



AGRICULTURAL WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

**MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021
1:30 PM**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Agricultural Water Advisory Committee was held on April 5, 2021, Teleconference via Zoom in San Jose, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair David Vanni called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

Members in attendance were:

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Representative</u>
District 1	Russ Bonino
	Mitchell Mariani
District 2	James Provenzano
District 3	William Cilker
	David Vanni
District 4	Sheila Barry
	Brent Bonino
District 5	Jan Garrod*
	Michael Miller
District 6	Robert Long
District 7	Sandra Carrico
Loma Prieta Resource Conservation District	Peter Van Dyke
Private Well Owner (Non-Retail)	Dhruv Khanna*

Member not in attendance was:

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Representative</u>
District 6	Tim Chiala

Board members in attendance were: Director Nai Hsueh (District 5), Board Alternate, Director Richard P. Santos (District 3), and Director John L. Varela (District 1), Board Representatives.

Staff members in attendance were: Glenna Brambill, Vanessa De La Piedra, James Downing, Melissa Fels, Vincent Gin, Carmen Narayanan, Kirsten Struve, Darin Taylor, and Gregory Williams.

Guests in attendance were: Jill Bicknell (EOA, Inc.) and Lena Eyen (OSA).

Public in attendance was: George Fohner.

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

There was no one present who wished to speak.

*Mr. Jan Garrod logged on at 1:35 p.m.

*Mr. Dhruv Khanna logged on at 1:40 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Bill Cilker, second by Ms. Sheila Barry, and by roll call and majority vote approved the January 4, 2021, Agricultural Water Advisory Committee meeting minutes, as presented. Mr. Peter Van Dyke abstained.

4. ACTION ITEMS:

**4.1 REVIEW AND COMMENT TO THE BOARD ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2021-22
MAXIMUM PROPOSED GROUNDWATER PRODUCTION CHARGES**

Mr. Darin Taylor reviewed the materials as outlined in the agenda.

The Agricultural Water Advisory Committee (Mr. Peter Van Dyke, Mr. Dhruv Khanna and Ms. Sheila Barry) discussed the following: subsidence, rates, open space, preservation of farmland, recharge, and ecosystem services.

The Agricultural Water Advisory Committee took the following action:

It was moved by Mr. Dhruv Khanna, second by Mr. Peter Van Dyke, and by roll call and unanimous vote to support the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau's April 5, 2021, Letter with the main requests being: 1). Valley Water freeze ag groundwater rates for the next 15 years, and 2). Valley Water work affirmatively and actively with farmers going forward to increase the aquifer recharge done on farmlands over and above what farmlands have done routinely in years past.

The other considerations noted in the letter are below



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April 5, 2021

Board of Directors & Agricultural Water Advisory Committee Members
Valley Water
5750 Almaden Expy
San Jose, CA 95118

Dear Honorable Directors of Valley Water and Members of the Agricultural Water Advisory Committee,

Regarding groundwater production charges, the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau would like to emphasize the following:

1. Our agricultural ground water production charges have doubled over the past ten years
2. These charges bring in revenue to Valley Water that are minuscule relative to the Valley Water's operations and total budget
3. The Santa Clara County Farm Bureau has supported Valley Water's efforts to raise funds from the public
4. Farmers have adopted efficiency enhancing and water use minimizing irrigation techniques such as drip irrigation with great speed over the past few decades
5. Farmers continue to be falsely painted as careless users of water

We ask that you adopt a different strategy with respect to farmers, and specifically with respect to Points 1 and 5 above. We acknowledge and are grateful that Valley Water has historically recognized that farmers provide the public with numerous benefits such as open space, carbon-reduction, local-grown produce, recreational opportunities, bio-filtration of water etc.

That farmers also reduce run-off and engage in aquifer recharge during the rainy season has been less well recognized. As the supply of water has become an increasing concern in our state and in our County, we are pleased to see that there is increasing recognition of the role of farmers and farmland in aquifer recharge statewide.

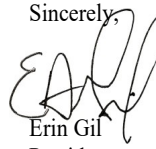
Accordingly, we respectfully submit the following points for your consideration:

First, we ask that Valley Water affirmatively emphasize the role of farmers in deploying irrigation techniques that make efficient water use and in replenishing our aquifers. The needless and unfounded vilification of farmers as water-wasters must cease. We ask your public affairs unit to emphasize going forward the historical zeal with which farmers have adopted water-efficient irrigation techniques and our historical and continuing role with respect to run-off reduction and aquifer recharge during rainy months.

Second, at our Board meeting on March 2, 2021, we adopted the following resolution that we now bring to your attention: "All customers of Valley Water who are charged ground water production charges for ground water they pump should be credited fully with the ground water recharged on their lands during months of rainfall as determined by application of the Santa Clara County Drainage Manual (adopted August 14, 2007). This amount of

recharge credited to each ground water user as determined by application of the Santa Clara County Drainage Manual should offset the quantity of ground water pumped by the customer for which Valley Water currently applies its ground water charges." We respectfully ask that Valley Water recognize that the quantification of the aquifer recharges, done by farmers on a farm-by-farm and collective basis, is important to record and credit with fidelity since Valley Water charges all ground water users for the quantities of water that Valley Water itself adds to our aquifers.

In the light of the above, we ask that you reconsider Valley Water's routine subjection of farmers to the last ten years of agricultural ground water production rate increases. We specifically and respectfully ask: (i) That Valley Water freeze agricultural ground water rates for the next fifteen years; and (ii) That Valley Water work affirmatively and actively with farmers going forward to increase the aquifer recharge done on farmlands over and above what farmlands have done routinely in years past.

Sincerely,

Erin Gil
President

4.2 STORMWATER CAPTURE REPORT

Ms. Kirsten Struve introduced the guest presenter, Ms. Jill Bicknell (EOA, Inc.) who reviewed the materials as outlined in the agenda.

The Agricultural Water Advisory Committee (Mr. Jan Garrod, Mr. Dhruv Khanna, Mr. Peter Van Dyke, and Ms. Sandra Carrico) discussed the following: goal of putting water back into the ground, erosion, infiltration, terrain, cleaning of water downstream or upstream, Landscape Rebate Program, chemicals, fertilization, toxicity, pesticides, turbidity, impervious concrete, and cover cropping.

The Agricultural Water Advisory Committee took no 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

Ms. Glenna Brambill reviewed the materials as outlined in the agenda.

The Agricultural Water Advisory Committee took no action.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS:

5.1 STANDING ITEMS REPORT

Ms. Glenna Brambill reviewed the materials as outlined in the agenda.

The Agricultural Water Advisory Committee took no action.

6. CLERK REVIEW AND CLARIFICATION OF COMMITTEE REQUESTS TO THE BOARD

Ms. Glenna Brambill reported there was one action item for Board consideration.

Agenda item 4.1

The Committee by roll call and unanimous voted to support the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau's April 5, 2021, Letter with the main requests being: 1). Valley Water freeze ag groundwater rates for the next 15 years, and 2). Valley Water work affirmatively and actively with farmers going forward to increase the aquifer recharge done on farmlands over and above what farmlands have done routinely in years past and the other considerations noted in the letter.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair David Vanni adjourned in memory of Hon. Sig Sanchez at 3:08 p.m. to the regular meeting on Monday, July 12, 2021, at 1:30 p. m. to be called to order in compliance with the State Emergency Services Act, the Governor's Emergency Declaration related to COVID-19, and the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20.

Glenna Brambill
Board Committee Liaison
Office of the Clerk of the Board

Approved: 7-12-2021