

South Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Regular Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.
429 C Street, Lemoore, CA 93245

Members Present:

Joe Neves, County of Kings (Chair)
Ceil Howe, Jr., Empire West Side Irrigation District (Vice Chair)
Frank Gornick – City of Lemoore
Michael Newton, Stratford Irrigation District
Scott Mercer, Stratford Public Utility District

Members Absent

None.

Others Present:

Amer Hussain, Geosyntec (Technical Consultant)
Johnny Gailey (Administrative Consultant)
Ken Richardson (Legal Counsel)
Doug Freitas
Julie Freitas
Gary Quintel
Kevin Ruble

Brian Osborn (Lemoore Canal)
Frank Coelho Jr.
Joseph Fernandes
Jay Weiner
Bill Miguel
Montserrat Solis (SJV Water)
Antonio Solario (WWD)

Item 1: CALL TO ORDER

Presenter: Chair Neves

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m., and the Roll was called to establish a quorum.

Roll Call:

Director Neves: Present
Director Gornick: Present
Director Howe: Present
Director Newton: Present
Director Mercer: Present

Item 2: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Presenter: Chair Neves

Item 3: ADDITIONS TO OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

Presenter: Chair Neves

Discussion:

None.

Actions:

None.

Item 4: PUBLIC COMMENT

Presenter: Chair Neves

Discussion:

Doug and Julie Freitas submitted a recorded public comment on the draft groundwater allocation policy that was played for the Board. They noted concerns that future GSA policies may impinge on water rights. They also expressed concerns related to setting extraction fees to levels not exceeding the State board extraction fees. They also express support of the Water Blueprint and contribute to it through the SFKGSA Discussion ensued between Board members and Ken Richardson discussing the GSA nexus with surface water.

Actions:

None.

Item 5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Presenter: Chair Neves

Discussion:

Minutes were presented for SFKGSA Regular Board Meeting held on December 19, 2024

Actions:

It was moved by Director Howe and seconded by Director Gornick to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2024 Regular Board Meeting.

(Ayes: Directors Neves, Gornick, Howe, Mercer, and Newton; Noes: None; Abstentions: None; Absent:None)

Item 6: FINANCIAL REPORTS

Presenter: Johnny Gailey

Discussion:

It was reported that a discrepancy was found in the Financial reports provided by M Greene. Johnny will work with them to correct and present at the next meeting. Johnny provided an update on the current bank balance and outstanding invoices from the initial Prop 218 invoicing.

Actions:

Item was Tabled until the following meeting.

No action taken

Item 7: DIRECTOR REPORTS

Presenter: Directors

Discussion:

Director Neves thanked Director Howe for stepping in to Chair the last 2 GSA meetings.

Actions: None

Item 8: GROWER COMMITTEE REPORT

Presenter: Frank Coelho

Discussion:

Frank Coelho reported on the progress of development of groundwater allocation policy. Discussion is ongoing and productive. The next grower committee meeting will be held on January 30th at 9 AM.

Actions:

None

Item 9: ADMINISTRATIVE CONSULTANT REPORT

Presenter: Johnny Gailey

Discussion:

Johnny Gailey gave an update on the Tulare lake subbasin status with the State Board. Both DWR and the State Board continue to not communicate with SFKGSA due to the Preliminary Injunction from the Farm Bureau Lawsuit. SFKGSA will continue to work on GSP update including policy development for pumping allocations. SFKGSA will continue to develop allocation policies to support the updated GSP with the best available information. There has still been no movement on the coordination agreement for the Tulare Lake subbasin which was confirmed by Ken Richardson.

Johnny reported on policy development progress with the Grower committee. A more detailed discussion will be presented by Amer in his report.

Johnny reported on the progress of the efforts to amend the JPA agreement to add 2 Board seats to SFKGSA

Actions:

None

Item 10: GEOSYNTEC REPORT**Presenter:** Amer HussainDiscussion:

Amer gave a progress report on a very much draft Groundwater allocation policy. The grower committee will be meeting more often to help develop and provide input on the policy. He also provided updates on the progress in updating the GSP including progress on management plans for subsidence, water levels, and water quality.

Amer reported on coordination with the other GSA's in the subbasin including that Mid Kings River GSA had convened its Stakeholder Committee.

Amer then gave a presentation on key items to be included in the draft Groundwater Allocation Policy including Water Accounting Framework, Timeframe, Measurement, Eligibility, Sustainable Yield, and Landowner Developed Credits. He discussed potential limitation on transfers, along with proposed pumping caps. Management Plans would address localized impact utilizing the zone maps.

There was a discussion with the board about timeframes for allocation blocks to minimize impact to growers with permanent crops.

Amer reported on progress on the Annual Groundwater Report Due April 1, 2025.

There was discussion on the Well registration workshop and progress on coordination with MLJ for the registration of wells in SFKGSA.

Actions:

None.

Item 11: NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS**Presenter:** Chair NevesDiscussion:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 20, 2024 5:30 PM at 429 C Street, Lemoore, CA 93245

Actions:

None.

Item 12: ADJOURNMENT**Adjourned:** 6:39 p.m.