Soft Start project. The low bid was \$8,483.08 from P&J Electric, Inc. The soft start will lower the startup amperage for the Booster #3 saving about \$4,800 per year in Demand charges from Edison and enable the booster to be started by the Tesla Batteries. Bruce Kuebler asked for an explanation for the contingency amount of \$5,000 as it seemed high in proportion to the bid cost. Bert Rapp responded that this change order authority is high as a percentage of the project but is needed because it doesn't take much of a problem to come to \$5,000 and would not want to have to stop the work to wait to come back to the Board for additional approval. **Recommended Action:** Award the Baldwin Booster #3 Soft Start project to P&J Electric Inc. in the amount of \$8,483.08 and authorize the General Manager change order authority on the contract of \$5,000. Peggy Wiles moved for approval of the recommended action, seconded Jack Curtis and carried 4-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ed Lee).

- 7. TASK ORDER AUTHORIZATION-WATERSHED PROGRESSIVE FOR LANDOWNER CONSERVATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT-** The District has been awarded a grant to help fund the development of a Landowner Conservation Incentive Program that VRWD can use to encourage customers to capture rainwater, reuse grey water and upgrade their landscaping to low water plants. The grant is provided by the Wildlife Conservation Board as part of the Ventura River Instream Flow grant. The grant is administered by the Ventura County Resources Conservation District. The grant covers 46% of the cost. There was some general Board discussion regarding the specifics of the grant and the process for designing this program. **Recommended Action:** Authorize the General Manager to issue a Task Order to the Watershed Progressive per the current professional services agreement dated October 30, 2019 in the amount of \$15,000 to prepare a Landowner Conservation Incentive Program per their proposal dated April 16, 2021. Bruce Kuebler moved for approval of the recommended action, seconded Peggy Wiles and carried 4-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ed Lee).
- 8. REVISION TO PERSONNEL POLICY SECTION 3420: EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE-** The Board reviewed a proposed update to the District's educational policy at the March and April 2021 Board meetings. Staff re-worked the proposed changes per the Board's comments and requested direct edits from Directors Wiles and Rosser before bringing this item back to the full Board for review. **Recommended Action:** 1) Increase the limit of annual tuition reimbursement for employees from \$3,000 per year up to \$5,000 per year with General Manager approval. 2) Require Board approval of tuition reimbursement greater than \$5,000 per year with a three-year reimbursement program. Peggy Wiles moved for approval of the recommended actions, seconded Nathan Rosser and carried 4-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ed Lee).
- 9. AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS HYDRANTS & VALVES 2021-** The draft budget for fiscal year ending 2022 includes \$305,000 for the Hydrant and Valve Replacement project. In 2019, the District shifted its replacement schedule for hydrants and valves to every other year. The bid package includes 17 hydrants and 15 valves. This includes 6 existing hydrants that are being replaced and 11 in-fill hydrants. **Recommended Actions:** 1) Approve the plans and specifications. 2) Authorize the advertisement for bids for the Valve and Hydrant Replacement 2021 Project. Peggy Wiles moved for approval of the recommended actions, seconded Bruce Kuebler and carried 4-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ed Lee.)
- 10. APPROVAL OF DROUGHT BANNERS-**At the April 2021 Board meeting, draft drought banners were reviewed. Director Peggy Wiles worked with staff after last month's meeting to come up with a new and improved set of drought banners for review. Staff presented all updated designs for placing around the District for the Summer months (July through August). There was Board support for displaying banners through October. **Recommended Action:** 1) Review and comment on banners. 2) Select banners to be printed. Jack Curtis moved for approval of the recommended action with the Board consensus to print all banner designs, seconded Nathan Rosser and carried 4-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Nathan Rosser, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. ABSENT: Ed Lee.)
- 11. APPROVAL OF SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER-**District staff presented the draft Spring 2021 newsletter with a fresh new design created by VRWD Account Administrator Emily Arnbrister. The newsletter used to be a separate and dedicated mailing but is now mailed as a billing insert with the

regular monthly water bill at a much lower cost. Going forward, staff would prefer to do a semi-annual newsletter mailing to keep customers informed.

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

Bruce Kuebler said that the last UVRGA meeting to was held to identify how they are going to approach the depletion of interconnected service water and groundwater sources and the effect on the steelhead. There was UVRGA Board consensus in agreement with the proposal. The UVRGA Board identified they do not have enough information at present time to make a definitive determination as there are some data gaps to fill. While there could be significant adverse effects, more data must be gathered before that determination can be made which could occur with the first update of the plan in five years. More data will be gathered in those years and the state's water model will also be out then. The UVRGA Board voted to include the staff recommendation in writing as part of the draft GSP which will be released in August. It was important to note that the GSP has not been approved, it is just a draft. There is a possibility of one more workshop, but it has not been decided yet. UVRGA has gone through all six management criteria and is now ready to be compiled and released to the public for comments. The hope is that UVRGA is on schedule for GSP approval in November for online submittal by the end of January. For more information, interested parties can visit [uvrgroundwater.org](http://uvrgroundwater.org). No action was taken on this item.

**13. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT ON WATER & DISTRICT STATUS-**

The aquifer is currently 19.6 feet below the 30-year average for May 1. Well #1 is pumping 962 GPM, down 15 GPM from last month. Well #2, #3, #4 & #6 were not online in April. Well #7 is pumping 745 GPM, down 13 GPM from last month. No supplemental water was purchased from Casitas. Sales dollars billed on April 30, 2021 amounted to \$208,184, over budget by \$41,744 for April. Water sold in April 2021 amounted to 28,544 HCF, a decrease of 29% below the 40,335 HCF sold in April 2013. On April 1, 2021, Lake Casitas level was at 38% of full capacity at elevation of 495.16 feet. The lake has decreased 0.6% or 1.1 feet and decreased 1,592 AF since last month. No action was taken on this item.

**14. OLD & NEW BUSINESS-**


Bruce Kuebler asked Bert Rapp if he would be providing comments on the Water Board's Supply and Demand webinar, they both attended earlier in the day. Bert responded he thought that was a good idea and he would put some comments together. This is a component of the surface water/groundwater model being developed for their instream flow enhancement program.


**15. EXECUTIVE SESSION-**

Bruce Kuebler moved the meeting into executive session at 4:23 to discuss pending litigation and real estate negotiations. Bruce Kuebler moved the meeting out of executive session at 4:47 pm. No action was taken on this item.

Meeting adjourned at 4:48 pm.

Attested:

  
Bruce Kuebler, President

  
Peggy Wiles, Vice President

