



AGRICULTURAL WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING

MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING SESSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024
1:30 PM**

(Paragraph numbers coincide with agenda item numbers)

1. CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) Agricultural Water Advisory Committee (Committee) was called to order in the Valley Water Headquarters Building Boardroom at 5700 Almaden Expressway, San Jose, California, and by Zoom teleconference, at 1:30 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call.

Committee members in attendance were District 1 Erin Gil, District 2 James Provenzano, District 5 Jan Garrod, District 6 Robert Long, District 5 and Vice Chairperson Trevor Garrod, and Loma Prieta Resource Conservative District and Chairperson presiding, Peter Van Dyke constituting a quorum of the Committee.

District 1 Mitchell Mariani, District 4 Sheila Barry and District 6 Tim Chiala arrived as noted below.

Committee member not in attendance in person was District 4 Brent Bonino.

Staff members in attendance were: Mark Bilski, Theresa Chinte, Jennifer Codianne, Vanessa De La Piedra, Vincent Gin, Jason Gurdak, Andy Gschwind, Kaho Kong, Candice Kwok-Smith, Nicole Merritt, Walter Gonzalez, Ryan McCarter, Julianne O'Brien, Ashley Shannon, Stephanie Simunic, Kirsten Struve, Darin Taylor, Nadia Webster, Gregory Williams, and Beckie Zisser.

Board Representatives in attendance were: Valley Water Vice Chairperson Richard P. Santos (District 3) and Director John L. Varela (District 1).

Public in attendance were: Valley Water Director Rebecca Eisenberg (District 7) and Sarah.

2. TIME OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Chairperson Van Dyke declared time open for public comment on any item not on the agenda. There was no one present who wished to speak.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

3.1. Approval of July 1, 2024 Agricultural Water Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

Recommendation: Approve the minutes.

The Committee considered the attached minutes of the July 1, 2024 Committee meeting.

Public Comments:
None.

It was moved by James Provenzano and seconded by Erin Gil and unanimously carried that the minutes be approved.

4. REGULAR AGENDA:

4.1. Receive the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Update.

Recommendation: Receive update on SGMA.

Mitchell Mariani and Tim Chiala arrived.

Jason Gurdak and Kaho Kong reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee Agenda Memo, and the corresponding materials contained in Attachment 1 were reviewed by staff as follows: Jason Gurdak reviewed Slides 1 through 5 and Kaho Kong reviewed Slide 6.

Sheila Barry arrived.

Jason Gurdak, Kaho Kong, Vanessa De La Piedra, Ryan McCarter, Vincent Gin, and Valley Water Board Director Varela were available to answer questions.

Public Comments:
None.

The Committee discussed the following topics: the groundwater divide and county boundary and the general comparison of outcome measures between the Santa Clara and Llagas subbasins and the San Benito County subbasin; confirmed the State Water Board is evaluating further the accounting procedure for the water banked in Semitropics by Valley Water; confirmed a subbasin on probation may require metering, fees, and reporting requirements for pumping groundwater, with 1 year to address any deficiencies in its sustainability plan, otherwise,

a state interim plan may be imposed; expressed concern over continued water banking with Semitropics and noted water is banked with Semitropic during wet years at a low price to use in future dry seasons; noted Valley Water is staying in communication and fully engaged with the State Water Board's probationary hearing new regulatory process for the Kern County Subbasin; confirmed options to recover water from Semitropics or have stored water be purchased for the cost of water at the time it was placed at Semitropic; noted Valley Water is looking at diversifying groundwater banking outside of Semitropic; confirmed subsidence is one of the deficiencies that the State Water Board is reviewing for the Kern County Subbasin; and noted the water quality issues related to 1,2,3 – Trichloropropane (TCP) and arsenic for Semitropic; and noted the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion project is currently going through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process and working towards obtaining water banking partners to provide a significant future watershed capture and off stream storage option.

The Committee received and noted the information and took no formal action.

4.2. Discuss Policy for Securing Agricultural Water for Food Production/Security.

Recommendation: Discuss policy for securing agricultural water for food production/security.

Erin Gil requested this agenda item and reviewed the information contained in Attachment 1.

Vincent Gin, Kirsten Struve, Valley Water Board Vice Chairperson Santos and Director Varela were available to answer questions.

Public Comments:
None.

The Committee discussed the following topics: noted support of public outreach regarding agricultural water supply challenges per regulatory processes and urban development; noted invitation to attend various community meetings to increase representation of farmers and build relationships with agencies to assist with legislation; noted Vincent Gin will follow up with information for the Committee regarding the Family Farm Alliance and the California Farm Water Coalition; confirmed potable reuse recycled water is heavily regulated and non-potable recycled water is also regulated and depleted during peak times.

The Committee received and noted the information and took no formal action.

4.3. Review Agricultural Water Advisory Committee Work Plan, the Outcomes of Board Action of Committee Requests; and the Committee's Next Meeting Agenda and the Committee's Vacancies.

Recommendation: Review the Committee work plan to guide the committee's discussions regarding policy alternatives and implications for Board deliberation.

The Committee considered this Item without a staff presentation.

Public Comments:
None.

Nicole Merritt, Vincent Gin, Valley Water Board Vice Chairperson Santos and Director Varela were available to answer questions.

The Committee received the information, took no formal action, and noted interest in the AWAC Work Plan focusing on agricultural water, keeping water rates low, and confirmed Chairperson Peter Van Dyke will work with Committee Oversight Managers Vincent Gin and Darin Taylor on the AWAC Work Plan updates; and noted the ongoing challenges to fulfilling the AWAC vacancies.

5. INFORMATION ITEM:

5.1. Standing Items Report.

Recommendation: This item allows the Agricultural Water Advisory Committee to receive verbal or written updates and discuss the Board's Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Work Plan Strategies. These items are generally informational; however, the Committee may request additional information and/or provide collective input to the assigned Board Committee.

The Committee considered this Item without a staff presentation.

Public Comments:
None.

Nicole Merritt, Darin Taylor, Vincent Gin, and Valley Water Board Vice Chairperson Santos were available to answer questions.

The Committee received the information, took no formal action, noted the attached Board Work Plan standing items report, confirmed the WIFIA loan details for the planning and design portion of the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project, and discussed the challenges associated with the Endangered Species Act.

5. CLERK REVIEW AND CLARIFICATION OF COMMITTEE REQUESTS:

This is an opportunity for the Clerk to review and obtain clarification on any formally moved, seconded, and approved requests and recommendations made by the Committee during the meeting.

Nicole Merritt confirmed there were no items for Board consideration; noted the Committee received, discussed, and provided feedback on Items 4.1 through 4.3 and Item 5.1; and noted staff follow up regarding further information for other agricultural associations under Item 4.2.

6. REPORTS:

6.1. Director's Report

Valley Water Board Vice Chairperson Director Santos noted the former AWAC member Vincent Cortese Jr.'s passing, and noted Valley Water is not out of the equation for the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project if the price is reasonable.

6.2. Manager's Report

Vincent Gin provided the Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Project Update: increased project prices due to facility cost, project yield has diminished per prioritization of access to Contra Costa's intakes/internal pipes/systems to the Delta and fish/wildlife restrictions for 20,000-acre feet (AF) storage for Valley Water, and negotiations have not yet started for access to the Transfer-Bethany Pipeline. Vincent Gin also noted for the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion project that Valley Water's share is 60,000 AF storage and recently reached milestone in negotiations with investors through the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority with the Bureau and Reclamation for agreement and principal for cost sharing and management of the reservoir.

Ryan McCarter provided the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project Update: Valley Water is actively reaching out to potential partners/agencies; noted target of 65% for Valley Water's share - generally 90,000 AF of storage and 35% for partnership.

6.3. Committee Member Report

Mitchell Mariani requested status of Anderson Dam tunnel.

Ryan McCarter confirmed that the excavation of the tunnel was completed, pipe is in place, and the next stage is to line the tunnel with reinforced concrete/piping with generally another year of construction for completion.

Chairperson Peter Van Dyke requested Anderson Dam status.

Ryan McCarter confirmed that CEQA is in process and the target is to finalize the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) early next year, and go into dam construction early 2026 for the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project, and noted continued work on the Coyote Creek flood management measures and flood protection projects to manage flows from the dam's releases in addition to the dam safety upgrades.

Robert Long requested status of pollution from the United Technology Corporation (UTC) facility regarding Anderson and local wells.

Vanessa De La Piedra confirmed that Valley Water is closely monitoring this matter through the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, who oversees site cleanup, and there are no known impacts to Anderson.

- 6.4. Information Links:
Links noted on agenda.

7. ADJOURN:

- 7.1. Adjourn to Regular Meeting at 1:30 p.m. on January 6, 2025.

Chairperson Van Dyke adjourned the meeting at 3:14 p.m., to
the regular meeting at 1:30 p.m. on January 6, 2025.

Date approved: January 6, 2025

Nicole Merritt
Assistant Deputy Clerk II