

**VENTURA RIVER WATER DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MAY 20, 2020**

Directors present via Zoom video and teleconference were: Ed Lee, Jack Curtis, Peggy Wiles, Bruce Kuebler and Marvin Hanson. Also present were: Attorney Lindsey Nielson, General Manager/Board Secretary Bert Rapp, and Office Manager Amy Joy Bakken. Public present were: Harrison Stenberg of Time Value Investments (TVI) and Nathan Rosser.

- 1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER-** Vice President Bruce Kuebler called the meeting to order at 3:02 P.M.
- 2. CONSENT AGENDA:**
 - A. MINUTES APRIL 15TH, 2020**
 - B. FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR FEBRUARY & MARCH 2020**

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

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

- 4. RESOLUTION 2020-321 RECOGNIZING 35 YEARS OF SERVICE-LINDSAY NIELSON–** Ed Lee, Jack Curtis, Marvin Hanson, Peggy Wiles and Bruce Kuebler all gave brief statements about Lindsay Nielson and his many years of gracious service to the District. Bruce Kuebler read Resolution 2020-321 aloud in recognition of Lindsay. Jack Curtis moved for approval, seconded Peggy Wiles, and carried 5-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Marvin Hanson, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)

- 5. 2020-2021 BUDGET 2ND REVIEW–** Bert Rapp and Amy Joy Bakken presented the second draft of the budget for FY 20/21 including the highlights of what changed from the last draft. With revenues slightly uncertain due to the coronavirus restrictions, staff recommended relooking at the finances in August when the Santa Ana pipeline project will be ready to advertise for bids and consider postponing to next spring, funding with Water Sales Fluctuation Reserves or the zero interest SRF loan. There were some general questions presented by each board member. Jack Curtis recommended budgeting tablet devices instead of laptops for the Board Members. No action was taken on this item.

- 6. DISCUSSION ABOUT MAKING A COMMENT ON THE CASITAS PROTEST HEARING NOTICE –** Casitas Municipal Water District has published a Protest Hearing notice for a rate increase to fund their expenses associated with the Santa Barbara Channelkeeper lawsuit and associated City of Ventura Adjudication. The VRWD ratepayers have no ability to protest the rate increase because the Casitas meters serving them are held in the name of VRWD. The discussion raised is whether the rate increase proposed by Casitas is fair to VRWD customers. Each Board Member gave a brief statement regarding their view on the Adjudication Fees. Peggy Wiles stated she disagreed with the VRWD customers essentially being charged twice as they are already paying \$50,000 for the District's representation in the adjudication. Bruce Kuebler read his prepared statement to submit to Casitas. Peggy Wiles will submit some additional language to include. **Public Comment:** Nathan Rosser asked some specific questions regarding how the increased cost would be allocated to VRWD customers and if it would only be assessed to Casitas Springs and Monte Via. Bert Rapp replied that the District no longer has individual rates for those neighborhoods so the cost would be shared by all customers. Marvin Hanson moved for approval of Bruce Kuebler's motion to submit to Casitas with Peggy Wiles added language, seconded Peggy Wiles and carried 5-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Marvin Hanson, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)

- 7. INVESTMENT OPTIONS USING CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT** –With the current economic disruption being caused by COVID-19 the return on investment of the District reserve funds could be minimal and presents a good time to re-look at putting some funds into the Certificates of Deposit that are Federally insured. The District previously reviewed this option last August but decided not to move forward. Harrison Stenberg of Time Value Investments (TVI) gave an extended statement and presentation on the benefits of investing in CD's including fixed interest over time. LAIF interest rates go up and down with the economy. In addition to comparing interest percentages on different types of investments, Harrison discussed Safety, Liquidity and Yield as the public funds investing mandates. Bruce Kuebler called on each board member to ask questions. Peggy Wiles stated she felt diversifying the District's portfolio was a wise choice and the best way to go, especially during this time. Bruce Kuebler appointed an ad-hoc committee of Jack Curtis and Peggy Wiles to work with Bert Rapp and Harrison Stenberg to work on the specifics. **Public Comment:** Nathan Rosser asked how we heard of TVI if they were recommended by another District. Bert Rapp answered it was a cold call. Harrison commented he would be happy to provide references. Peggy Wiles moved for approval to invest some of the District's funds into CD's, second Bruce Kuebler and carried 5-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Marvin Hanson, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)
- 8. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNT ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SALARY RANGE**–The District is creating a new job position entitled Account Administrator to replace the previous Office Assistant position. As the assignments for the Office Assistant are changing with more automation in the billing tasks and moving away from manual work, the position is transitioning to performing more accounting work and technical administrative tasks. There was some general board discussion regarding where the position will be advertised and the timeline for filling the position. Bert Rapp and Amy Joy Bakken commented that the position will be listed as open until filled to allow a thorough, unrushed process. Marvin Hanson moved for approval of the Account Administrator job description and Salary Range Schedule, seconded Peggy Wiles and carried 5-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Marvin Hanson, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None).
- 9. BOARD REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED & UPDATE ON THE UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY (UVRGA)-BRUCE KUEBLER** – Bruce Kuebler attended the Ojai/Ventura water agency partnership meeting a week ago Friday which was hosted by Steve Bennett. The partnership was formed to try to coordinate activities between the Districts to apply for grants. Bruce found that the meeting was not very conducive to sharing, mostly due it being held on Zoom. At the UVRGA meeting, the budget for 2021 was approved as well as the long-range budget for 2024. The cost increase is about \$103,000. For the upcoming year, the extraction fee will be \$79.16, \$75.00 for 21/22, \$54.00 for 22/23 and \$49.00 for 23/24. The schedule was updated and can be found on the UVRGA website. UVRGA is considering putting out letter to stakeholders and putting something in the paper to give an update on work that has been done. No action was taken on this item.
- 10. VCSDA SELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE**–Jack Curtis stated he goes all the time and would like to be the representative for the District. There was consensus that Jack Curtis was the right person. Peggy Wiles suggested that Bruce Kuebler be the alternate. Peggy Wiles moved for approval to select Jack Curtis as the representative and Bruce Kuebler as the alternative, seconded Marvin Hanson and carried 5-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Marvin Hanson, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)
- 11. RESOLUTION 2020-322 RESCIND DROUGHT EMERGENCY**–Bert Rapp gave a brief statement about rescinding the drought emergency. The winter rains of 2020 restored aquifer levels sufficiently

to provide up to a two-year supply of water and the backup supply (Casitas Municipal Water District) have risen to 44.9%. The stage 3 drought declaration by the Casitas Municipal Water District remains in effect. Peggy Wiles asked that part of the resolution be edited to move the Stage 3 drought paragraph to 2nd from the top. Jack Curtis moved for approval of Resolution 2020-322, seconded Marvin Hanson and carried 5-0 (AYES: Jack Curtis, Marvin Hanson, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)

- 12. GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT ON WATER & DISTRICT STATUS-** The aquifer is currently 2.7 feet below the 30-year average for May 1 at an elevation of 532.1 feet. Well #1 is pumping 974 GPM, up 14 GPM from last month. Well #2, #3, #4 were not online in April. Well #7 is pumping 778 GPM, up 35 GPM from last month. Well #2 can be pumped but is not needed at this time. One hundred and eighty-two units of Casitas water was purchased from Casitas in May. Sales dollars billed on April 30, 2020 amounted to \$147,633, under budget by \$45,339 for April. Water sold in April 2020 amounted to 18,145 HCF, a decrease of 55% below the 40,335 HCF sold in April 2013. On May 1, Lake Casitas level was at 44.9% of full capacity at elevation of 505.8 feet. No action was taken on this item.

- 13. OLD & NEW BUSINESS** - Marvin Hanson asked what stage we are in for the well spinner test. Bert Rapp replied the acid wash will be a little later when the river stops flowing so that we do not have to discharge to the running river. Peggy Wiles asked for specifics on how we are looking at the top 85 water users going over budget. She also asked who we are using to investigate the issue. Peggy Wiles went on to say that she does not want the District putting too much funding into a program when we are going to be paying for the new aerial flight in the summer which may refine the data in question.

- 14. EXECUTIVE SESSION-**None.

Meeting adjourned at 4:54 pm

Attested:


Bruce Kuebler, Vice President


Jack Curtis, Treasurer