



COUNTY OF COLUSA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT,
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION
100 Sunrise Boulevard Suite A, Colusa, CA 95932
530-458-0719

COLUSA COUNTY GROUNDWATER COMMISSION

Darrin Williams, Dist. 1 | Deke Dormer, Dist. 2 | Matt LaGrande, Dist. 3 | Tom Charter, Dist. 4 | Jeff Moresco, Dist. 5

Meeting Minutes

Location: Colusa Industrial Properties Conference Room
100 Sunrise Blvd., Colusa, CA 95932 and via conference call

Date: June 3, 2020

Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Williams opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance, a Roll Call of Officers and introductions of others in attendance.

Introductions

Staff and public in attendance:

Mary Fahey, Colusa County Water Resources	Darren Cordova, MBK Engineers
Greg Plucker, Director of Community Development	Patrick Neu, MBK Engineers
Denise Carter, Supervisor, District V	Dan Ruiz
Christy Scofield	Sajit Singh
Emily James, SMWC	Pat Velines, DWR
John Brennan, SMWC	Bob Kirsten
Dan Griffith, SMWC	Shelly Murphy
Alison Yerxa	Elizabeth Yerxa
Jeff Sutton, TCCA	Mike Reinhart
Larry Neils	Andrew Wallace

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Dormer, Moresco, LaGrande, Williams and Charter (arrived at 1:15)

Approval of Minutes from the February 2, 2020 Meeting

Motion: Commissioner LaGrande moved to approve the February 2, 2020 meeting minutes. Commissioner Moresco seconded. The motion passed 4-0 (1 absent).

Period of Public Comment

There was no public comment.



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DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

Public Hearing

Discuss and consider a request from Sycamore Mutual Water Company for a permit to participate in a short-term (less than one year) groundwater substitution water transfer to San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority, outside of the County

Chair Williams opened the Public Hearing.

John Brennan, representing Sycamore Mutual Water Company (SMWC), provided a history of SMWC. He also described the water use and farming operations within SMWC. Their reasons for requesting a permit to transfer water to San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority are mostly economic – infrastructure repairs are needed and they need to build reserves that they have spent down on past repairs that benefit not only SMWC landowners, but also landowners outside of the Company.

At Davis Ranches, the largest landholder in SMWC, they plan to still be farming in the year 2100 and they are interested in long-term solutions for water availability which is the most important component of their operations. Through the proposed transfer, they are interested in tracking groundwater recharge and flow and gathering data.

Commissioner Charter expressed some concern that this is a very different year as far as weather patterns and it is hard to predict how things will play out over the growing season.

Commissioner Williams asked about the monitoring that will occur during the proposed transfer. Darren Cordova, MBK Engineers, explained the monitoring components of the proposal. DWR only includes monitoring wells that are very close to the pumping wells. If monitoring occurs too far from the participating wells, it is hard to know where any potential issues are coming from. He stated that if the Commission wanted to add other monitoring wells to the Plan, they could do that separately.

Commissioner Williams asked how they would know if any neighboring landowners were being affected by the pumping. Discussion was held regarding the monitoring and mitigation Plan.

Commissioner Moresco stated that in 2014 and 2015 during a groundwater substitution transfer from SMWC to the Tehama Colusa Canal, there were a couple of landowners that had to lower the bowls in their wells. Mr. Cordova said that 2014/15 was at the height of the drought and groundwater levels were at their lowest level.

Commissioner Charter suggested that as part of the Mitigation Plan, SMWC could spread out the pumping hours instead of pumping 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Commissioner Williams expressed concern about neighbors having well issues during the growing season and Commissioner Moresco pointed out that the current Mitigation Plan allows 27 days from a complaint to any action having to take place. It is not feasible for a grower to be without water for that long.

Commissioner Williams opened the floor to public comment. Andrew Wallace said that he had concerns about water leaving the area. His farming operation has already had to replace wells along the slough.



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Chairman Williams closed the Public Hearing.

Consider Resolution 2020-01: A Resolution of the Colusa County Groundwater Commission approving an out-of-county Groundwater Substitution Water Transfer Permit and Agreement from the Sycamore Mutual Water Company

Discussion was held regarding the proposed Mitigation Plan. Greg Plucker, Director of Community Development for Colusa County offered an idea for additional mitigation measures which would include:

- Prior to transfer commencing, notify all landowners within a specified number of miles from the pumping wells about the transfer, the mitigation measures and who to contact should they experience any impacts.
- Notice shall be reviewed and approved by County Staff prior to being sent out
- County Staff shall be immediately notified if there is a complaint filed

Mitigation:

- Determine if any 3rd party claim is reasonably related to the groundwater transfer pumping. County Staff shall make the determination if such a claim is reasonably likely to be caused by the groundwater transfer pumping. Should Staff determine that the impact is of such magnitude that it deems immediate action, those mitigation measures shall be activated within 24 hours upon determination.
- County Staff will have the authority to address any complaints so there is no confusion about first party, third party, etc.

Mr. Brennan said that those terms were acceptable for SMWC.

Mr. Charter suggested that SMWC could spread out the pumping so there is less daily pumping and weight the pumping more in August and September so that the neighbors could get to harvest with less likelihood of any issues occurring.

Motion: Commissioner Charter moved to approve the permit for Sycamore Mutual Water Company to participate in a short-term (less than one year) groundwater substitution water transfer to San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority with the addition of the specified mitigation measures subject to final review by the Commission Chair. Mr. Moresco seconded.

Yes: Commissioner Charter

No: Commissioners LaGrande, Dormer, Moresco

Abstain: Commissioner Williams

Motion failed.



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UPDATES AND REMINDERS

Legislative Update

Ms. Fahey referred the Commissioners to the update provided in the agenda packet.

Commissioner Comments and Updates

Mr. Charter reported that growers on the west side have to rely on transfers in drier years. This is unique year. There is water available on the west side this year. He has been working with Colusa County Water District (CCWD) to try to get service to parcels that are outside of the District, but just on the fringe. It would be beneficial to be able to get surface water to those lands rather than pumping groundwater. CCWD is working with their legal counsel to develop a draft contract for this type of "second class" service to growers on the exterior of CCWD's service area. If the District has water available, this would be beneficial and could take pressure off of the groundwater system.

Items for Next Agenda

DWR update – Spring groundwater levels

ADJOURNMENT

Next Regular meeting date: May 6, 2020 at 10:00 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 p.m.