

Supervisors be circulated for signature by the GSAs overlying the County. Osterling requested direction from the Board on this matter.

Amer Hussain, Geosyntec Consultants, introduced himself and additional technical consultant staff present from Geosyntec Consultants. Hussain provided the Board with an introduction to a presentation on the status of technical activities related to GSP development. He reminded the Board that GSPs are due January 2020 and if the GSA does not move forward with its tasks, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will intervene and impose higher fees than those the GSA is proposing in its Prop 218 election process. Hussain gave a brief background on the Board's decision to pursue funding the GSA through a Prop 218 election, which requires an Engineer's Report, which is to be presented later in the agenda.

Bob Anderson, Geosyntec Consultants, introduced himself and presented to the Board the following:

- Initial findings of an evaluation of existing groundwater data;
- Data needed for the GSA's GSP;
- Modeling efforts underway to improve the GSA's data collection and analysis; and
- Information required to manage the Subbasin over time.

Regarding the GSA's model, Anderson explained that the majority of the South Fork Kings GSA's neighbors are also building off of the Central Valley Hydrologic Model (CVHM) developed by the United State Geological Survey (USGS) and will work to reconcile informational discrepancies among the neighboring GSAs. Anderson asked that land use information (i.e. cropping patterns) be sent to their office for inclusion in the model, as the GSA does not have meters on existing wells and cannot monitor pumping output. Additionally, the model will need to:

- Consider surface water use;
- How to manage both surface water and groundwater conjunctively;
- Identify actual locations of wells since the current model assumes the locations; and
- The model will need to discriminate between managed recharge and deep percolation.

Anderson clarified the difference in roles between DWR and SWRCB under SGMA. Although DWR will be the agency that will approve or deny GSPs, they will serve as planning support and a collaborator, whereas the SWRCB will serve as the enforcer should the GSP be denied. On a separate note, the Staff and Board members present expressed their intent to minimize costs through cooperation efforts and provided examples of how those efforts are being conducted.

Osterling presented on the policies that are driving higher costs. Osterling explained the initial desire was for the GSAs to have the largest boundaries possible, but in the end multiple GSAs were formed. He added that on the other hand, the region is unique in that it is working on a single GSP, which may include various forms of managerial or technical consolidation which should save costs. Osterling reiterated that DWR will be invited to the meetings in order to receive ongoing input on the GSP which should help to insure its success. Osterling explained that DWR has two years to approve and review the GSP. During this time, the GSA will be receiving feedback from DWR on how to improve the GSP, including being granted half a year to make corrections so there will likely be ample opportunity to correct issues as they arise.

Director Howe is representing the South Fork Kings (SFK) GSA at the Tulare Lake GSA Coordination Group, which has issued a Request for Proposals for GSP Development. Proposals are due January 9, 2018.

Responding to a question from a member of the public regarding grant opportunities, Osterling explained the Kings Basin Water Authority is communicating grant opportunities to local agencies and districts, including funds from Prop 1 to help with groundwater efforts.

Actions:

Director Howe motioned, seconded by Director Brown, and it was unanimously carried to approve the Tulare Lake Basin GSA joint letter of opposition, as presented, and to have Chairman Neves sign the letter.

Item 5: CONSIDER ACTION ON PROPOSITION 218 ELECTION **Presenter:** Geosyntec Consultants

Discussion:

A representative from Geosyntec Consultants presented the Proposition 218 election plan and expanded on Hussain's introductory comments that receiving funding is critical to completing the GSP by the 2020 deadline, retaining local control of projects, and to minimizing landowner fees. If the GSA is unable to complete a GSP, the SWRCB will provide its own staff for the GSA, charge higher rates, and determine which projects the area will implement. If the GSA's Prop 218 election passes, the Board will be able to set the assessment every year up to a maximum of \$9.80/acre, depending on budgetary needs.

John Quiring, QK, presented to the Board the Engineer's Report up for consideration. Quiring discussed the budget and provided rationale that the first year's assessment will be the maximum amount the GSA can charge and that these greater initial expenses may be used to cover grant-matching needs, but are primarily needed to fund GSP development, reimbursing the member agencies for past contributions and to accumulate data via technical assessments within the first two years of the budget. Quiring provided sample assessments to demonstrate how landowners would be charged effective January 2019 as part of the property tax roll, if the election passes. Quiring also explained the public outreach process, which is driven by the State's code and legislation. He added that the earliest assessment would be set at a proposed June 7, 2018 public hearing date.

Voters will be approving the highest assessment amount which is \$9.80/acre. Throughout each year, the Board will vote on the budget, so the assessed amount could fluctuate but can never go over the approved \$9.80/acre. Quiring stressed that the GSA cannot make money off of the assessments; every expense must be justified by the GSA's annual budget. A member of the public, Nathan Olson, stressed educating and marketing this point to the Public in order to avoid the SWRCB's significantly higher fees. Ken Richardson, Legal Counsel, stated that staff worked extensively to develop a process with the best chance of success. When asked about SGMA, Richardson explained that there is no known legislative activity to challenge SGMA. He added that this is a difficult endeavor as it is an unfunded mandate from the State.

Geosyntec suggested correcting the following items in the Executive Summary (ES) found in the Engineer's Report:

- ES-1 to read that the GSA was formed in 2017, not 2016.
- ES-2 to read May 2019, not 2018.

Staff clarified how extractors would be charged if the SWRCB were to intervene and manage the SFK GSA. Staff responded that, according to their fees listed in the Report, the SWRCB would put the largest financial burden on those who pump and extract, with a priority on pumpers.

Actions:

Vice Chair Howe motioned, seconded by Director Brown, and the motion to approve the Proposition 218 election did not pass. The Board requested the item be brought back for further consideration at a later date.

(AYES: Chair Neves, Vice Chair Howe, Directors Brown; NOES: None; ABSTAIN: Meyers; ABSENT: Stratford Public Utility District)

Item 6: STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS **Presenter:** Cristel Tufenkjian

Discussion:

Staff Cristel Tufenkjian reported to the Board about recent, current, and future outreach efforts for the Public's benefit regarding about SGMA, the SFK GSA, and encouraging public participation in SFK GSA meetings. Tufenkjian highlighted the various outreach efforts conducted on behalf of the GSA focusing on email, YouTube, website activity. Tufenkjian explained the Prop 218 process and her efforts to maximize resources within her department to minimize expenses. Chair Neves recommended Tufenkjian specifically target participating member agencies.

Actions:

None.

Item 7: RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE EXECUTION OF WESTLANDS WATER DISTRICT DATA SHARING AGREEMENT **Presenter:** Eric Osterling

Discussion:

Osterling explained how the agreements under consideration fit within the GSA's activities and indicates data and assumptions our neighbors agree to use. He added that both agreements were reviewed and approved by legal counsel. Chair Neves and Osterling discussed how current and future land use is represented in the agreement, particularly for agricultural lands that will be taken out of production. Osterling explained that such matters fall under the category of forecasting, which the agreement covers.

Actions:

Vice Chair Howe motioned, Director Brown seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the Westlands Water District Data Sharing Agreement, as presented.

Item 8: RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE EXECUTION OF NORTH FORK KINGS GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY DATA SHARING AGREEMENT **Presenter:** Eric Osterling

Discussion:

No further discussion.

Actions:

Vice Chair Howe motioned, Director Meyers seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the North Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Data Sharing Agreement, as presented.

Item 9: FINANCIAL REPORT **Presenter:** Randy Shilling

Discussion:

Staff Randy Shilling reviewed the financial reports for the periods ending September 30, 2017 and December 31, 2017. Shilling explained that the GSA is operating far below the budgeted amount because the Prop 218 election process encompasses a large portion of the GSA's budget.

Actions:

Vice Chair Howe motioned, Director Meyers seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the financial report, as presented.

Item 10: OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION **Presenter:** Chair Neves

Discussion: None.

Actions: None.

Item 11: NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS **Presenter:** Eric Osterling

Discussion:

The Board suggested scheduling a special meeting to take action on the Prop 218 election.

Actions:

A special Board meeting may be scheduled for February 15, 2018 at 5:30pm.

The next regular meeting of the Board will occur March 15, 2018 at 5:30pm.

Item 12: ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned: 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____ approved on March 15, 2018

Joe Neves, Board Chair