

**VENTURA RIVER WATER DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 19, 2022**

Directors present via Zoom video were: Nathan Rosser. Directors present in person: Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee and Peggy Wiles. Director Jack Curtis joined via Zoom at 3:42pm. Also present were: Attorney Lindsey Nielson, General Manager/Board Secretary Bert Rapp, Assistant General Manager Alma Quezada, Office Manager Emily Arnbrister, Office Assistant Nichole Ochoa. Public Present: Jon Turner of Phoenix Civil Engineering.

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER-** President Peggy Wiles called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT (FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA) –** None
3. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
 - A. **MINUTES SEPTEMBER 21, 2022**
 - B. **PAYMENTS & CHECKS FOR SEPTEMBER 2022; FINANCIALS FOR AUGUST 2022**
 - C. **CONFIRMATION OF RESOLUTION 2021-335 REMOTE MEETINGS**

Peggy Wiles moved for approval of the Consent Agenda with removal of Financials for August 2022 and updating the end meeting time for the minutes to reflect the correct time of 4:05pm, seconded Bruce Kuebler and carried 3-0-1. (AYES: Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. Abstain: Bruce Kuebler. Absent: Jack Curtis)

4. **APPROVAL OF REVISED WORK TASKS FOR 2023 WATER PROJECTS:** Since the award of the 2023 Water Projects contract, two water project components have been removed: water main reconstruction in Monte Via/Rio Via neighborhoods, and on Catalina Street. Amendment #1 will replace Parker Soft Starts with VFD's and prepare and administer the pre-construction potholing contract. Amendment #2 will move the Ojai Terrace Emergency Intertie from Carillo Road to La Paz Drive. Task Orders #18 and #19 document the changes to the 2023 Water Projects design contract. Bert Rapp recommended an increase of 8% due to inflation for the remaining work on Task Order #16 in January 2023. Director Kuebler inquired about the need and dollar cost for the inflation increase. Jon Turner responded to Director Kuebler's questions regarding the duration of contracts and the cost incurred to Phoenix Civil Engineering. General Manager Bert Rapp mentioned that Phoenix Civil Engineering historically comes in underbudget and is very mindful of budget constraints. There was general Board discussion regarding the budgeted expense. **Public Comment:** None.
Recommended Action: 1. Approve Task Orders #18 and #19 documenting the changes to the Water Projects design contract with Phoenix Civil Engineering. 2. Authorize the General Manager to make an 8% inflation adjustment to the fee balance of the 2023 Water Projects design project with Phoenix Civil Engineering, Task Order #16, as of January 15, 2023. Bruce Kuebler moved for approval of the recommended actions, seconded Ed Lee. Each item was voted on separately as follows: Approval of Task Order #18 carried 4-0. (AYES: Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. Absent: Jack Curtis), Approval of Task Order #19 carried 4-0. (AYES: Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. Absent: Jack Curtis), Approval of 8% inflation increase, carried 4-0. (AYES: Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. Absent: Jack Curtis).
5. **AWARD OF TASK ORDER- FIRE FLOW PUMP CASITAS SPRINGS:** The lowered Lake Casitas levels have decreased water pressure to the Casitas water system in Casitas Springs, reducing fire flow in the neighborhood. A drought booster pump will be needed to restore the pressure and needed fire flow during an emergency. The District recently applied for a grant to cover the cost of the pump, but not the engineering design. Potential grant award is 6 to 9 months out. Task Order #20 is for the preparation of the engineering design and bid package for the Drought Booster Pump. The pump will be a trailer mounted diesel pump. There was general Board discussion regarding the possibility of a dual use for the pump at both Casitas Springs and the Parker Plant. **Public Comment:** None.
Recommended Action: Approve Task Order #20 to Phoenix Civil Engineering to design and prepare a bid package for a trailer mounted Drought Booster Pump for Casitas Springs in the amount of

\$57,864. Nathan Rosser moved for approval of the recommended action, seconded Bruce Kuebler and carried 4-0. (AYES: Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None. Absent: Jack Curtis).

6. **STAGE 4 LETTER TO CASITAS:** On September 14th the Casitas Board discussed implementing a Stage 4 drought. The lake level is expected to drop below 30% (Stage 4) in November. The Casitas Board asked staff to bring the item back in two months. The letter to Casitas supports implementing a Stage 4 drought now. Director Kuebler was in support of the letter and suggested the removal of one paragraph that mentioned National Geographic. Director Wiles suggested mentioning that increased conservation preserves fire flow capacity in the gravity service areas of Casitas including the Casitas Springs area served by VRWD. **Public Comment:** None. **Recommended Action:** authorize the Board President to sign the final letter to be sent to Casitas Municipal Water District, after removing the paragraph citing National Geographic, and including a paragraph about adequate pressure for fire flow. Ed Lee moved for approval of the recommended action with both Director Kuebler and Director Wiles edits, seconded Bruce Kuebler and carried 5-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)
7. **AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS F-250 UTILITY TRUCK:** The District's 2008 Ford F-250 Utility Vehicle is in need of replacement. This item was bid in 2021, but supply chain issues didn't allow for delivery in a timely manner. The truck is already budgeted for this fiscal year. **Public Comment:** None. **Recommended Action:** Authorize the Assistant General Manager to advertise for bids for the replacement of the 2008 Ford F-250. Jack Curtis moved for approval of the recommended action, seconded Ed Lee and carried 5-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)
8. **UPDATE TO PERSONNEL POLICY- HEALTH & DEPENDENT FLEX SPENDING ACCOUNTS & HOLIDAY CLARIFICATION:** Adding Flexible Spending Accounts as an employee benefit allows for employees to contribute to their Health Spending Account or Dependent Care Spending Account on a pre-tax basis. The limits of the programs are governed by the IRS each year. Participation in the FSA options by two employees would offset the third-party cost to administer the program, and as more employees participate in the program, VRWD savings will increase. Director Kuebler and Wiles mentioned the success they have seen in the implementation of these programs in other companies. Clarification of the personnel policy is intended to expressly illustrate the Holiday Schedule for the day before Christmas and the day before New Year's when they fall on weekends. Employees will not receive 4 hours of holiday pay on days when they fall on weekends. **Public Comment:** None. **Recommended Action:** Approve the addition of Section 3505.4 to the Personnel Policy to add a new benefit that will offer employees the option to participate in two Flexible Spending Accounts. Ed Lee moved for approval of the recommended action, seconded Nathan Rosser and carried 5-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.) **Recommended Action:** Approve the clarification to Section 3425 HOLIDAYS that the 4-hour holiday time will only be provided when Christmas Eve and New Year's Ever fall on a workday. Ed Lee moved for approval of the recommended action, seconded Nathan Rosser and carried 5-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)
9. **LAFCO MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW:** As part of the LAFCO Municipal Service Review (MSR), it is recommended that the district adopts a mission statement. The Assistant General Manager presented 5 mission statements; Director Kuebler offered his own suggestion as well. There was general Board discussion regarding the length and intent of the mission statement. The Office Manager suggested the district adopt a concise mission statement as well as a vision statement. Director Wiles suggested the District adopt the mission statement, "We Serve Water" and have staff to come back next month with possible vision statements. **Public Comment:** None. Ed Lee moved for approval of the adoption of "We Serve Water" as a mission statement, seconded Nathan Rosser and carried 5-0. (AYES: Jack Curtis, Bruce Kuebler, Ed Lee, Nathan Rosser and Peggy Wiles. NOES: None.)

10. **BOARD REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED & UPDATE ON THE UPPER VENTURA RIVER GROUNDWATER AGENCY (UVRGA) - BRUCE KUEBLER:** Director Kuebler stated that the UVRGA is continuing to approve more contracts for monitoring and implementation of monitoring. Computer modeling needs to be updated every year, not every few years as expected. No new updates regarding the City of Ojai wanting to join the UVRGA. Bruce Kuebler made a presentation on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan to the Ventura County Association of Water Agencies at the October 18th meeting.
11. **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT ON WATER & DISTRICT STATUS:** The static aquifer level at Well #2 on October 1, 2022, was at elevation 504.1, dropping 5.1 feet since the first of last month. The aquifer is currently 6.9 feet below the 30-year average for October 1st. Well #1 is pumping 895 GPM, down 34 GPM from last month. Well #7 is pumping 667 GPM, down 46 GPM from last month. Well #2, #3, #4 & #6 were not online in September. No supplemental water was purchased from Casitas. Sales dollars billed on September 30, 2022, amounted to \$268,046, under budget by \$28,650 for September. Water sold in September 2022 amounted to 36,940 HCF, a decrease of 41% below the 63,102 HCF sold in September 2013. On October 1, 2022, Lake Casitas level was at 30.7% of full capacity at an elevation of 481.6 feet. The lake has decreased 0.7% since last month.
Bruce made a comment regarding the State of California moving to a base year of 2020 instead of 2013. Bert Rapp stated he and Mike Flood they felt that 2020 is not a normal usage year in the Ojai Valley and Casitas is going to keep 2013 as the base year. It would be best to keep the same base year consistent in the Ojai Valley.
12. **OLD & NEW BUSINESS:** The district is going to transition the monthly water update sent monthly to more of a newsletter to be distributed to all the customers with emails, while still providing quarterly newsletters to be sent as a mailer with the water bills. Watershed progressive has more funding available for yard design and possible implementation.
13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION –** Peggy Wiles moved the meeting into executive session at 4:56 pm to discuss pending litigation. Peggy Wiles brought the Board out of executive session at 5:04 pm. No action was taken in the Executive Session.

Meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

Attested:



Bert J. Rapp, Secretary